

On Eagles' Wings Pt 162

by Don Courville

God allows us to go through sorrow to break down our hard natures and to melt our stubborn wills, so that we can grow spiritually and become more like Christ.

Duration: 26:08

Scripture: Proverbs 1:21, Proverbs 12:20, Matthew 26:38, Romans 1:21, 2 Corinthians 10:5, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Peter 4:8

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the church being a place of fellowship, encouragement, growth, and building up. He highlights the seven things that God hates, including a heart that divides and sows discord among brethren. The preacher emphasizes the need to cast down evil imaginations and bring every thought into obedience to Christ. He also emphasizes the importance of forgiveness and fervent charity among believers, as it covers a multitude of sins. The preacher encourages listeners to seek reconciliation and unity in their church, as strife and pride hinder growth and grieve the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, the sermon emphasizes the freedom and abundant life found in Christ and the importance of having a deep fellowship with Him.

Transcript

I'd like to start off today by reading a passage of Scripture with you, and then praying with you. The passage of Scripture is in Matthew 26, verse 38, where the Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples when He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He says, He began to be sorrowful and very heavy, and then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Carry ye here, and watch with me.

Father, I pray that You take Your Word today, that You'd minister to us. Many of us are going through some extremely difficult trials. Some of us have no trials at all, and life seems to be a big ball game that we're always winning.

But whatever our state and wherever we're at, we know that You can minister to us. We know that when Christ is our life, then the fruit of Christ will be in our life, and You are pruning some of us, and You are working Your will. I pray that if there's any today that do not have assurance of Christ being their Savior, no hope and joy in their life, that You would show them that Christ is what's missing.

Lord, I can't minister unless You anoint my lips to speak. And Father, we can't receive unless You anoint our ears to hear. So we thank You, Father, that You will meet us at our point of need.

In Jesus' name, amen. One of the things that is associated with life, almost in every corner, in every block, in every county and state and city, within your neighborhood, within your boundary, you will always find this element of life. And it's the element of sorrow.

Now, the opposite of not receiving the sorrow that God would have you to go through, if you're going to be Christ-like, will be that you will grow into a bitter person. We've been talking about bitterness, sharing some things that God's been giving to us. And I want to start off this morning, before we go back into our study on bitterness, share with you a little bit about the area of bitterness and the area of sorrow in relation to sorrow.

And sorrow is another whole topic on itself. Probably one of the misunderstood areas is why God lets us go through sorrow. Sorrow, the cross is a sorrow weapon.

Or maybe not a weapon, but it's an instrument. And God many times uses this instrument to produce the life of Christ in us. And I have a book here, I want to read you a few statements out of it, on the area of sorrow.

Sorrow is a species of suffering with hope in it. Suffering with no hope in it is despair. And that is the normal condition in hell.

You see, many refuse to identify with Christ because of the sorrow and the suffering. But if you refuse to identify with Christ in this life, you will also have no identity with Christ or the things of Christ or heaven in the next life. You make the choice.

You make the decision. Christ has died on the cross for your sins to get you into fellowship with Him. Heaven is wherever Jesus is.

He that has Christ has the hope of heaven in His heart. You can't just forget Christ and neglect Christ and then plan on going to heaven. He's the key to life.

Now, it is the ministry of sorrow that God uses to break down our hard natures and to melt our stubborn wills. These are some of the statements from a book by G.D. Watson, *Tribulation Work It*. I want to share some things before we get into the area of bitterness today to show you that many times God has brought a sorrowful thing along our way.

And instead of receiving it as part of God's plan for our life, we've grown bitter. And thus we have robbed ourselves of the joy of the fragrance of Christ in our life. Watson said, There are men who have plenty of mind and capacity to see truth, to sanction righteousness, but whose heart nature seems made of flint.

They lack feeling, warmth, tenderness. They look upon religion as a cold morality or a set of business-like duties or as a financial and political transaction with God. They look upon religious emotion as weak and wombishness.

And if they are church members, they make a pretense to religion. They are more like baptized mules than little children with their Heavenly Father. God takes His time and watches His opportunity and slowly undermines these tough natures till someday an uneasy feeling comes up from the fountain of their being and creeps all through them.

Calamity takes hold upon them. I was just thinking, maybe we call this the midlife crisis. It might be the spirit life crisis.

