

A Graduation That Fails

by Don Godfrey

Don Godfrey's sermon emphasizes the necessity of confronting truth and the importance of genuine revival in the life of believers.

Duration: 51:33

Scripture: Psalm 139:23

Topics: "Failure"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his personal journey with God and how he initially struggled to understand the changes happening in his life. He eventually realizes that God was destroying his old self and bringing forth a new, transformed person. The speaker emphasizes the importance of fully surrendering to God's will and allowing Him to work in our lives. He also highlights the ongoing need for God's grace in our daily lives, not just for salvation but also for living according to His purpose. The speaker encourages the audience to let go of their own desires and trust in God's plan.

Transcript

I don't recognize the fellow that he introduced. And I just think that it needs to be said that in the whole approach of matters, perhaps we who are not pastors, you who are pastors, I feel sorry for you. Because you have to take the truth and go and deal with it, and somehow or other you've got to avoid diluting it.

It's not all as easy as it sounds, is it? Because people really don't want to hear the real truth. People really don't. But I have a special advantage.

I'm able to sort of deliver it off kind of raw, you know. It's much like a gauge maker might. I've been a gauge maker all my life.

We deal with steel. Steel is rather uncompromising. You can say, well, that piece of steel went haywire on me.

It didn't go haywire. You went haywire on it. You know, it wasn't that it went haywire.

You can pretty much predict what that piece of steel will do. You know, as we grind, for example, which I was very much involved in grinding, you can be very busy taking cuts off of a piece of steel on the grinder, lay it out on the surface plate, and check, check, and find out it's all sucked down in the middle. You say, well, it warped on me.

No, it didn't. When it was full of heat and warmed up, you cut the top off, and then it just went back to its normal shape. Now you're saying it's all warped.

You see, what I'm saying is that surely we need to approach the matters that are basic to the truth in an uncompromising way, and we have to regard the truth as truth. I think that this is well known in theological circles, and I think it was C.S. Lewis that he said, that he said, that wasn't bad. Now, you remember what Ralph said? Mark that down.

Study that later. But it was Lewis who said that the truth is the truth whether you find it in a cathedral or in a garbage can. And so it's difficult for us to deal with the truth.

It's the last thing that Don Godfrey really wants to deal with. I tell you what, I just pray that God will make me honest this morning, because if I'm going to be honest, then God's going to have to make me honest. The heart is still deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

You see, and the scripture says, let God be true in every man a liar. That means every man but me. Or is that what it means? Or does it mean that we have a natural aversion to the truth? We try to escape it on the ground of our personal advantage.

You know, it'll make us look bad. Can't we just shade it a little? And beloved, God forgive us and God cleanse us because we all do it. And that's the reason we sometimes don't need revival because we've pretended we're so good there aren't any bad people around.

Nobody's ever been wrong. We've had ongoing church fights that last for sometimes two or three years at a time and finally the thing begins to mend without anyone ever being wrong. Do you believe that kind of amending? How good is it? What is it when we're still waiting for God to deal with the deep reality in our spirit? What I have on my heart this morning is mostly what I would call a rather historic trend.

It seems strange, doesn't it? That God would meet us and he would deliver us and he would deliver us into an area of much peace and much joy in our lives and yet you know the old things are there and yet as time marches on we discover that even our contemporaries, the folks around us have fallen away from the truth. And that we have begun to take up God's truth. What is the danger, would you say, of revival as we've learned it and as the Canadian Revival Fellowship intends to promote it or as Ralph and Lou Soutera who have headlined and spearheaded this work for so many years.

What do you suppose they've found as years go on? Well I think I know, I think they find that people begin to become specialists in revival. We begin to understand it better and we begin to have handles on revival and what we found out at first was there was no handle. It was the main thing about it was there was no handle.

That God took and he did something in our lives when we least expected it. We didn't know anything and yet God touched our spirits and his spirit began to drive out that rebel spirit of ours. I remember how it was with me, you know, I was asked to testify in the first couple days of my new relationship with God and I've testified that God took every weight off my life in just a moment.

