

On Eagles' Wings Pt 196

by Don Courville

The sermon emphasizes the urgent need for the church to return to the glory of God by being Spirit-filled and God-oriented rather than relying on human wisdom and traditions.

Duration: 30:29

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:1

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker expresses concern about the state of the church today, particularly in America. He believes that the church has departed from the power of God and is playing games instead of truly seeking Him. He references the concept of building with gold, silver, and precious stones versus wood, hay, and stubble, emphasizing the importance of producing eternal results. The speaker also shares his personal journey of learning about the glory of God and how he was impacted by a book that exposed the church's departure from God's glory.

Transcript

Well, I'm glad to be back with you again today on Eagle's Wings. Let's start off today by reading a passage of Scripture from 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2, first five verses. And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Back over in Chapter 1 in verse 29, Paul had closed up with a statement after he'd been dealing with the Corinthians, started off in Chapter 1 with their carnality, and he said that no flesh should glory in His presence. And then verse 31, the same chapter, he said that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord. Heavenly Father, I pray that today you'd open up our eyes to see and our ears to hear what you have for us.

We pray that your Word would accomplish that which you please. We yield ourselves to you. I yield myself to you, Holy Spirit, that you'd speak through me, that we'd understand what you're trying to say to us, that we would receive and not be rebellious, that you'd open up our ears, O Lord, that you'd revive your church

today.

We pray, if there are any that are listening that have not yet repented of their sins and trusted Christ as their Savior, that the Holy Spirit would open up their eyes to see their utter lost condition without Christ, that they would receive Him. Father, we just pray you're not willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance. We just pray that you'd help us.

We're a needy people. Whether if we're without Christ, we're desperately needy, and then if we're trying to live our Christian life in the flesh, we're needy. We're needy of the grace of God.

Thank you now in Jesus' name, amen. I've been going over the last few weeks with you in the subject of the glory of God, and then in closing down on it, I'd just like to talk to you a little bit, maybe share some things with you about what God has taught me in the last few years and how it's building back up. A number of years ago, I was speaking down in Arizona, and while I was there, I was with a pastor and he had a book, and I don't even know what the name of the book is, but it was such a powerful book exposing how the church today has departed from the glory of God that I copied a few pages out of it, and I've been going through that this afternoon, and I've just been astounded at how much the Holy Spirit had opened up to this man, whoever he was that wrote some of these things, about the church's departure from the glory of God.

And I wanted to share with you a few thoughts from that and get into some Scriptures. But basically today, the church, sad to say, is we're playing games, and we've departed. The power of God is gone, and for the most part, in America especially, I know over in some of the third world countries, they're experiencing revival and also having great persecution.

I know when I talk to my evangelist friend, John Musser, he says it's just a different world when he goes over there, how people are responding to Christ, thousands of people respond to Christ. But over here in America, we seem to be dead, and we're getting ready for something else. But in the meantime, I believe God is wanting to purge His church.

He's wanting to wake us up. And in the revival ministry, and many of those that I work with and am in touch with from time to time, the Spirit of God really opens up our eyes to see what He's after. And I was thinking today, after almost around nine years ago, about eight and a half years ago in the revival we experienced up in western Nebraska, God began a process of breaking me from the ways of man.

It's taken several years for me to begin to see what He was after. And I'm not saying I see everything. I'm not saying I know everything.

By the way, if anything comes to you from this program that's a blessing to you, just consider it just comes from God, just the grace of God ministering. And if there's something that's not right, then you pray for me, and if you feel like you need to correct me, then you do that. But we are human, and unless we're filled with the Spirit of God, we make mistakes.

Unless we're filled with the Spirit of God, we do not perceive right. Unless we're filled with the Spirit of God, we do not act right. It's so desperately, it's such a desperate time for us to be filled with the Spirit and to have the knowledge of the will of God, especially in our churches.

And in relation to revival, God's begun to give me a picture. Not just me, I'm not alone, but He's given this picture to other godly men around the country of what's been wrong in the church, and they're beginning to

change. And we're noticing a pattern, and I'm hungry for this.

Among the churches where these godly men, pastors and the deacons and the elders in the churches, are beginning to go back to God's ways and turn away from man's ways, that they're experiencing tremendous blessing in their church. And by the way, that's why we're back here in this part of the country now, is to see God give us that blessing, too. We want to experience the glory of God.