But he goes on, God allows most bitter disappointment to crush some darling hope or plan. Clouds gather, misunderstandings, separations, sharp and sudden turns in the intellectual or financial or social life transpire. Or health breaks down, or bereavement turns life into a walking cemetery.

Then sorrow gets in its beautiful work and fairly laughs behind its mask of tears at the work it will do. I think one of the things that we are so prone to think is that life is supposed to turn out somehow like a fairy book story where all ends well. Well, all does end well in God's way, in God's timing.

But if we're not careful, we can let the exigencies of life and the trials of life, the tragedies of life, instead of using the sorrows to let Christ be produced in our life, we can become bitter at God. I have a little pamphlet that has a lot of personal meaning to me. I think that anyone that's going to be like Christ, going to be growing into the deeper Christ life, you're going to go through extremely excruciating trials in your life, many things you won't understand.

But if God has called you, as this little pamphlet, *Others May and You Cannot*, says by G.D. Watson, if God has called you to be really like Jesus, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility and put upon you such demands of obedience that you will not be able to follow other people or measure yourself by other Christians. And in many ways, He will seem to let other people, good people, do things which He will not let you do. Other Christians and ministers who seem very religious and useful may push themselves, pull wires, and work schemes to carry out their plans.

But you cannot do it. If you attempt it, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as to make you sorely penitent. Others may boast of themselves, of their work, of their success, of their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing.

And if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works. Others may be allowed to succeed in making money or may have a legacy left to them, but it is likely God will keep you poor because He wants you to have something far better than gold, namely, a helpless dependence on Him, that He may have the privilege of supplying your needs day by day out of an unseen treasury. The Lord may let others be honored and put forward and keep you hidden in obscurity because He wants you to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory, which can only be produced in the shade.

He may let others be great but keep you small. He may let others do a work for Him and get the credit for it, but He will make you work and toil on without knowing how much you are doing. And then to make your work still more precious, He may let others get the credit for the work which you have done and thus make your reward ten times greater when Jesus comes.

The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch over you with a jealous love and will rebuke you for little words and feelings or for wasting your time which other Christians never seem distressed over. So make up your mind that God is an infinite sovereign and has a right to do as He pleases with His own. He may not explain to you a thousand things which puzzle your reason in His dealings with you, but if you absolutely sell yourself to be His love slave, He will wrap you up in a jealous love and bestow upon you many blessings which come only to those who are in the inner circle.

Settle it forever then that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue or chaining your hand or closing your eyes in ways that He does not seem to use with others. Now when you are so possessed with the Living God that you are in your secret heart pleased and delighted over this peculiar, personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the Vessel of Heaven. G.D. Watson in living words.

As you go through the trials of life and I, we find out that the flesh cannot endure. It's not made to endure. It complains, it wants things soft, it wants things its way, it doesn't like when things go wrong.

The flesh is weak. Jesus said the Spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. This is why we focused in on Hebrews 12, 2 where we are to keep looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

He endured the cross. What this means, the definition of this is it means to remain under, to sustain a load of miseries. There is that sorrow.

To sustain a load of adversities, persecutions, or provocations, whatever it is, is to remain under. At any point in His 33 years on this earth, Christ could have said, that's it, and He was gone. He could have left us to go to our way.

But what was He willing to endure for? You know, it's said in the book of Luke, in 12, verse 50, Christ said, but I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished? He had the cross in His sights, and He was not going to let anything deter Him from that cross. His mother and His sisters came there, His brethren came there, tried to get them to come take some rest. No, it was away from the cross, so He would not deter.

Peter came to Him. No, He would not deter. Anything that will keep you from the cross will keep you from the glory of God in your life.

He wanted to get to the cross to pay our sin debt, to get us back into fellowship with Him. And this is eternal life, that we might know Him. It's not making a decision, it's knowing Jesus Christ, coming to a point where you have an encounter with Jesus Christ, and you know Him.

And He becomes your life, He becomes your Savior, your Lord. And being a disciple is to line up with Jesus in the enduring department. Hebrews 12, verse 1 says, Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us.

Lay aside that sin. The cross was the provision for our sin. All of it, and the weights.

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. The joy that was set before Him. Who for the joy that was set before Him.

My God loves you, and God loves me. He was willing to go through a lot. And so how do we take what He has done for our example and apply it to our life? Well, you go to verse 3 and there's your answer.

For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself. You know what you're going through right now? God's grace is sufficient. He's able to bear you up on eagle's wings.