But it was hard for me to know what had happened. I thought it was, I think I've told you this before and I repeat this because I think it bears repeating that it seemed to me logical that a smart fellow like me would finally come to this place. You know and I would understand and I would be in a new position but it took me about three days before I realized that God had taken that old man and he'd commenced to destroy

him.

And the real joy in my heart was that God was beginning to destroy that man. That man had ruled my life long enough. God's purpose now was to destroy him and his work of grace and salvation which had already happened in my life much earlier needed a continuing work.

That his work of grace is not a momentary work, merely the grace of salvation but the grace for living. The grace for going on. And as much as there's much to be said about grace because you know as we go on one of the reasons that we accumulate that we accumulate techniques is we would like to rule out what God will do.

We'd like to do it ourselves. We really would. We'd like to get a hold on it and do it ourselves.

But God won't have it that way and so finally we wind up with a lot of answers and no joy. What we need is the Holy Spirit of God in our hearts and working in our hearts. And so as we wonder these things and we wonder why revival, why so much emphasis on revival? Because as we talk about the kernel of this truth and the hard core of the truth we find out that the proposition of complete ownership by God and of yielding and giving over that life to God is only, it is only demonstrated, it is only summoned and called for in a few narrow areas of revival.

It should be the central teaching in the church. There's more and more emphasis on revival because there's less and less emphasis on revival in the church. What I'm saying is historically we seem to need revival more than we ever did.

We need revival so much that we bend over backwards and do all of our human things that we can only encourage people to be revived. And most of that work is a work where we stimulate the resolve of the person. Resolution.

And preachers say you can do it and I tell you what beloved if you're preaching that you'd better stop it because you're preaching from false ground. I'm not going to say you're lying but I'm saying the ground is false. We would never want to accuse any person of lying even though we know we've been caught at it ourselves.

But we need the solid ground of the ministry of the grace of God. What will God do in my life? You know it became so important to me as God worked because I just became a bystander in effect. People say well you're really a little schizophrenic aren't you? You're kind of a split personality.

I like to sort of stand back and watch God work on that second man. And you know I've heard different psychiatrists try to interpret this but I recognize that there is a duality in the personality of a man. In your personality and in mine.

And there is that temptation and that summoning by outside forces into an area which I've already agreed I don't want to walk in. That's the good of my resolution. You see I can inspire people and they can come to a new place of resolve.

They can rededicate themselves but it's only a momentary work. It can never last. And if people are going to really come into the place where they can be blessed by God they're going to have to continually be committed to Him.

And for that reason I make a distinction in my own mind between dedication and commitment. That they are opposites. You need to remember that they are opposites.

They are not something similar at all. They are opposites. Because dedication says I will take a better hold on things.

Dedication says I will do more and better. And commitment says I'm going to get my hands off this thing and see what God will do. And that's the difference.

That's a tremendous difference. And what is the problem? Is it true that God will do nothing? We don't know how to deal really in reality with people who have what we figure are terminal diseases because we've ceased to think that God will do anything. We have a God that will do nothing.

I quote that, you know, out of personal context because I believe I have a God that will do something. If I have a loved one who is in the grip of a threatening disease then my God is going to be blessed in that life in one way or another. I'm not going to say what that blessedness will be.

But God will begin to work. Now we talk about, I've been talking, trying to lead up to the idea of why revival and why does revival have such a great emphasis today? Because we all know and I know especially because we don't live in the same world as we did in 1942 when I received Jesus as my Savior. I received of the grace of God and much of the joy that went with it, the victory and the conviction and I was a happy Christian, joyful.

But what about the post-salvation decline in my life? What about it? Maybe you had no such thing. I see some people in the world that seem to live on and on and go from victory to victory and never have that decline in their life. I almost think to myself they can't possibly understand what I'm saying because this decline was represented by an interlude of many, many, many years where I did my best.

My best became the defeating principle in my life. And now when I take that back up, my problem is I have lost the fear of God when I begin to do His work. The fear of God is that dread that I have in my heart that I will go against Him now that I belong to Him.

That's what the fear of God is. I believe that this comes close to describing the fear of God. It is the dread.

