

On Eagles' Wings Pt 232

by Don Courville

Suffering is a necessary part of the Christian life, and it can bring us closer to God and allow us to possess the character of deity.

Duration: 20:34

Scripture: John 17:16

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher talks about a man who believes that God will bring a great awakening to the land and plans to preach until he dies. The preacher emphasizes that being blessed means having God's kingdom within our hearts and being in the world but not of the world. He refers to John 17 to explain how Christians are different in the world and should be kept from evil. The preacher also mentions the story of Corrie and Betsy, where Corrie learns to find satisfaction in Christ despite difficult circumstances. The sermon highlights the importance of experiencing the kingdom of God and the need for deliverance from demonic influences.

Transcript

We have been delivered from the power of darkness. This is why so many say they're Christians, but yet they're not delivered from the power of darkness. It becomes very clear if they say, oh yeah, I'm a Christian, but yet their life has darkness in it, and not light, then you watch the life.

And we see that they really haven't been brought into Christ. Jesus said, I'm not come to call the righteous to repentance. Why? Well, if you can take that one or two ways, He doesn't need to call us, we're already there.

The righteous are already right, right standing with God. But the self-righteous, He would call those that thought they were self-righteous. Are you righteous? Are you righteous? And of course, there's two positions in this.

We come into our position in Christ, where we are righteous by the blood of Christ. And that is secured by the blood of Christ. We are there for all eternity, but then, is our position in the same place as our walking, our practice? This is what God is doing.

This is what God showed Mr. Bright after his 40 days of fasting, that God said He's going to bring the church to a righteous standard. In other words, we're not there. We've got a long ways to go.

And I guess this is one of the reasons I'm interested in revival. And God is bringing a revival in our country. He's bringing a slow revival of turning the hearts of fathers back to their families and to their children.

But many believe that God's going to bring an old-time revival, where righteousness is swept back into the church. The standard is brought back. And I'm reading on a book on revival, and it's just amazing.

Over the years, this goes back, I don't know, all the way back. This history study. How many times God would just sweep through a whole country and bring back a standard of righteousness through revival.

And that's probably what it's going to take in our land, and we're believing God for it. But are you righteous? Now, if you are righteous, there is one thing that goes along with righteousness consistently, and it's suffering. It's suffering.

He said, "...the eyes of the Lord," verse 12, "...are over the righteous, but His ears are open unto their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Who is He that will harm you if you be followers of that which is good? But, and if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." If you are suffering for Christ right now, are you happy? Look at that.

It said, in verse 14, "...if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are you." Now, the degree of suffering will vary. There will be some times when there's not much suffering. Sometimes it's severe.

Sometimes, because God brings us through cycles in our life, and periods where we will walk with the Lord. Without those periods, Many have been brought to new levels of walking close to Jesus because they've gone through the times of suffering. But to get to the position of the righteous standard of Christ almost always takes some kind of suffering to get there at least.

He said, "...happy are you." Do you know what this word, happy, means? I didn't know what it meant. I mean, I forgot because I go over this stuff, you know. Greek's one of those things.

I don't know Greek a lot. I took a little bit. And you've got to keep going back to it.

And you learn that which you keep going over and over and over. It's just a memory program. But I looked this one up again.

And here's the definition of this word. And I can give you the Greek word, makarios, and all that, but that doesn't help us any. But listen to the definition of it.

Blessed. Possessing the character of deity. That's what this word means.

"...but if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are you." You possess the character of deity. Wow. Blessing the character of Jesus.

That's good. Deity, the character of the Holy Spirit. It's the character of God.

Matthew 5, you know the Beatitudes, where he gives all the blessings. You come down to verse 10. "...blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

And this is how I've got to meditate on this, on the kingdom.

God's kingdom. We know Christ has a kingdom that's coming, but there's a kingdom in our hearts. And it's the kingdom of righteousness.

But blessed, that's possessing the character of deity. "...one whom God makes fully satisfied, not because of circumstances, but because he is indwelt by Christ." Some more addition to that definition. Possessing the character of deity, it's one whom God makes fully satisfied.

How is it that, you know the story about Corrie ten Boom, how her family was helping the Jews when the Nazis were killing them, and they finally, they got found out, and some of the family was taken into the camps, and Corrie and her sister Betsy were allowed to be together. God worked it out for them to end up there, and Betsy, she just was there. You know, like Jacob.

