

Be My Strong Habitation

by Hans R. Waldvogel

To hide in God means to be united to Him, letting Him take over and control our lives, thoughts, and actions.

Duration: 26:30

Scripture: Proverbs 2:3

Topics: "Habitation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for humility and teachability in our spiritual journey. He highlights the danger of relying on our own knowledge and spirituality, urging listeners to surrender to Jesus Christ as the true source of life. The speaker encourages a deep longing for wisdom and understanding, emphasizing the importance of seeking God's guidance. He also warns against the dangers of pride and self-reliance, sharing examples of how God sometimes allows drastic measures to lead His people to repentance.

Transcript

Hiding in Him doesn't mean to turn your eyes inside out and to breathe heavily and to look religious, but it means to be united to God. It means to let God Almighty take over, to shut you in with Himself so that whatever we are, whatever we do, we do and we are by Him. Glory to God.

Father, I in them and Thou in me. I think we see something of that in the life of Jesus. We know that God Almighty lived in Him, walked in Him, controlled Him, His mind, His words.

He said, the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself but the Father that dwelleth in me. It's a great secret. He that seeth me hath seen the Father.

Why sayest thou showest the Father? And so He said, he that eateth me shall live by me. Father, I in them. Now that's true of us this morning.

Christ is in us. The Father is in us. But to hide in Him means to recognize that and to live it, to live by Him even as He lived by the Father.

That's why the Lord is so persistent in calling us to hide in Him. Psalm 91 talks about that hiding place, the secret place of the Most High, the shadow of the Almighty. I've often been surprised in reading Madame Guyon's autobiography at the way that woman found that place.

Now what in the world made her? Alone in the whole world, a world full of Catholicism, full of Protestantism, full of religion, full of warfare. But you know that woman was a greater reformer than Martin Luther. Martin Luther and other reformers were, after all, religious politicians.

They aimed at the exterior, the outward forms of religion, which they thought were wrong. But she, through the power of the Holy Ghost, made an assault upon this habitation, the heart of man. How in the world did she get there? Well, you know, Jesus Christ revealed Himself to her.

And she said she woke up, or rather, she suddenly found within her a fountain flowing. Why? She said, I sought the Lord outside of myself and now I found Him within. And He became my King and my heart became His kingdom.

She said up to that time she had tried to pray. She had fasted, she had prayed, she had chastened herself to find God. She couldn't find Him until someone said, Madame, it's because you seek on the outside what you have within.

Oh, that's it. Guard thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life, when the heart is God's possession. When God possesses that heart, when He becomes the manager and the King and the Lord of your heart, then your whole life becomes His kingdom.

Then Jesus rules and reigns. Where do our thoughts come from? Why, Jesus says, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, theft, perjury, all these things. They all have their inception in the heart.

How do they get there? Where do our thoughts, our feelings originate? Why, in the heart. But oh Jesus, to hide in you means to pay attention to you. Means to gather up all the powers of my being and submit them and subject them to Jesus.

That's the job. The Lord has said what it means is to come down and to come in. And if God in these two weeks can hide us and show us that hiding place, so that we can say, be thou my strong habitation.

It's a very, very real habitation. It doesn't make sort of a dishrag out of you, but it makes a monarch out of you, makes a king out of you, a priest. They that receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life.

It means that life gets hold of you. It means that you become a vessel of life, filled with life, a channel through which Almighty God can pour forth his eternal life. But the Bible, of course, makes very clear the fact that, first of all, I must reckon myself dead indeed.

Oh, that's it. That's coming down. And as Jesus Christ revealed himself to Madame Guyon, she said, there was manifested within her a secret flow of sacred oil.

She said she didn't sleep all night. She said she couldn't do anything but pray. She didn't pray with her lips anymore.

But she said the prayer she now made was the prayer of the Son of God within her. The eternal word was operating within her soul. She didn't hear any voice or any word, but she felt that light.

And I've often wondered at one woman that lived like that. And then she said when she went to church, of course, she was a Roman Catholic. She didn't hear the sermon.

She didn't see anybody that was there. She said Jesus Christ within her heart held her so closely. And while she didn't hear the sermon, she kept hearing that internal word, Christ.

What does he mean when he says, I will manifest myself to him? Father, thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto me. Oh, to hide in him, to be hid with Christ in God, is a very mighty operation of the Holy Ghost. And unless we submit to that hiding power of the Holy Ghost, we'll never be hidden.

There are a thousand forces that pull us out. And you get hold of one thing, and you think God's got the victory, and then a thousand others fly off. If you ever try to shut an umbrella, you know, you get the umbrella, you close it up, and there are a dozen or two dozen little iron things sticking up.

And you try to put that iron cap over it, and you've got the hardest time to gather them all together, because they spring up. Well, that's a very crude illustration of what I mean by God hiding when he's got all the powers of your soul in his control. Nothing is jumping up.