I absolutely dread to think, since I'm His, since I delight in having Him run my life, I dread to think that I will depart from His Lordship, His ownership, His power and do something second best because beloved, it all has a very basic selfish human motive. I don't want to miss what He has for me. Somehow or other belief, basic belief in God says that what He has is the best for me, that there is no possible way to ascend above His goal for me.

I must descend as far as that carnal man goes in order to ascend. I must let that carnal man perish, let him die, goodbye. But he doesn't want to stay dead, does he? I see him.

I've used the figure numerous times. I see his fingers on the edge of the coffin. He begins to pull himself up.

He begins to show vitality. What will I do? Since it's clear, and by the way, beloved, I have a further advantage. I was telling somebody, you know, I got a little older last week and hoped that not everybody would notice.

But I do notice some things when I get older and that as I realize I'm very soon going to look into the face of God and that all that I have here, I will very soon stop driving my car. When you are in the cemetery, beloved, you are not driving your car. You are not responding to people's questions.

You have been removed, and we need to begin to see that there is a wonderful reality to this, a wonderful reality. Our plans are not long-term as pertaining to the flesh, but as pertaining to the Spirit. We begin to change the timing.

And so we see that there are long-term goals. So we have that post-salvation decline. Will you not revive us again, O Lord? Because we need new vitality.

We need a resumption of vitality in our lives. That's all that revival is. Revival is God resuming His work of vitalizing my life.

He needs to resume it. I need to allow Him. I need to get out of the way.

I remember once we called up to the fellowship in Regina. There was a conference going on. And I talked to Ralph because we were having a revival up at St. John's.

I share this because it's still a very important thing in my life. And I told Ralph we couldn't come up because God was working in the revival we were in, and we were just trying to stay out of His way. You know what Ralph said? Don't try.

Just stay out of His way. Never have forgotten that. Don't try to stay out of His way.

If you try to stay out of His way, you aren't staying out of His way. You're just trying. And so what my mode of life now is to simply stay out of His way.

This is not method. Mode is not method. Reminds me of the computer age we're in.

We've been programming machinery in the shop for years. My son does the programming. And I say, well, what do you do to make sure there's some water on that part so that you lubricate it and cool it? And he says, well, I've got to have it in an hour mode.

The machine doesn't have to think. The machine doesn't have to determine. It doesn't have to make conclusions.

It just has to be in the right mode. You know, it's the right mode, not the right mood. And we work by mood, not by mode.

God wants us to be in the proper mode. Now there are certain negative things about this. And some of the negative things about this involve my relationship with my old man.

And I don't know that in a Christian life that there are many volitional and willful things I can become involved in. I remember it became my desire and purpose to become baptized, and therefore I was baptized. I noticed that the first act of faith, according to some papers we have available to us, is an act, that Thanksgiving is an act of faith.

How many times can you put actions to what you believe? And so if I have any action at all in the matter, when I'm at my best and when God's working closest to me, I can rebuke the old man. This becomes a

rather real factor in my life as I rebuke that fellow when I see him. Some folks say, well, I'm going all apart, you know, this revival is breaking down on me.

It isn't at all. Just rebuke that chap. He has no right running your life.

Just rebuke him. He's the very image of that arch-rebel who was rebuked by Jesus. Get behind me, he said.

So these are things. But as we see this declension then, the post-salvation decline leads to revival. That God convicts my spirit and He tells me that there's no longer a chance of me going forward based on the old things.

You know, there needs to be a crisis in my life once in a while. Do you suppose that's true? I find it's true and I don't move very well except from a crisis. A crisis kind of tells me it's time to move.

You can't stand here and keep on marking time when it's time to move. And so revival becomes a part of my personal experience but now the long-term prospect of revival. You know that revival is necessary because all of the falsehood and the sufficiency of man becomes structured and entrenched.

Now these words I think are important because as we see the entrenchment of the self-weight, we see that there is a historic process at work that probably had its ascendancy maybe all the way back at the time of the Reformation. That there was a time in the world when reason began to get ahead of belief. I mean in its respectability.

That's what I mean. There became respectable to be reasonable. The age of reason dawned upon man.

