

On Eagles' Wings Pt 183

by Don Courville

We must be careful not to fall into the prison of tradition and instead seek God's will in all things, relying on the power of the Word of God to change us and set us free.

Duration: 28:55

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:4

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a man named Joe who was once imprisoned but eventually found freedom. Joe collected pieces of wire in a bottle to symbolize his freedom from bondage. The preacher emphasizes the importance of renewing our minds and not conforming to the ways of the world. He also encourages gentleness, patience, and meekness when sharing the message of Christ with others. The sermon concludes with a reminder that seeking God's will and allowing Him to work through proper authority is crucial for the church to function as a unified body.

Transcript

1. Prophet Isaiah said, Hast thou not heard that the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not? Neither is weary, there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. Heavenly Father, we pray that you would guide us today, that you would bless us according to the Word of God, that the Word of God would speak to us.

I pray, Father, that you would set captives free, in Jesus' name, Amen. Well, the last couple of weeks I've been speaking with you about the area of how Jesus came to set the captives free. You know, Christ said that the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He hath 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. In the area of the religious world, of spirituality, there's much bondage. Even in our fundamental churches, many areas where we can become under bondage, just like the Pharisees were under bondage.

They got onto Jesus in Matthew 15. They said, Why have your disciples broke the commandments of the elders? How come they're breaking all the rules? And Jesus came back to them, and He said, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? And I think that we in the church today are dangerously close to doing the same thing to where we've established, almost as written scripture, our traditions, our ways of doing things. And we are in danger of losing the spontaneity and the freshness of the Holy Spirit if we haven't already lost it already in our churches.

The church is to be a vibrant, fresh place, full of joyfulness and holiness, and with the testimony of Jesus there, instead of being such a cold place where we go through all our menus, our schedules, and we've got all our programs. And I heard somebody told me a few weeks ago that they had everything planned out for months ahead. They said, Isn't that wonderful? Well, I usually put my foot in my mouth and say what I think, but that time I kept my mouth shut and didn't say anything.

But what I was thinking is, Well, what if the Holy Spirit wants to do something different in the meantime? Well, boy, you know, many of us, if the Holy Spirit wants to do something different, it throws us in a tailspin. Suppose the Spirit of God wants to bring into your life some unusual event. Well, if you're free in Christ, you say, Well, praise the Lord, this wasn't in my plans, but I'm just going to watch and see what God has in mind.

You know, every day should be an exciting day, a day of adventure. As you look and say, Well, wow, Lord, I've got this day, I give it to you myself, I want to see what you're going to do. You be the Lord.

You orchestrate in our lives. But you know what? There's not a lot of freedom today in our churches. And we have become, almost some of our places are like tombs.

They're like prisons. And it's hard to get free. You know, I've said it's easier to get the man out of the prison than it is to get the prison out of the man.

I remember a pastor, Dick Sibley, sharing a story. I don't know if I'd get all the details right or not. But many years ago, a man came out of prison and he met a friend on the street.

When he came out and his friend said, Well, wow, Joe, what's it like to be out of prison? What's it like to be free? And he says, I can't tell you yet. And he says, I'll tell you a little later on. And so over the next few weeks, what Joe did is everywhere he went, he would, he would pick up any kind of little piece of wire that he'd find when he'd come home.

He had this bottle and he just put it in the bottle. Well, over the weeks, the bottle began to get filled up and pretty soon he was really having to stuff them in. And pretty soon the bottle was all filled up, full of these wires that he had crammed in there and pushed in until they couldn't get any more wire in there.

And so then he took the bottle and he went over to his friend's house and he walked in and he says, I want to tell you now what it's like to be free and out of that prison. And he took that bottle and he threw it against the wall and it just smashed all over the place. Glass went everywhere.

But the wire still retained the form of the prison. A few strands popped out here and there, but basically the wire had the shape of the bottle. And he said, that's what it's like to be out of that prison.