Everything's controlled by the Holy Ghost. Your will, your thoughts, your memory, your feelings, your affection, past, present, and future, it's all submitted to him. Oh, what humility that constitutes.

That's the only true humility. People have written plenty books about humility. It's just as simple as that.

It simply means abandonment to the indwelling King. To the indwelling... Why do we pay attention to anybody and anything outside of him? Isn't it because we love ourselves so much? We think so much of ourselves, we don't realize how infatuated we are with our own doings, and maybe with our own spirituality and our own spiritual attainment. Someone had received some gifts in the Holy Ghost, real powers, real gifts, wonderful gifts, and then they got into trouble.

And when I suggested to them, why don't you lay it down at Jesus' feet? Just quit somehow. Why? They flew into a race and said, what? After I prayed all that down? After I labored so hard over it? The funny thing was, at that time, the Lord had exercised all those gifts in me too, but I never thought of it. I never saw any gifts or anything like that.

I always laid everything down at Jesus' feet because they never wanted anything but just him. He operates the gifts. His is the kingdom and the power and the glory, and that's what's the matter as long as you are the center of the universe.

Well, then God has to command all the milky way to serve you, and everything relates to you. All your spiritual attainments somehow have to reflect credit on yourself. That isn't hiding.

That's outwardness. That's dangerous. But oh, when Jesus Christ becomes your all and in all, self fades into nothingness.

Jesus Christ really becomes king, and he really becomes all and in all glory to God. That's what he means when he says, delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Oh, how difficult it is for God to get his people to see that they need this hiding place.

They need to get into this hidden place with Christ and God. Do you know why it's so difficult? Oh, because we like to appropriate things to ourselves. We love.

The Lord gave a strange message some time ago, which I couldn't quote, but it reminded me of something God taught me many years ago, when I was deeply and passionately in love with Jesus, and then after a while, I lost that. I lost that passionate feeling. Oh, I was so in love with Jesus.

I don't think any young man could be more in love with a girl than I was with Jesus. My heart was always burning and melting within me, and then for a while, God took all that away from me, and I began to lament. I said, oh Jesus, where are you? Where is my love for you? And then I saw something.

I had fallen in love with my love for Jesus. Did you ever do that? You know, we don't know how deceitful these hearts of ours are, and how desperately wicked, until we are enlightened by the Holy Ghost. And oh, how is God going to get us to delight ourselves in the Lord, as long as we delight ourselves in anything outside of Him? That's where our defeats come from, and that's where our testings come from.

Peter is a good illustration of that, how he loved himself, how he admired himself, and he had reason to. He was zealous. He wasn't lazy like some of the other disciples.

He was full of zeal, and when Jesus suggested that he was going to betray him, or deny him, he said, me? You don't know your Peter. Or I'll go into prison and into death. The Lord was very kind, very kind, very kind.

He wanted a different kind of a Peter. He wanted a vessel that was emptied of self and self-love, and he had to use a very strong medicine for Peter, a strong purgative. When nature won't do the will, they used to say, and God has strong medicine.

If you're, you haven't got enough sense or light, God uses, oh poor Peter, how he wept, but you know, it was the best thing that ever happened to him. It's the greatest blessing he ever received. Did you ever get a blessing like that? And then we go into a dump, and we make it impossible for God to hide us.

But oh, when the Lord loosens our hands from their treasured store, and strips us, and empties us, and he says, we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should learn not to trust in ourselves. Since I had that experience, I've been afraid of this thing, I've been scared. And when the Lord shows me my nothingness, then I shout to you.

Where do your shouts come from? Where do your blessings come from? When do you have your anointing? It's very amusing sometimes to watch people get anointing. I know what's happened to them. Sometimes in preachers.

I know they preached a good sermon. Next day I can tell, they shout. They're very spiritual.

They pray. They, they feel their oath. They've been used of God.

God's blessed them. Beloved, these hearts of ours are desperately wicked. Desperately wicked.

And we don't worship God, and we don't hide in him. And the devil will find us, and he'll trip us up, until really Jesus Christ is the only one. All in all, delight thyself, oh I can't at this very moment.

Let go, and oh, be thou my strong habitation. I know it doesn't come all at once. I know it comes through testing.

Jesus said, Peter, Satan has desire to have you. No, he said Simon. He didn't address him as the first pope.

He said Simon, the way his wife called him when she wanted him to start a fire or shine her shoes. Simon, Satan has desire to have you. Necessary.

Strange, isn't it, that it was necessary for God to turn that ether over to the devil. There was nothing that would wake him up but a sight of his own wickedness. And how often God has to do that with his choice of saints.