And you know it seems that many of God's ministers began to embrace that principle as an exclusive way of presenting God. Now reason cannot transcend belief. We're doing the wrong thing.

You know it's our Chinese friend. He says if you're committed to reason you'll never learn the truth. Now it's alright to be reasonable and to use reason but not to be committed to it.

Now you'll notice that almost every time I speak I get off a little on this. I don't want to get too hard on this because we talked last time about what this may mean. As the very basic principles of our best scientific methods find their basis in reason and in some kind of a hypothesis.

Which simply means we have assigned certain values that we suppose to be true. And now we go ahead and we move from those values in a very arbitrary way since we've concluded that the values are right. We feel free to move.

But the values are never right. They're always subject to more information and to more change. But as reason took hold well then the necessity of belief diminished.

And we might also say that the whole philosophical approach of man, and I want to do this quickly because I don't want to seem to try to get into something that's too big for me because I already know it is. But you know that philosophically man always comes up with an existential philosophy that says it's up to me to determine what reality is. And all philosophies from Plato right on through Gnosticism and on through the modern forms of philosophy.

We find that men say we have a right to determine and to make our own mind up as to what reality is. And you know I really believe beloved and particularly since we've moved into an age of information. How many of you are aware that we've moved into what is called the third great age in the world in the history of men and that is the age of information.

Not just the age of reason but the age of information. And so in the past 15 or 20 years we've seen an acceleration of this process. And men are willing to say we have the answers at our fingertips.

Belief is obsolete. I think to myself I tell you what the belief that God has given in my heart is the most precious thing that I have. I don't want to give it up for something that I suppose I have or something that suppose other folks presume me to be wise in.

Something which is strictly temporary because God is more and bigger. And so we come down to where we have a great problem. Now people show this existentialism and this desire to do as they please.

You will remember that back in Israel when Samuel was in charge as a prophet. And we began to get our first king Saul. That we see certain signs of the failure of those who would take God's reign from him.

We see the disqualification of the sons of Saul. I mean the sons of Eli. Not the sons of Saul, the sons of Eli.

The scripture tells us they were base men. They didn't know God. How could you live that close to the tabernacle and that near to the altar and be in the temple all the time and not know God? Well they were able.

They were abundantly able. And so we get a little later on and when Samuel becomes very old. He desires to put his sons in the place.

And it turns out they didn't know but the children of Israel said let's have a king. What we really need is a king. Give us a king.

They were impatient you know. Because if the sons of Samuel were off making money on the job which it appears from the text that they were. Well then it would have been up to God to solve that problem.

Beloved let me ask you something. Don't you think that's the kind of a problem God could solve? I wonder what kind of a problem you have in your life and in your heart this morning. What is it? Don't you think that it's the kind of a problem God could solve? What is your attitude and belief towards the problems in your life and the perplexities in your life? Beloved I believe that God is going to be able to solve all these.

And the joy in my life is in knowing that all these things can be solved by God. And so you'll remember that when at last well God said don't argue with them. If they want a king give them a king.

They haven't rejected you. They've rejected me. They've turned me down.

We face a world that wants to turn God down. I remember that. How do you know the world wants to turn God down? Because you want to turn Him down.

That's why. That's how you know. Don't get so good, beloved, that you become the model in the midst of the church or else you'll find out that you've put a gag on the church.

Nobody wants to talk. The silent church, you know, that has a gag on it. Because we can't concede that God's great moves and God's great work is in the life of a man like me who must have God and who must hear you share that you have a similar need and that God is being mighty in your life.

So we can delight in one another and rejoice and have great joy over the fact we have such a God. And so what God says, they haven't rejected you. They've rejected me that I should not reign over them.

I should not reign over them. I don't want to be reigned over. I don't mind having a nice God who made everything.

Oh, look at the wonders as I drive out and see the fall scenery are soon well. A rejoicing nature that's now bringing out its abundance. Wonderful.

That's fine as long as God doesn't reign over me. But, beloved, God wants to reign over me. You see.

Lord, the power and the glory be unto you. The power and the glory. Because I want you to reign.