We've been talking about the glory of God, and I'm hungry for it. And I've tasted the glory of God in different aspects in revival, but there's an aspect that we're hungry for, and God is putting a group of us people together to seek Him, to let Him be the Lord of the church, and He's directing us, and He's showing us where we've been wrong, and missing out on His glory. And it's in the area of, basically, the foundation of many of our churches has been man-oriented.

I'm going to take a little time to share with you what I'm talking about. And we haven't been God-oriented, and by being man-oriented, we've looked to man too much. Instead of having our churches to be established under an elder operation, we've been under a man operation most of the time, and God is blessed to some extent, but we're not seeing the blessing that He wants to pour out.

And you know, we suffer. We as God's people suffer when we just have things on the surface. And to God's people, the surface of things has become substance.

This is true to a far deeper extent than we really realize. And things become so important to us, they rob us. As God's people, they rob us from reality.

They really rob us from His presence. And so many things, they become all-important to us. And our activities become so important to us, our religious life.

And many of us that are dedicated to Christ, we love the Lord Jesus Christ our whole life, revolves around our church. And this is good to an extent, but if we're revolving around our church instead of having our life centered around Christ, then we're missing the heart of the matter. And our doctrines can become so important.

Boy, we're always pushing this or that. Our education, our intellectual capacity. And so we get to boasting about all of our stuff.

And when in reality, Christ is to be all and in all. He's to be the center of everything. He's to be the center of your home, the center of your church, the center of your personal life day by day.

And so I just want to share with you some things about glorifying God, which I feel like we really don't know much about if we're not doing things according to His Word. You see, one of the things that we've done, and we were talking about this in our Sunday school class last week, how much we have just developed traditions. And we carry on our traditions year after year, thinking that this pleases God.

When in reality, what we need to be doing is continually checking with God to see what He wants. Things change. Times change.

His methods change. God doesn't change, but He changes the way that He does things. But there are some things that do not change.

And His basic principle of how a church is to operate, we have changed that into our ways. And I just wanted to share some thoughts with you, maybe this week and next week, about how in doing that we've lost the glory of God. And this is just sort of the putting together, and it may be jumbled up.

I don't have an outline before me or anything like that. I've got my open Bible and some notes here that I copied off from this book that I told you about, and I'll share some things with you about from that that I feel that's pertinent. But just my heart wants to see God to be on the throne in my life and in this church that I'm in and in your church.

And I'm no better than you. I'm no better than your pastor. I'm not trying to replace your pastor.

You need your shepherd. I can't shepherd but just a few people. And working with the other elders around me, I can just do so much.

And your pastor can just do so much. But we're seeking God together, and we've got to quit playing games. We're in a dangerous time.

One of the things that was said in this book, and I've shared some of these thoughts with you a while back, but I wanted to get to some new thoughts, and I thought I'd mention some of the old to sort of prick your memory. But it was when Christ was talking about the wineskins. You remember that? He said back in Luke 5, if you want to turn to Luke 5, we can turn there together.

In verse 36, He spake also a parable unto them, No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old, if otherwise than both the new maketh the rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine will burst the bottles and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved.

No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new, for he saith, The old is better. We have two orders, the old and the new order. The two garments are God's provision for the clothing of the sinner.

The old one, which was imperfect, was a symbolic or symbol of the cleansing, which had not yet been effected, because Christ had not yet given His life as a sacrifice. But when He did, then the old passed away, and a new order came in. The new garment is the righteousness of the one who is in Christ, clothed with Christ's righteousness, indwelt by Him, and manifest by His glory.

And it was a wonderful thing when the early Christians, which were almost totally Jews at first, when they realized what had happened, that the old had passed. Remember when Christ died, He said it was finished, the veil in the temple was torn in two, and now there was access to God, and fellowship was restored, which was lost by Adam in the garden. Now man could come back and have fellowship with God, and actually God moved within him when the man was born again by the Spirit of God.

And this is what it means to be born again, is you have your sins cleansed, you're forgiven, and you're back into a right relationship with God through Christ. But you can't take that old system and try to make it into the new. And so what we've done in our modern Christianity, especially in this country, is we've been trying to put the new and the old together.