Oh, they've been used. They've been blessed so greatly, but they haven't realized a poisonous something rising within them. God has seen it.

And in order to save them, he's got to do something very drastic. I heard the Lord say about a man one time who had gotten right back into the world. He said, I had to do it to lead him to repentance.

Strange. Be thou my strong habitation. Oh, until I recognize my utter inability, my utter nothingness, I'm not likely to crawl into that hiding place.

You know how the little chicks run, run after worms and bugs and things. Until they hear a peal of thunder and then the old hen clucks and how they rush under. They're not afraid of the lightning, but they're afraid of the thunder.

One Catholic Pope, not afraid of the lightning. And whenever it thundered, he was our polisher. And then these little chicks, they run.

Oh, it's such a healthy experience to get acquainted with your horribleness. So that you will hide. Oh, Jesus is opening his heart.

He says, abide in me and I in you. Without me, ye can do nothing. But as soon as we see a, I was going to say a worm, something that interests us.

Another thing the Lord found fault with me, just as I got into the ministry. He was teaching me something about hiding. And then he stopped and said, ah, I see you're getting interested now in the need of souls.

Why? I can't do anything for them. That's what curses the ministry. Ministers who think they know.

I was working with a minister one time. As soon as certain people came in through the door, he got up and he preached hellfire at them. And I knew who he meant and they knew it too.

He knew how to set things straight. He was like that Quaker minister who had driven them all out his church. That's what this man did.

And when he got them all out, he said to his deacon, well, they weren't worthy. You and I are the only ones. And I got my doubts about you too.

You know, when you're hiding Jesus, you have no more thoughts. You don't dare. You have no more opinions.

You don't dare. Oh, that's what's the matter with us. We, we have too much confidence in our own knowledge, in our own spirituality.

But oh, when it is really Jesus Christ and he becomes the fountain of life. When I've really capitulated and crucified my flesh, I mean my good flesh. And I believe Jesus Christ wants to help us, don't you? He will help us, but oh, how few of God's people are teachable enough.

If you're teachable, if you want to know, God will let you know. And so we ought to spend two weeks crying for Jesus. If thou liftest up thy voice for understanding and cries for wisdom and searches for her as for his treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of the most high.

For out of his mouth goes wisdom. The Lord give us wisdom and understanding. And oh, as we wait upon our God, I know the Lord is giving light right now.

I know I can see a spark. In some spot. Why it's God that does it.

God. And why is it? Well, the time has come when God must find the people that are hidden. Really hidden.

Not in some corner, not in a monastery or a nunnery. That isn't the place. But there is a strong habitation.

It's strong. The devil can't get at you and you can't get out. It's powerful.

Its walls are salvation. Its gates are praise. But God himself, when God himself hides me, it means that he grips every part of my being.

He controls. The reason we're overthrown and overcome by evil is because we haven't hidden. We haven't come in.

Oh, how dangerous it is. What a dangerous place it is to be. Not hidden.

Reminds me of a story I learned in kindergarten, Switzerland, and thought of it for years. There was a fish, not the one that swallowed Jonah, but this was a pike. And he had a family of little pikes.

Oh, no, excuse me, it was a trout, I think, or maybe some other kind of a fish. And he was in an aquarium. And this aquarium was divided into two parts.

In one part were the pikes and the pickerel. And in the other part were the closure fish. The parts that opened through the cut.

And they had babies. And one of the mother fish taught the babies, now you stay here. There was a screen between the two so the pike and pickerel couldn't get in and eat those.

But the meshes were large enough for the little fish to get through. And this closure fish, maybe a Sunday school teacher, got the little ones and taught them, now don't you get through that screen because it's dangerous on the other side. But you know one smart aleck came.

When the mother wasn't looking, he slipped through the meshes and right into the mouth of the pike. He graduated. He didn't have to go to school anymore.

Well, what does Jesus mean when he says, abide in me and I in you? He that abideth not in me is cut off as a branch with it. Oh, let us learn the lesson that God sets before us. Let us really come down and come in.

Now, tell you, nobody can teach us that but Jesus, the Holy Ghost. Oh, I'm so thankful for his presence. I'm so glad that he's here.

Now, he wanted me to get up and say this else I wouldn't have gotten up. There must have been a purpose. And as we wait upon the Lord, Brother Gardner called attention to the fact that after we've had a season of waiting upon God in silence, we feel the change.

You call that silence? Yes. But you know there are sounds that are inaudible to our natural ears because they're not made for those sounds. There's a voice, there's a word that continues to speak to our hearts and when we cease hearing man's voice, then we hear the voice of the bridegroom.

It isn't an audible voice to our ears, but it is to our spirit, to our inner man. We hear, we understand things that you cannot read in books. It's the eternal word that gives eternal life.

Now, God has been doing some hiding. Now, let him lock the door.

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