Now, there's never been a God that would settle for less from a man. Even though our religious forms and symbols seem to say that there are ways of skirting these issues. That we qualify our relationship to God in some way.

I'm not saying this by way of an excuse. But I'm saying that the historic problem is that we militate against God. That's why we need a constant fellowship.

God will work in our life. And so when this happens, you'll remember that in the New Testament form, we realize that in Romans 5.21 that sin reigned. And death was a demonstration of that rule of sin.

But grace had ought to reign. But grace might reign. Now, grace is what God does.

Now, there's not a better definition of grace. Grace is what God... When you say the grace of salvation, well, that's when God brings salvation. It's God at work.

Grace is God at work. And if any man fail of the grace of God, you see... Sometimes we say they fall from the grace. But what we do in Hebrews 12.15 is God says that we fail of the grace of God.

And what that simply means is we've substituted what we will do instead of what God will do. That's how you fail of the grace of God. Just do your own thing and you'll fail of what He'll do.

He will not barge in and do it. And so in one way or another, whereas we used to worry about people failing, we used to worry about people falling, now we have a doctrinal system in our church where we talk about resolution, the resolve of the self, man. It turns out that He has promoted and graduated from grace.

He doesn't need what God will do anymore. He's encouraged to do it Himself. And you can almost believe it, except there is that gnawing dissatisfaction.

There is that turmoil of reason going on in the church among men who are all conditioned in some different environment. Who have very light conditioning with respect of the Word and respect of prayer. People have been taught that what we really need to do is pray a lot.

And yet we won't be heard for our much prayer. And yet we persist in thinking what our problem is. We just didn't pray.

We just didn't pray enough. That's not the problem. I think we're going to talk about prayer over yonder in Tirana again.

Is that right? Next winter we'll talk again about prayer. But the lack of a lot of prayer is not the problem. But the lack of real prayer is the problem.

And so as we begin to draw this more into focus and we see what happens, because you know we've gone through the philosophical aspects of it, man desiring to name what's right for himself. And we've gone through a little bit of the intellectual process where we take all kinds of information and we ball it all together and we try to make good sense. Now I've thought to myself, because you know, I come under considerable misunderstanding.

Reason being that people don't understand me. There's a good reason for people not understanding me. Because I don't understand myself, if you'll forgive me.

I do not aim to understand myself, beloved. I aim for God to move into my life because I've allowed Him to supervene everything I know. And so that as I allow Him to supervene, that simply means as I allow God to come beyond everything I know, I'm less sure that I know all that.

I'm less certain. Not only that, it's not all that necessary for me to meet you eyeball to eyeball and to show down with you on some rational, intellectual matter which is not settled yet in heaven. Beloved, God must work in our hearts.

I think it is a dreadful duty to be a pastor. What does that mean? What is that dread? It is the innate fear of doing the work myself or of doing the work yourself. You notice that in most of the Old Testament descriptions of the saints, they were men that feared God.

And you'll notice in the commissioning of New Testament saints in the book of Acts where there was a new work of God, they were described as men who feared God and were full of the Holy Ghost. And isn't it strange that in all of that, I didn't really know that God wanted to take possession and ownership of my life, that I was leading a defeated life in spite of all that, in spite of what maybe some people would have said, well, Don, he's a good Christian. You know, God doesn't want good Christians.

Is that what you're teaching your people, to be good Christians? Well, then if you are, well, then the people who are outside aren't going to want to come in and be good Christians. They see your people. You mean you want me to be just like this fellow over here and that fellow over there? No.

Jesus is the central goal of our... or the target for our conduct and behavior and the kind of person that we want to be. Many of us wouldn't do what Jesus did. You know, if somebody evil were around, we'd cut off their water, right? If we were God, we wouldn't make our rain fall in the just and the unjust, would we? We'd be very careful where it fell.

It could only fall on the good guys. Amen? Any good deacons here? Amen. I want to just warn you, don't pray for this fellow that's dying for AIDS out yonder.

The dying of AIDS. See, as long as you don't concede, you know, of any kind of obligation to pray for a man that needs to be saved, well, then you are a fellow who is proud and arrogant and forget that you're a death-deserving sinner for different reasons. Oh, one of the blessed things that keeps rescuing my life is that God doesn't let me forget that I'm a death-deserving sinner.