God's grace was sufficient for Israel. He bared them on eagle's wings. And that same grace is sufficient for you for that trial that you're going through right now.

But you know what happens? If we do not endure by grace, whatever trial we go through, we will become bitter. Bitterness is one of the most destructive enemies in the church today. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Consider Him. You see, the Scripture says, He came to set the captives free. He came to set you free.

He says, Christ said, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He had sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Draw upon Christ for your need, whatever it is, whoever you're hurting, draw upon Him for your need.

If you don't, that bitterness will get in. Remember, bitterness. Paul reads that hidden bitterness, hidden deep within the soul, is a far more fruitful cause of spiritual defeat and powerlessness in the lives of Christians than we have any idea.

It smolders there for years on end. Bitterness. A wrong was done to you, either real or imagined, and instead of committing it to God, you've allowed it to lodge in your heart and fester.

And by such undisciplined emotion, you grieve the Holy Spirit. Is God after you for something? You know, He wants to bring many sons unto glory. Hebrews 2, 9 and 10.

He wants to bring many sons unto glory. He wants to bring you in. He wants you to be free.

He wants me to be free. And when we're free, we're free indeed. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

He's come to give you life, not only eternal life, but abundant life. Do you have it? Do you have it? Oh, the Lord Jesus Christ truly is all you need. And when Christ becomes all you want, you've entered into the life of fellowship with Him.

Paul says, that I might know Him, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death. The death of self, that's the hardest thing for us. We want to hang on to our rights.

We think we've got some kind of right. We had a right to be treated different. They violated my rights.

They insulted me. They didn't pay due respect to me. They didn't pay me what I deserved.

Whenever you fail to yield your rights, you give ground for Satan to come in. Christ did not hang on to His rights. He laid them all aside.

You go to Philippians 2, and you'll see what He did for us. He took upon Himself the form of a servant. You looked at Him, you thought He was a nobody.

But when they saw the life of God coming out of His life, they said, there's somebody there. It was God. And that's what they're supposed to see when they see you and me.

And what really draws attention to Christ is when they see us going through excruciating pain, tremendous tribulation and trials, and they say, wow, there's something inside that person. What is it that you have? I want it. And that's why we go through the trials.

He had such contradiction of sinners against Himself. So He said, don't think that you'll be any different. Don't think it's strange concerning the fiery trials that will try you.

So we're to consider Him. We're to consider Him. That endurance of contradiction of sinners against Himself lets you be wearied and faint in your minds.

You know, the battle is won or lost in the mind. So this is why we have to consider Him. Satan will put things in your mind about your brothers or sisters.

And if you don't guard yourself, you'll think that the voice of God which is in reality the voice of Satan, He's putting these thoughts in there. And they'll be lies. And the Bible says that we're to be casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

In our church relationships, this is why I'm preaching on this, because we have so many problems, and we want to have revival in our church, so we have revival meetings, which are really evangelistic meetings most of them. We want to see people saved, and that's good. I want to see souls saved.

And so we'll try to have evangelistic meetings and get them in. My friend, if you'll get clean, and your church will get clean, and you'll let God become God in your church and in your life, you'll have people drawn to the light. They'll be drawn to your church like bugs to light at night.

They'll be drawn to the Jesus that's there, but they're not drawn when Christ isn't there. They're not. We have to try to entice them with all kinds of programs and gimmicks and things to try to get people to come.

That's not the way to do it. Whatever you have to draw them with, that's what you're going to have to use to keep them there. And so our churches are turning into social clubs, feeding centers.

And I'm not against eating. I like it. I like fellowships, church dinners.

That's alright. But if you have to have all kinds of entertainment, movie stars to come in, then that's what you've got to use to keep them there. But when Christ draws them there, then Christ is all that's needed to keep them there.

And really you want those there that love Jesus. The church is to be a place of fellowship, encouraging, growing, and building up so we can go back out and win and witness to those that are lost. And what do we have instead? We have those seven things that God hates.

Two of them. One was a heart that divided wicked imaginations. You got something going on against your brother? You better get it straightened out.

Another one was he that soweth discord among his brethren. Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil, Proverbs 12, 20 says. Romans 1, 21 says, Because when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

We need to be careful about our imaginations, these vain imaginations. Just like many imagine they're going to get into heaven. Where'd they get that thought? Well, they didn't get it from the Bible.