In other words, he's saying it's easier to get the man out of the prison than to get the prison out of the man. And for the Pharisees, for Jesus to come along and try to set them free, it was very hard for them to face

up to the fact that they were in a legalistic system, a legalistic prison and that they were not free. Well, I want to continue on and finish this up today with you.

And I'd just like to say that I'm glad that I can minister to you over the air, but I'm not taking the place of your pastor, I hope. And I know sometimes some of you don't have a church and you might consider me maybe in that sense. And I'm praying.

I'm praying. And I'll just share this with you folks. We're praying about making a move back down to the Joplin area.

And specifically, we're believing God to use us in a church. We don't know where exactly. There's one thing in the makings and maybe God will do that or maybe He'll do something different.

But it was four years ago on the 12th of September that we began on the air. And I'd like to be back down on the 12th or either the Sunday after that and just meet with you. Maybe we'll get a place lined up or something to open up for us to have a place where you can come.

And I'd like to just give you a gift, sort of a fourth year anniversary gift to you. If I can make it down. We're praying about it.

My wife and I, we're out walking. We've been freed up where we're at. And we're believing God to move us this fall.

And we're just watching Him. The last time we tried to get moved in there, the Lord redirected us and it's been exciting. But we have a real hunger in our heart to be back down there with you folks.

To see God build a church. That's my desire, to see Him build a church. I can't build anything.

I like to do carpentry work. My son and I, we get out when we have time and we'll get us a job and go do this or that. That's really great.

But I want to see God build a church. Don't you? And so you pray with us. We're planning on making a visit down on the 12th or the 19th of this month if possible.

We'd like to spend a few days down. And we need a place. We're praying about a place in the country to live.

We're country type people. We like to be out in the country. I'd like to have a place in the country even if I could just get a barn and turn it into a place to live.

That's what I'd like to do. But you pray for us. I just thought I'd put this in.

Many times you don't know where we're at and what's going on. But that's what's going on now. We're looking for a change this fall.

For God to direct us, if possible, back to the Joplin area. We've been thinking about down in the Neosho area. We like it down there.

I'd like to live down in that area somewhere around there. So you pray for us. We need a place to live and a place to minister.

A little commercial there. We don't do that too much. But that's where we're at.

So you pray for us. We do need your prayers. We love you.

And we're encouraged when you write us. And sometimes you write and tell how this message has blessed you and whatever. And that's great.

We just want to be encouragement. We want to help set captives free. That's Christianity.

It's Christ living in us, reaching out to someone else to set the captives free. But it's sometimes hard to get us out of this prison that we get ourselves in. The traditions of men can really get us bound up.

And we can be in other prisons of immorality or anger or lust or greed or whatever. And that thing can possess you. And you know, Jesus Christ, He's like the warden.

He opens the door. At Calvary, He died on the cross to set us free, not only from our sins, but also from the control of sin in our life. You shall be free indeed.

And He's like the warden. He opens the door. But it's up to us to walk free.

And by the way, if you haven't received Christ as your Savior yet, you may be a church member. You might even be a preacher or a preacher's wife. All kinds of people get saved.

When you recognize that you can't save yourself, you can't get yourself free from the prison of your sin, that Christ died on the cross, He was buried and He rose again the third day to do that for you, to set you free. When you quit struggling and start resting, then you enter into the freedom of Christ. He that has entered into His rest has ceased from His own works.

You know, one of the prisons, there's several different prisons, but one of the toughest prisons that we have in our churches today is the prison of activity and the prison of performance. We're doing this. People, especially relatives, say, well, what are you doing now? You know, since I resigned my church several years ago, it's been hard on some of them because they knew this was where I was going.

But they don't understand in the area of revival what God is doing. They say, what are you doing? Well, I'm just sitting. You know, sitting is not sin.