Just a death-deserving sinner. I'm not better. Oh, you mean you're not a good Christian? I'd like to be a good Christian, beloved.

But I can't see that that is the goal, if I'm going to have to shape him up and form him according to all of the outside dimensions, the texture, the shine, the posture. I need to be broken-hearted. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.

And you shall find rest to your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Why does God have to speak to us? Because, beloved, naturally speaking, we are oriented in the opposite direction. So when I watch these things and see the development, I see such things as accelerated clinicalism in the Church.

I would say that the fad that the Church follows today is clinicalism. And just like the Old Testament Jew said, give us a king and we'll be okay. Just give us a king.

We'd like to manage this ourselves. There's no truth of revival that believers wouldn't like to have if they could manage it themselves. Do you know that? And that's why we fall for clinicalism, because the clinicalism says, here's all you have to do.

Point one, two, three. I never knew it was that easy. It isn't.

Oh, how I love to know those things. And how I love this reason. I keep talking about reason.

We keep going back to the seminary. We keep outlining. Keep missing God.

Oh Lord, I don't want you, I just want the answers. Just the answers. Now the Scripture says we are the circumcision that worship God in the Spirit.

Philippians 3, 3. What a joy to worship God in the Spirit. Not my spirit even, it's His. I worship in His pure Holy Spirit.

Why do I do that? Because His pure Holy Spirit is willing. Yea, He aggressively seeks my permission to do His work in my life. He aggressively seeks it.

How do I know? Because my life can't prosper any other way. My life stays in the doldrums. I'm scraping bottom all the time.

I'm working to a series of emergency deadlines that never seem to be satisfied. One deadline gives way to another. Still no victory.

I need victory. We are the circumcision. We are those that are cut away from the flesh.

That's what that circumcision means. Just the way Jesus was cut out of the land of the living. As God tells us in Isaiah 53 and I think in the 8th verse.

He was cut out of the land of the living. He was excised. You see the work of revival is not minor surgery.

It is not a bunch of wise men tinkering around with a lot of little ideas. It is God going to the heart of the thing with a scalpel. It's not merely the depiction or the picture of circumcision that's given when we think of circumcision and operation minor surgery done upon the 8 day old male child.

That's not it. It is God providing the counterpart of that of which it was no more than an illustration of His willingness to go deep into my life and cut me all the way out of the flesh. I trust this is so.

I'm too old now not to hope otherwise. I long ago gave up being that hunk on the beach. Right? Hallelujah.

I tell you what beloved, I haven't given up on God. I haven't given up on God for you. I haven't given up on God for me.

I'm sure that what God will do for me will excite me and fill me immeasurably. But just as certain am I that God will fulfill you with equal gratification. Only I don't want to miss it.

I'd rather stay out of His way. Now I find there's very little appetite for this message. It becomes too absolute.

It becomes the steel of the thing. It is the ribs of the truth. It is the skeleton, the spine, the whole inner part.

And you wonder what have we done as far as doctrine goes. I tell you beloved, we have departed from the truth of the proper teaching. We have to embellish it.

We have to have conditions. We have contingency arrangements with God. We would do it if only so and so.

If only something else. But you know, the writer to the Philippians says we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit. He's writing to the whole church at Philippi, but he's not saying the folks at Philippi.

All the folks at Philippi are the circumcision. They are not. Only those who worship God in the spirit at Philippi.

There is that distinction within the church at Philippi. Beloved, we need a holy church. And you know in the spectrum of worship in the average church, it's cut off at both ends.

Because the church and its doctrine and its position tends to moderate the extremes of each end of the possibilities of human conduct. And so that the fellow who's an AM or who only wants to come Sunday morning. Or perhaps he's a fellow out yonder that hasn't come yet.

He's a fellow that we know is in love with a bottle and we have no heart for him. Or he's the fellow that wants to go on with God and he wants to be holy, holy, holy. Cut him off too.

Cut him off too. We'll live in the middle ground. We'll have a contingency relationship.