And it's frustrating, and we're frustrated, our churches are frustrated, our pastors are frustrated, because things are just not working out. And we've got all kinds of programs, everything from movies, to entertainment, to revival meetings of trying to get something to happen. We're trying to get something to

happen all the time.

But this new wine, the living Christ, which was manifest by the Spirit of God, who indwells the man, the man that is redeemed and born of the Spirit, must be placed in a new container, one capable of containing it. The Holy Spirit comes into you. You're now the church, your body.

What? No, you're not. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have of God. You're not your own, Paul said.

Now he says the church now is Christ in you. And so the church is not a building. And we've gone into this thing today to where we've become so building-oriented, so program-oriented, that we're missing out on some of the things that are so vital.

Let's just take this one area alone, and that is our talents, our abilities, the things that we think is so important to us as people. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2, 4, and 5, he says, In my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. You see, God didn't use Paul because of all, and this is my personal opinion, because of all his training and his ability and his education and his background, Paul said all of this is dung.

He said, I count all of this as dung, but he used Paul because he was a crucified man. He was dead to Paul, and it was no longer Paul living his life. It was Christ in him.

He said, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of Man who loved me and gave himself for me. He went on to the next verse, he said, I do not frustrate the grace of God.

You know, one of the most frustrating things for a Christian is to try to live the Christian life. You can't do it. The Christian life, in reality, is Christ living his life through you.

You're just to be a yielded vessel. I'm just to be a yielded vessel. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones said this, when we thus become weary and tired, the one thing above all else which we must not do is to resort to artificial stimulants.

And that's what we're doing today in the church, resorting to artificial stimulants. He said, you know the temptation, it has been the ruin of many a man. Many a man has ended as a drunkard because of that.

He just did it at the beginning because he felt he could not carry on. And the people take to drugs and various other things in precisely that way. But this has a very important and vital spiritual application.

I have seen people in the church dealing with this general spiritual weariness in that very way. They work up some kind of excitement, or they adopt new methods. They say that they must rouse themselves out of this, so they put on some new program.

Have you not seen it sometimes in the advertisements outside church buildings? Cannot you think of certain churches that are always finding some fresh announcement or some new attraction? Such a church is obviously living on artificial stimulants, and it is all being done with this idea in mind. In other words, when we are not operating under the Spirit of God, and by the direction of the Spirit of God, we have got the wisdom of man, which is just flesh in its best effort. And God is not interested in your best

effort.

He is interested in us being dead to self. This was the work of Christ at Calvary, to crucify us, that He might live. He is not interested in us giving our best to the Master.

The best that we can do is still corruption in His sight. He is interested in us being yielded to Him, completely crucified to self, letting Him be the Lord of all and in all. And you know what we have done today? We are worshipping our own works.

And you know, the Lord's disciples, the disciples, they had to come to understand this lesson too. And all of the leaders in the Church had to go through training and teaching. And if we won't go through the teaching and the discipling ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives, to get us conformed to the image of Christ, to be vessels, meat or fit for the Master's use, then He'll have to set us aside on a shelf somewhere.

I don't want to be set aside. I want to be used by the Lord for His glory, don't you? We want to humble ourselves before Him. So Paul, Timothy, Titus, all the others, they understood that they had to be trained.

And so God took them through the discipling ministry and He trained them. And it was these men who established the churches and He taught them. And then those that they taught, taught others.

And those that they taught, taught others all the way down to the one that disciplined you. But you know what happens sometimes? Satan is always trying to slip in man's wisdom and man's ideas. And so there's been these little divergences.

Someone says, where did all these denominations come from? That's where they came from. That's just where they came from. Some of them I can't have anything to do.

They have nothing to do with Scripture. It's almost totally a man-made traditional system. And my family, half my family come out of the Roman Catholicism system.

I can't, I just can't be that. Because I follow the Scripture. And I listen to what the priests say.

And I read what the Bible says. And I read what their doctrine says. And it doesn't say what Scripture says.

That there is a divergence back there. And Satan's always trying to do it. Now, I'm not attacking Catholics.

I love them. I love all men. And this is the way we're to be.