Waiting on God is not sin. Having an opportunity to pray is a real privilege, but most of those that have been called into a life of intercession have been greatly misunderstood, but they are the backbone of the church. Those that have been called into a life of intercession, if God has called you and given you the special opportunity to be laid back somewhere, to be shut up to Him, then don't complain, don't get bitter, rejoice.

Thank Him for the opportunity that you have to spend quality time with Jesus praying. And would you pray for me and pray for my wife and our six kids as we're looking to God to get us moved down this fall? And you pray because there's other things knocking on the door, and we're trying to be careful not to shut out the other things, even though the desire of our heart is to be back down in the Joplin area. Preferably, we're sensing down south of it somewhere, but we don't want to shut God off.

We know that He can change plans, and He can redirect and whatever. He's the sovereign God. We have complete confidence in Him, but you pray for us.

These moves are not easy things to make for large families, so thank you for your prayers. Anyway, are you free? Are you free? Let's get into the message. Enough of this stuff today.

Okay, let's get into the Word of God and see what God has for us today. You know, I had to stop the tape and cut out some last time. I was getting long-winded.

I wasn't watching the clock when I was recording. Listen, I wanted to share this last time with you, that when we're sharing Christ with others, we must be like 2 Timothy, chapter 2 and 24, where it says, And the servant of the Lord must not strive. You can't go up and grab somebody around the neck, squeeze their tie tight, and say, Listen, you're in bondage, brother, and I'm going to get you free.

Man, they say, I'm in bondage, all right, and if I can get free of you, I'll be free. No, the servant of the Lord must not strive. You know, the way to get things done in your church is through prayer, not bickering, politicking, arguing, slipping around on the side, well, we're going to get rid of the preacher.

So you go around doing an underhanded political job and get it done. No, you go to God. That way you know when it's done, He's done it.

He has done it. This is what we're looking to see Him build, a church that He is building. I want to see Him do that.

I was sharing with a young man earlier today who called me up, and we both had the desire in our heart to see a church where God was building it. And it's exciting to be in a place where God is doing it. It is exciting to be there.

But he says, The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves, and that's basically the description of a person that's in bondage. They oppose themselves if God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. You see, the truth shall make you free.

And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. You see, if we're not careful, we want to get our will, well, we might miss God's will. So we have to be careful in this area that we seek God's will in all things.

Remember, the church is a body. A body is fragile. It gets bent.

It gets bruised. It gets broke. But Christ is the head of the spiritual body, the church.

And so we must let him work through the proper authority. The elders are the authority structure. The pastor to be one of them.

None of them is more important than the others as in a body. Which is more important, your left arm or your right arm? Well, you say my right arm because I'm right-handed. But let me tell you, you lose your left one, you're going to miss it an awful, awful lot.

And if you miss one part of the body and one part of the body in your church gets bent out of shape and leaves the body, if it was a functioning part of the body, you should miss it. And we're a body. The body needs each other, you know? My head needs my neck.

If my neck gets cut off, then my head's had it. Matter of fact, the whole body's had it. We're wiped out.

None is more important. Everything's needed. Even if you're, you know, like, some of us may feel like we're not a very important body.

Like, you know, we're a little toe. But I've been told that somebody that loses a little toe, they have to learn to walk without that little toe. It's important to have it.

And so the church is a body. I was sharing with you about some things and one of the things that I want to talk to you about is our minds. The area of captivity, our minds, if Satan can get control of your mind, he can control you and your life.

Listen. The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 3, Now listen to this. He says, Do your own imagination.

And then you can, if you're not careful, Satan can get in there and begin to feed you thoughts. Need to watch the imagination, casting down imaginations. You get to thinking about yourself, that you're more important.

Need to go back to read Romans 12, 3. Not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God. And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

And having a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. How's your mind? You know, God said in Romans 12, 2 and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. One of the reasons our churches are getting to the point to where more people are being put in bondage spiritually is because the churches are conformed to the world.