Beloved, do you think God ever thought of endorsing such a relationship with him? What God is after is not a contingency relationship but an unconditional relationship. And by the way, beloved, that's the only thing that will satisfy my heart. My own heart agrees with that.

It's what I'm uneasy about. And I see that somehow or other my life is qualifying that relationship. I need to get back and find my way back into the center of fellowship with God.

So as I move out, I find out that it's possible, even in the most conservative circles, to graduate not only from grace but to graduate from redemption. I don't need redemption anymore because after all, look how well I'm doing. And I don't see myself.

I begin to relate to all the social issues of the day, and I have a political position with respect to those issues, and I judge other people with respect to whether they belong to the same religio-political society that I do. God doesn't want the church to be a club. He does not want it to be a religious club, but a bunch of brethren that are in love with God and therefore they're in love with one another.

It can't be the other way around. It's not me learning to love you so much I love God. You aren't that lovely, beloved.

But when I see you and God at work, I mean God at work in you and me, not just you, not just me, because these are the conditions that fail in the church. Because we attempt to build up one fellow after another who is stalwart and vertical. He may even shine a lot because he becomes an example of uprightness, but not many examples of humility, not many examples of the broken heart.

And I think I know why I find little of that, because beloved, I'm not there myself. Now I've noticed one thing about revival. Revival and the teaching of revival becomes a dissertation of truth that aims back at the speaker, in which the one who desires to do the ministry becomes the chief subject of the truth.

The chief subject. Always being searched out, always being probed, always being found out. Did you ever stop to think what sharing really is? I've seen so little of it lately, you know.

We're so strong and right in many of our areas. You know, but in some way you could almost transliterate everybody's testimony in sharing. I say such and such and such and such was happening in my life, but hallelujah, God found me out.

Amen? Isn't that what it is? Am I wrong in thinking that it is the revelation of numerous saints who are able to share that God was able to probe their lives and to discover them to themselves? To themselves, first of all. I'm the one that needs this. We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus.

See, we rejoice in Him. Oh, how He becomes the heart. He has been revealed to us in a new way.

Do you know what Jesus did when He was revealed to me in a new way? He revealed His Father in a new way. I thought to myself, you know, I began to have a greater love for God in every one of His relationships to me. Because by seeing Jesus, I see God.

He is the image of the invisible God. Did you know that? He mirrors God. He is the image of the invisible God.

The firstborn of every creature, for by Him were all things made. And so we see this blessedness and this fullness opening up in our life, this wonderful thing that we know that is threatened more and more and more as the humanism and the rationalism grows up. The existentialism, beloved, is almost full grown in the world today.

You wonder why there is trouble? Because man's supposed right to determine truth for himself is almost full grown. It is frightening to think. I am not one who militates and preaches against any of these things.

What I am saying is the problem is not out there. It is in here because the salt has lost its saltiness. How did it ever get this way? Well, we let it get this way because the salt lost its saltiness.

But we rejoice in Christ Jesus. I wonder how broad the extent of our rejoicing is. I got a new car now.

I want to say one thing. I've had so many new cars, I just know that I'm not that deluded by new cars anymore. I'm grateful to have a new car and a good car.

But I tell you what, we are moving in all areas of what you might call fulfillment of carnal things, fulfillment of demands that are made by our reason, and we've forgotten how valuable and wonderful it is to just be a believer and just to rejoice in Christ Jesus and not to have any confidence in the flesh. We just have no confidence. I want to tell you what the Scripture says, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual.

I want to say what I think about carnal weapons. I am very suspicious of carnal weapons. I am suspicious, I even wonder, and perhaps I am overly suspicious because I see that some of us wield carnal weapons.

And the weapons are you really ought to go and do something for Jesus because after all, He died on the cross for you. Now, that's not a spiritual reason, beloved. That's a carnal reason.

It makes good sense. It is a good rationale. But the fact is that I love Him because He first loved me.

First, it was His love, not mine. It was not my response to some little thing that He did or some great thing that He did, but my response to Him Himself because He loved me. And I am able to reciprocate love.