God got him out there, and he wrestled with him. He wrestled with Jesus, and then he blessed him there. But he had to go through the wrestling.

Now Corrie was wrestling at this time, but her sister Betsy was there. She was in the blessing of Jesus. They could do whatever they wanted to to Betsy, and she just had Jesus for her response all the time.

But Corrie was getting bitter because of the way they were beginning to treat Betsy, and through this experience, she began to see that she wasn't there yet. And this is the thing about us as Christians. We can know about being there, but yet not be there ourself.

Or we may be there for a moment, or two hours, or three hours, or one day, but not consistently there. But Betsy was there in this happy state, to where it didn't matter what they did with her. The circumstances just drew out what was the definition here, one whom God makes fully satisfied.

Hard to be satisfied when they're starving you, making you stand in the cold and let your feet freeze, and Betsy's disposition was weak. She was not a very strong person. And so she'd go to dig dirt for the ditch, and she could hardly get any dirt on there.

And one time they were making fun of her doing that, and Betsy herself just laughed when they did that. But Corrie, it infuriated her, made her mad. And God was bringing Corrie around to get her there, into this happy state.

Are you there? Are you there? One whom God makes fully satisfied, not because of circumstances, but because he is indwelt by Christ. Romans 14, 17-18. We know that verse that says what the kingdom of God is.

It says that the kingdom of God is what? It's not meat. If the kingdom of God is meat, and you don't have meat, in other words, if the blessing of God is having lots, and you don't have lots, then you're not there. But no, he says the kingdom of God is spiritual.

This is why Paul could say he knew how to be abased, and he knew how to abound. He could be just as happy, just as content, sitting in a prison with rats crawling over him, as he was out walking free. Can we? Are we there? But the standard of righteousness, the kingdom of God, he says, is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

And this is what God is bringing this country around. We're going to get revival. He's bringing it in.

He's going to bring us back to Him, and many are so excited they can't stand it. I know one preacher going around the country. He packs 200 sermons with him everywhere he goes.

Taught me to at least take a few with me, if I go off on a trip somewhere, because he knows, he believes with all his heart, that God is going to come back in blessing and bring a mighty awakening in our land. And he's already got his plans. He's going to preach himself to death.

He says it probably only lasts about six months, and he's going to go up to glory. But to be blessed is equivalent to having God's kingdom within our hearts, to be blessed is to be in the world and not of the world. I was looking at this over in John 17 and noticing this is why we are different in the world.

We have Jesus in us. But I never realized it until I went through it with my little green pen last night and marked all the times the world was mentioned. It looks like close to a dozen times the world was mentioned in John 7. Some of them was in reference to his relation to the world because he said that he was with the Father before the world was.

But I noticed in relation to us in the world and what he was saying. He was saying the world, he said, I've given them, in verse 14, I've given them thy word, and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. If the world loves you as a Christian and really gets along real good with you as a Christian, then we need to be careful.

There's something there. Because he says the world will hate us, this world system. In verse 15, he says, I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world.

How many times would you like to get out of the world? But he says, but thou shouldest keep them from the evil, the porno in the world. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Verse 18, as thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And then verse 21, that they all may be one as thou fathered in me, and I in them, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. Verse 23, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect and one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them and hast loved me. What did the world do to Jesus? The world, the world system, those that were in it, they hated Jesus and they crucified him.

And so this is why when we go to work, we go to our jobs, those of us that have jobs in the world, I've had many different jobs in the world, in different situations, every one of them working around unbelievers was hard. It seemed like God always had me alone, be the only one. Every now and then he might let another believer be around, but Jesus wants the world to be seen through us, and it's the suffering that we go through that brings out the righteousness of Christ.

Are you suffering for righteousness' sake? First, Philippians 1.29, you know that verse that says, friends, you it is given on the behalf of Christ to what? Suffer for his sake. Did you know that the word given, I took and I looked that up, that word given, for unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Did you know what that word given means? I didn't know what it meant.

That word given means to do a person a favor. God does us a favor if he lets us suffer for him. Do you know that? He does us a favor.

I was thinking about that. Now, Lord, I'm sorry, I haven't always received your favors with a good attitude. I confess that.

How would you like to have been born blind, John? Joy? Nathan? Don? You young people? Would you think that that was a gift of God for you to be born blind? Who's nodding their head yes. That's not how you're supposed to respond. You're supposed to say, no, I wouldn't think that was a gift of God.