They think they're going to get into heaven because they've joined the church and they're doing good works. Satan's put those things in your mind. Because the Bible says, For by grace do you say through faith in that and not of yourselves.

It's a gift of God and not of works as to any man should boast. So today in America, I believe more harm is done to the church from within than without because we want guard ourselves. We bite and devour one another as Galatians says.

And so we're not careful. The flesh cannot endure. The flesh gets in control.

The flesh wants to have its way. What does God want in our church relationships? I'll tell you what He wants. I'm going to go back over to 1 Peter.

1 Peter chapter 3. Listen to this in verse 8. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another. Love as brethren. Be pitiful.

Be courteous. Oh yeah, I know so and so, they're pitiful all right. No, no.

He says having compassion one another. Love as brethren. Be pitiful.

Be courteous. You know why we can't love as brethren? Because we're not controlled by the Holy Spirit. We'll bite and devour one another.

Not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrarized blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Well, only the Holy Spirit can do that to a tongue, by the way.

The flesh cannot control the tongue. 1 Peter 4.8. The Spirit of Jesus is that of forgiveness. Listen to this.

And above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Who is it that you have not forgiven? Who is it that you would not be free to sit down at the table with and eat with? Who is it that you know that has something against you? You better be working towards getting it straightened out. You better be working towards it.

You better be praying at least that God will build that relationship in your church. Because people come to your church, they can feel that. You know how they can feel that? They can feel that because they don't feel the love of God there.

They feel the animosity and the strife. This is why many of the churches are not growing. Because there's strife there.

Wherever there's strife, the Bible says there's pride. The flesh cannot endure. It just cannot endure.

In a lot of our churches, what we have is flesh programs. You know, if we were like Stephen, when he was being stoned, and he said, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, it would have a drastic effect. The power of forgiveness will work as much for good.

Listen to this. It will work as much for good as the power of bitterness will work for wrong. You know, when God went to work on old Saul, man, he began to convict him.

The more he killed and chased down Christians, the more convicted he got. And he was really being convicted because of the pricks. God came to him and said, it's hard for you to kick against the pricks.

Who is God trying to reach out to through you? And you've been fighting it. You may have been even fighting them. God's trying to get us to the point where we'll use adversity as an avenue to pray for those who hurt us.

Like Jesus said, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. So Saul became a man under conviction. And one evidence of it was his anger.

Angry people, really, man, they're destructive. They'll flay about and hit whoever they can and everybody in their sight. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who are you? I am Jesus who thou persecutest.

It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. My friend, it's hard. It's hard in the flesh, but it's easy in the spirit.

You know, whenever it's hard, I'm trying to do it. Whenever it's easy, it's the Spirit of God doing it through me. I am Jesus who thou persecutest.

Oh, whatever you're bitter at, whoever you're bitter at, it comes out against Jesus. Is God saying something to you today? Is He? What's your answer? You see, your problem isn't your boss, it isn't your wife, your kids, your pastor, your Sunday school teacher, your deacons. Could it be your attitude? Can you be like Jesus and not forgive? You know, Jesus said, Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembers that thy brother had off against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way.

First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come to offer thy gift. I wonder how many of our churches have financial problems because of this. You know, he might just be right on to something.

There's no way we can know Jesus and the fellowship of His suffering if we have an unforgiving spirit. An unforgiving spirit is everything Jesus is not, someone said. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

What's it look like when you have an unforgiving spirit? One preacher said these things, it's a retaliating spirit. It could be a proud spirit, it could be a destructive spirit, it could be an impatient spirit, it could be an unspiritual spirit, it could be a self-righteous spirit, it could be a disobedient spirit, or it could be a rebellious spirit, or it could be an angry spirit, an unforgiving spirit, a judgmental spirit, a critical spirit, or a prayerless spirit. Are you loving your enemies? Are you free? Or are you bitter? Has God been trying to say something to you? Have you yielded your right to yourself? The first thing that happens when we trust Christ as our Savior is that self should come to the cross, our self-life.

Well, Heavenly Father, I pray that you'd use this message today to encourage us. Pray if there are any that haven't received Christ yet, that they would consider the Lord Jesus Christ and His claim for them, that He died on the cross for their sins, He was buried, and He rose again the third day. Thank you for ministering to us today.

In Jesus' name. Remember, Christ is all and in all. He's all you need.

But have you come to the point to where He's all you want. Until next time, may God richly bless you, my friend.

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