But I just have to follow the Scripture. And the Bible says, if anyone doesn't, if someone comes to you and brings a doctrine or teaching that doesn't line up with the Scripture, then we have to reject it. We have to turn away from it.

That's not unkind. That is being truthful. And we have to be true.

Jesus was full of grace and truth. And so when he confronted the disciples, they had developed their own little system of man's wisdom, supposedly following God. And they really didn't like Jesus Christ because he was exposing them that they were playing games, that they were hypocrites, that they really wasn't worshipping God.

He even told them if they loved God, they'd love him because he proceeded out from God. He told them he was God. And we get upset when the Spirit of God comes along or someone comes along and shows us that we're wrong.

We're proud. We're proud. We don't want to admit.

We've got our shields of brass, just like in the Old Testament. They lost their shields of gold. The glory of God had departed.

But they'd go out with their shields of brass, pretending that the glory of God was still there. It doesn't do any good. What good does it do to play games in our churches? And so, you know, Peter wrote, 1 Peter 2, 4, 5, and 9, to whom coming as unto a living stone disallowed indeed of men.

This is Jesus Christ. He was disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house. This is the church.

And a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice is acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praise of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. This is to be the normal Christian life, that you are light.

And in yourself there isn't light, but Jesus is in you, and He's the light. And you're excited about Him. And you're sure that He's called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

But what are we doing today in our churches? We're getting more and more darkness in our churches, the rock music. God saved me out of that stuff. But yet here the same stuff that Satan had tried to destroy my life with is being played in churches today, and they put so-called Christian words to it and say it's Christian.

I don't believe that, because I'm watching the fruit. I saw the fruit it did in my life, it about destroyed me, and it's destroying the youth in our churches. Our youth are confused.

They need some guidance. They need a challenge to step out and walk pure and holy. Wherefore come out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing.

We need to separate ourselves from the world, not bring the darkness in, but it's just the ways of man that we're bringing the darkness in. And someone comes along and says, hey brother, this is pretty dark stuff. We say to him, well you better get out of here.

Well then, if that's the way they are, then he better get out of there. And so people are leaving our churches, and the body of Christ is on the Rome today. Those that are truly seeking God are dissatisfied, and they're looking for a place where they can worship where it's holy and where Christ is present.

And this is what we're striving to do in this area, and I trust in your church too, to let Christ be preeminent, to let the Holy Spirit be the Lord of the church. He is to be the head of the church. Christ is the head of the church.

And as we let Him do that, we'll experience the blessing of God. As we apply the principles of the Word of God in proportion to our accuracy of applying them, and I'm not reading anything, I'm just sharing with you what God has taught me, we will experience His blessing. We will.

So we've got to watch that there's two wisdoms in writing to the church in Corinth. Paul recognized that they had become carnal, and they desired the wisdom and the eloquence of man. Paul comes along, he says, I'm not going to have anything to do with it.

Paul, you know, he said, I didn't come to you with wisdom. And he was dependent upon the Holy Spirit. He said, I didn't come to you with enticing words of man's wisdom.

And he gives his reason for doing so, and it was that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. I'm not looking to try to get people to follow me. I want people to follow Jesus Christ.

What we're doing today is we're elevating men in our churches, and when that man falls, he'll take hundreds and sometimes thousands, and sometimes if he's on TV, literally hundreds of thousands with him, following of man. He said that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. And in the following things we'll share with you, we'll see how maybe we have been following man and we need to stop it and turn, repent of it, confess it to God, and get back to following him.

You see, Paul's position and his reasons for it, as he stated them to these carnal Corinthian church, were very significant, they were very important, and they're important for us today. They're important for this reason, one, is we're doing the same thing that the Corinthians did. Paul said he was really a true follower of Christ, and he wanted them to accept that what he was saying is from Christ.

And so in his first three chapters of this letter to that church, before dealing with the various disorders in the church, he compares the two wisdoms, God's wisdom and man's wisdom. He speaks also of two kinds of material which can be used in the building of the church upon the foundation which is Christ, stating that the one, gold, silver, precious stones, you know the story, that's eternal, but the other wood, hay, stubble will be destroyed, and the builder will suffer complete loss, yet he's going to be saved by fire. You know, that might be a pretty good question to stop and ask ourselves today.