No, we normally don't think that some kind of infirmity, weakness, disability is a blessing. But how many of you remember the story in John 9 of that man that was born blind? That was a gift of God for that man. And that man was born blind and because of that, he what? He found Jesus.

And the interesting thing is that when he got done with his little deal, they run him back and forth. When he got done with this thing, it was the Pharisees who Jesus was telling that they were blind. You look at the passage.

He started off with a blind man and you end up with blind men still. You start off with one man born blind, then he's healed and he can see. He goes to the Pharisees who think they see and they're blind.

And it turns out to be where they even asked Jesus, are we blind? And Christ said, yes, you're blind. And ends up with blind men still. But that man was blessed.

That was a gift. Because the same word is used in that passage given to do someone a favor in reference to that blind man. I never realized that giving is a blessing.

For God so loved the world that He gave. That means to do someone a favor. That He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him.

The Scripture says, and to many that were blind, He gave sight. Luke 7.21. I looked up a few verses on that. Has He given you sight? I need to be thankful with the sight that I have.

Even though I can't see too good. I look back there and I see on our electric piano, I see the word rolling. I know it's rolling because I know it's there, but it's blurry.

And so I have to give thanks. I've got two new pair of glasses and I still can't see. So God has given me this gift of sight.

And I have to be content and keep coming to Him. Well, Lord, I don't think it's right. I can't read too good and I can't see too good.

So I'll just give you thanks because you allow things to come into my life that I need. Minor things and major things. What's the difference between a Christian and a victorious Christian? What's the difference between a Christian and a joyful Christian? The amount of suffering.

You know what the difference is between a Frenchman, which I is, partly. I am. And a Cajun, which I am partly.

You know what the difference is between a Frenchman? All Cajuns are Frenchmen, but not all Frenchmen are Cajuns. I spent some time a few weeks ago going back through my history. I learned a little bit more about myself.

I learned I wasn't half as wild as I thought I was. I'm not full Cajun. My dad wasn't full.

Matter of fact, he wasn't. But it was his mother, the line came down through the Cajuns. You know what the difference between the Acadians, which is what a Cajun is, a Cajun, they came out to say it.

The difference between a Frenchman and a Cajun was suffering. Do you know that? Because the Acadians were Frenchmen, French people that went up into Nova Scotia and they were driven out because of their religion. Being strong Catholic, they were driven out and cruelly made to suffer.

And then because of that, they spread around different parts of the country and a lot of them ended up down in southern Louisiana, where my father came from and my ancestors through that line came from. But the only difference is that the Acadians come out and they were sufferers. The difference between just being a Christian and being a joyful, victorious Christian is that the joyful, victorious one has learned to let the suffering that he goes through produce the righteousness of Christ.

Now, suffer, unto you is given on the behalf of Christ to suffer. Do you know what that word means? Nope. You say, I wasn't out there in your trailer studying with you.

Well, I was studying because I didn't know what it meant, but the definition of this is to experience something evil. That Greek word specifically means to experience something evil. So just having all kinds of things go wrong in your life that cause you to suffer may not mean that you're suffering for righteousness sake, but if you suffer something evil, attack on your spirit.

Attack on your person because if Satan was to attack Jesus today, how would he do it? How would he do it? He would attack his church. He would attack Christians. And so we can have this suffering to experience something evil come on us because it's Jesus that he's hitting.

And so the first place that we should go is not inward, but upward. God, are you showing me something in my life that's wrong? Or are you doing something else? And we keep our focus on God all the time. And once we get our eyes off on something else, then we begin to have vision problems.

It's to experience something evil. In Matthew 16, 21, it said that Christ would suffer many things of the elders. That was the same Greek word.

In other words, the demons that were driving them would attack him. And let me tell you, he could walk into the presence of one and in a crowd, he would know who were there because they would attack him. They attacked him.

Their minds were energized by demons and he was there to save them and to deliver them to set the captives free. And isn't this an amazing thing that the very one that could do them the most good, the very one that could give them the most help in life, the very one that could set them free was the very one that they fought against and they wrestled against and they lied about him and schemed and finally took him to a cross. And it may be that you and I will be the very one that can help someone.

And God will bring us and engineer us around to be around that person and that one that we are there to help, that one will be the one that will turn and attack us and come against us the most.

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