We're conforming. We're doing things that the world does. And the sad thing about it is, you know, we may be 15, 20 years behind what the world was doing, and we compare ourselves with what the world is doing today, and that's not right.

If it was worldly 20 years ago, then it's worldly 20 years later. And what we have done is we've just sort of followed along. Fads, styles, entertainment, all this stuff.

We got the music. You know, I notice a lot of times the music that Christ saved me out of, he saved me out of the rock culture, so I'm real sensitive to rock music. And I'll hear the same thing being played in churches that Christ saved me out of, definitely convicted me that was wrong, was of Satan.

But yet, I'll go into some places, and they're playing the same type of music, only they put Christian words, and they say, well, it's spiritual. Now, not to me it ain't. It's the same thing that God saved me out of.

And he says, be not conformed to this type of stuff, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. You get the Word of God in your mind. This is why our churches are going off.

We're not getting the Word of God in. We need the Word of God to change us. We need it to cleanse us, to purify us, to direct us.

I need it. I'm a needful person. Identify with David.

I'm poor and needy. Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove, prove what? What is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God? I want the

good will of God. I want the acceptable will of God.

I want the perfect will of God. You know, it's a sad thing to see somebody that's driven by something else, especially a believer, other than the will of God. I know of one woman who's continually driven by fear.

That's a prison in her life. It's brought her into bondage. What about our friends? Peer pressure, like old Peter, you know? He was eating with the Gentiles.

The Jews show up, and so he gets away from them and goes over and just eats with the Jews. Well, Paul recognized that right away, that he had a fear of man in his life. It was a bondage, a snare to him.

So he called him on the carpet, got him all straightened out, and Peter was fine. He loved him. Helped him out.

Psalms 116.16, Oh Lord, truly I am thy servant. I am thy servant. Are you the servant of the Lord? Remember, it's easier to get the man out of the prison than it is to get the prison out of the man.

You know, while Peter had a little bit of prison life, Paul was helping him out. That's what we do with one another. You help me, I'll help you.

We'll be a functioning body. Romans 6.6, Know you not that to whom you yield yourselves, servants to obey? His servants you are to whom you obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness. Just a little sin can wreck your whole life.

Are you free? Are you free, my brother? If you are free, then are you helping to get other people free? You see, it's easy to condemn and knock, and I'm good at that. I have to watch it, because I'm a pessimist by nature, and that's the old flesh. It's easy to be a critic.

But if I'll get free from that, you'll get free from yours, whatever yours is, then we can turn around and help others get free. Remember what I shared with you about, that Oswald Chambers shared? He said, A spiritually minded man will never come to you with the demand, believe this and that, but with the demand that you square your life with the standards of Jesus. Isn't that good? You better do this, brother.

You better do that to be spiritual. No. You take the Word of God, brother, and you go look in there at what it says, and square your life with what the Word of God says.

You see, if you and I try to get somebody squared up with the Word of God ourself, we'll get them all bent out of shape. Pretty soon, we're all bent out of shape. But if we'll let the Word of God do the work in our churches, in our own hearts, in our families, our lives, the Word of God is able to do it.

It's effective. Matthew 15, 2, remember? They said, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? Said, Hey, we're going to get you guys straightened out. They come to Jesus.

They're trying to straighten God out. If we're not careful, we will get to the point to where we are taking the position of God in the area of the spiritual realm. Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? How come these Pharisees had degenerated to the point to where they thought they were the authority? Well, they got carried away with themselves.

They got off the track. They got their eyes on themselves. They got their eyes off God and began to look at themselves, compare themselves with themselves, among themselves, and developed a system of

legalism.

And we are dangerously close to doing that today in our churches. They were free with Jesus. That's what the disciples were.

That's the answer. Why could his disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? They were free with Jesus. That's why.

And you and I will be free with Jesus. We are free in Jesus positionally, and we can be free with Jesus practically. Day by day, it's a choice not to be under the dominance of men.