In your fellowship, your church, what is being produced? And in ours, too. Is it gold, silver, and precious stones, or is it wood, hay, and stubble? I don't think God's very impressed, myself personally, and I know you may not like some of this, that's alright. There's been a lot of things God showed me I didn't like, and he showed me I've got to get lined up with him, and if I'm wrong, then I expect him to tell me, and he does.

And he uses my brothers in Christ, my sisters in Christ, my wife, my family, others. I've found my responsibility is to try to keep my eyes open, my ears open, all the time, in case I get off track. Because he showed me that I have the capacity to become a castaway.

Paul had this, too. One day, just one day, there can be great harm done to the kingdom of God. But if I walk in the power of the Spirit, instead, there can be great harm done to the power of Satan.

So we need to be careful in our churches that we don't get into line with the power of Satan. So, he talks about this wood, hay, and stubble. So, what are we doing? He also refers to two kinds of converts.

This is interesting. He said, one whose faith rests on the wisdom of man, and our churches, I believe, are full of these type of converts. The other whose faith rests solely on the power and the demonstration of the Spirit.

He explains that he deliberately avoided the one kind, and he sought the other. And the word that he used was, in 1 Corinthians 2, he said, I determine. You know what he's saying? That's a deliberate choice.

After careful consideration, he determined. He said, I determine not to know anything among you but Christ crucified. He said, I don't want anything to do with you phony followers of Christ.

There's nothing there. No use playing like you're saved. If you're just going to church and playing like you're a Christian, there's a gnawing inside of your spirit, inside of your soul, that something's not right.

And you're hoping above all things that somehow, when you die, that God's going to let you into heaven. My friend, you may have bit the devil's lie. You may have took it hook, line, sinker.

The line, the rod, and the reel, and everything. You swallowed it all. That somehow or another, God, that you're good enough, that God's going to let you into heaven because you've been playing the game very good.

You've been going to church all your life. You've got all kinds of sunscrew pins. You're very faithful.

Boy, you go rain, sleet, snow, storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, whatever. You're there faithfully. Doors open.

You're there. Oh, you're so faithful. But what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world, even all the recognition of all of your attendance and your faithfulness? And I commend you for that.

That's good. We need faithfulness. But that's not going to get you to heaven.

You have to trust the blood of Christ that was shed for you for your sins. What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? We must come to the point where we repent of our own self-efforts. This is what we can get into, that we're doing these things and God is pleased.

Oh, no, not for our salvation at all. No, it's Jesus Christ that died on the cross for our sins. And we must repent and trust Him as our Savior.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. It was Christ crucified, buried, risen again the third day for you. We must believe, believe in Him.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. In case you've been a church member, and we heard a testimony here a couple weeks ago in our church of several older men that got up to say how they were saved later in life as they realized they'd just been playing the game, that they hadn't really been saved. This is a common testimony in revival conferences that I get into.

Many times I hear this story about how they'd just been playing games. Don't play games with God, with your soul. Don't play games.

If you lose, it's a terrible loss for all eternity. It's life everlasting with God or life everlasting in hell. But it's life everlasting either way.

And we can't play games in church either. Well, I've got to be closing down. Let me close with this statement that Paul didn't say that converts may not be won when the wisdom of man is used.

He infers that they can be won, but he compares the quality of the two kinds of converts. The faith of those who had not been enticed or influenced in any way by man's wisdom or work would be based entirely on

the power and working of the Holy Spirit. And having had at the beginning of their Christian life a direct personal dealing with the Spirit of the living God, without anything spurious of man, their faith also would be pure, stripped of all of this, of man.

And they would be powerful testimonies. And what about our converts today? Why, we should have little Pauls and Peters running all over the place, just turning the world upside down for Jesus Christ. What have we got? We have a self-oriented program of converts around who don't know anything about the crucified life, that Jesus is their life.

What kind of convert are you? Are you a convert of the enticing of man's wisdom? And you can get saved under that, but you won't be disciplined in the power of Christ. Stripped of all of this, they were powerful Christians back in the early, and the same type today can be produced if we do it God's way. Well, I need to be closing down here.

Let me remind you that Jesus Christ is all you need, but have you come to the point in your life where He's all you want? May God richly bless you, my friend.

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