I am able to involve myself in a spiritual relationship. And His Spirit is willing to bear witness with my spirit and live a human life and find my satisfaction. Now, there is a problem because you know, beloved, obviously as we learn more and more of this, we are frustrated by what we see in the world.

Frustration is what happens when our ideas and plans don't work out. What will we do? Well, we are just going to have to just stay there and keep on enjoying God and receiving Him and honoring Him and worshipping Him. I notice there is much being said these days about revival, but I stay in there and I worship Him.

I am trying to think of the man's name who writes the book on revival, but he says, you know, the old Westminster confession, I believe, where it says men are made simply to worship and to adore God, not to have pleasure, not to enjoy themselves, not to have a good job, not to have leisure and recreation. And that is the premise of the life we live today in the flesh, and the life we live in the world. The more we are imbued in the world, the more we live for these wrong goals rather than to love God and worship Him.

When we rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have no confidence in the flesh. Now, isn't it amazing that in the breakdown of these things, and since we come so simply to the point of belief, that we demand to have some kind of a rationale for everything. We admire the weapons of the world.

We admire the carnal weapon of reason. And we demand and we study in order to correlate our response and our position in the world with the position of the man who primarily invented those weapons and wields them, namely the rationalist. We have fallen in full tilt into his camp, and we are fighting him with his weapons.

Something wrong with that, beloved. We need to begin to be believers and fully committed. You say, well, under a roof like this, how many believers can there be here this morning? Oh, I tell you, there are so many believers here this morning.

If God could get us into full bore gear, I tell you what, it would shake the world. It would shake the world. If God could only get a hold of me.

He's gotten a hold of me in a great measure, but I'm certain that as I call upon him to take better hold on me, that he's going to be able to take better hold on me. Find out there's less squirm and wiggle to the old rascal. For one reason, he's getting older, he doesn't fight quite as hard.

He's a little more tired. Willing enough to begin to see what God can do. We're going to have to see it.

We have no confidence in the flesh. What is God doing in a revival message? Revival talks about God motivating my life. Going to go back where we started.

Revival is God coming in and once again empowering my life. He might bring the vitality to my life. I might put away the problems.

Now you know, this that I've said, and I'm going to stop here, raises all kinds of questions in our lives, deliberately. Never thought I could answer them, beloved, for a minute. Never did.

But all I have to say is, beloved, let the dead bury the dead. Let the dead bury the dead. Let's pray.

Our God, we love Thee. We love Your perfect purpose for us. Thank You, Lord, for every insight that You give us.

Lord, we know that these things cannot be tied down in a hard pattern of rationalism. Lord, we wait yet, presenting ourselves to You. Lord, embracing what You have for us, that we may be found completely in Your embrace.

We desire this. Now have us, Lord, as we begin to close this meeting. Lord, we sense that You've spoken to our hearts in this meeting.

There are many of us that see that we've allowed our way to be cluttered with the tawdry demands of those who are against us, of those, Lord God, who have sought another way into a demand that we should take their way. We reject it absolutely. We call upon You, Lord God, minister in our hearts, we pray Thee.

I just wonder if God's speaking to your heart, just while we still have our heads bowed in prayer. And you want to make some new determination. Are you going to ask God to simply move in a new way? Do you just care to take a little part in this prayer as I close it? Just say, pray for me.

Slip your hand up. I would just love to do that. Thank You.

I see many hands. Many, many hands. God's speaking to our hearts.

Let's just let Him speak. Now, Lord, for all that You care to say, we pray that You'll focus in on all of these things in our hearts and lives, these days of retreat, these days of considering Your things. We thank You that You've drawn us aside for the moment in order to contemplate things that are too much for us, too great for us.

Lord, Thou art too great for us. But we desire to be in Your hand today as we look to You for all of Your blessing, with thanksgiving and praise, in the name of our loving Lord Jesus. Amen.

Men, lead out. Stand where you are. Let us pray together.

Let's make those commitments that need to be made and deal with the sin and the self-sufficiency, commitment to reason, rationale, rather than the glory of God, that God will transform our lives and our ministries.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20188.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/don-godfrey/a-graduation-that-fails/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net