Be ye not servants of men, the Scripture says. Jesus, you remember, he asked him, why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Why are you breaking God's laws by all your rules? Why do we do that? Is it because of pride, self-exaltation? We get this vain deceit, vain imagination. Why are we doing these things in our churches? We're trying today to do the same thing the Pharisees did.

Could it be that we have lost touch with the reality of the Holy Spirit's leading us in our churches today? Could it be that we are moving back? Why is there such a push on grace? There is a real push today on grace. We're free in Christ, and that is true, but it's to combat this legalistic spirit. We need to be very careful, because going overboard too far the other way will go into the other extreme of saying you can do your own thing.

You don't have to follow Scriptures, and we see this happening. You can dress the way you want. You can drink what you want.

You can go where you want. We're free in Christ. We are free, but our liberty is not to be a stumbling block and not to be an occasion of sin.

Romans 5.5 says, "...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us." If you and I are operating under the principle of the love of God, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that's given unto us, it will produce a balance in our life with love being the key thing. And so love will endure all things. It will bear all things.

It will hope all things. It will not be offensive, but yet it will be firm. Chambers said, "...if we are free with the liberty of Christ, others will be brought into that same liberty, the liberty of realizing the dominance of Jesus Christ." And as I said last time, it's the dominance of Jesus Christ in the church through the working of the Holy Spirit, not the dominance of one man or one pastor or a system or a denomination or whatever.

But it's the dominance of Jesus Christ working through the proper authority of the elders in the church, which is one of the basic structures of a New Testament church, which, by the way, many of us don't even know about today. We read our Bibles. We don't realize that it says what it means, and it means what it says.

Chambers said, "...always keep your life measured by the standards of Jesus. Bow your neck to his yoke alone." And remember, I told you that Jesus said my yoke is easy, my burden is light. When you get under the burden of a man or the burden of the flesh, it becomes hard.

He says, "...bow your neck to his yoke alone and to no other yoke whatever. And be careful to see that you never bind a yoke on others that is not placed by Jesus Christ." It takes God a long time to get us out of the way of thinking that unless everyone sees as we do, they must be wrong. Jesus said, "...go and make disciples, not make converts to your opinions." Oh, we need balance.

Calvary is God's balance program. God gave us Calvary to be our freedom program. Are you in on it? The blood of Christ was shed to free us from sin, the bondage of sin.

Paul thought he was free as he was running around chasing after Christians, but he wasn't. You know that? He thought he was free, but he wasn't. We need to be careful.

He said that he profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals. He said, "...in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Who are you preaching? Who are you pushing? Is it Jesus? Is it Jesus? You know, many years ago, 20-something years ago, I left the church because I was just getting plugged into Jesus. I just got saved and went back, and all they pushed was their denomination this, their denomination that.

And finally, after a year, I said, Man, I want Jesus. Let's push Jesus. Jesus Christ is all we need.

But is He all we want? When the Holy Spirit is working, He will glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives and our church. It'll be a wonderful, wonderful thing. Is Jesus all you want? Remember, Joseph was in a prison, but his spirit was free.

He lived in the realm of the Father's love. He was not bound up, but his brothers were free physically, but their spirit was in bondage. When they showed up with Joseph, it came out.

It was revealed that he was not free. I want to close up with maybe a couple passages of Scripture. One is 1 Peter 1.18. For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition of your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

Place your faith and hope in God, not in man. He says, seeing you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfaithful love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently. Listen, slipping down to the second chapter, he says, listen, to whom, when you come to Jesus, to whom coming as unto a living stone disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious.

He is precious. In verse six, God said, I'll lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect precious, and he that believeth in him shall not be confounded unto you therefore which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner. He's the head.

Let's follow him. He is all we need. Jesus is all we need.

Let's follow him and not men. Let's be careful that we don't get into bondage. Remember Romans chapter eight, if I can close up and give you this, 14, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

They're free. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Are you free? Well, may God bless you, my friend.

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