

Let Him Finish the Good Work Begun in You

by Hans R. Waldvogel

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of submitting to Christ as King to experience true salvation and transformation in our lives.

Duration: 28:36

Scripture: Psalm 27:14, John 14:21, Ephesians 6:11, Philippians 2:13, Revelation 3:17-18, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Finishing Well"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of loving the cross of Christ and not allowing the devil, the flesh, and the world to have sway in our lives. He refers to the book of Philippians as containing all the divine wisdom and instruction needed for a man of God to be perfect and established in every good work. The preacher shares a personal story of being tempted to watch a show that his father deemed as of the devil, and the conviction he felt afterwards. He warns about the influence of the devil in educational institutions, movies, and television programs, and the need for Christians to be aware of the poison being spewed out by the enemy. The preacher also highlights the importance of family worship and prioritizing time with God, and warns that backsliding and a lack of devotion to God can lead to judgment. He concludes by urging listeners to fully surrender their lives to Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to work in them.

Transcript

Do you know that today there is perhaps more Bible study than at any time before, but less obedience? Obedience. We heard a while ago about the king. Why, that is my salvation.

I've got a king, a wonderful king, a very great king. God has set his king upon the holy hill of Zion, and now he settles down and laughs at all his enemies, because this king has power over all the power of the enemy, over all the power of the flesh. He is able, we read in Philippians 3, to subdue all things unto himself.

Therein lies my salvation, when I have a king who is able to subdue his enemies within me unto himself, when he is able to take his great power and reign in the place where sin held me captive, where the devil fooled me, where my flesh hath chained me. There God Almighty has provided a wonderful deliverer, and he is king. But the question is, do I submit to him? Do I submit to you? Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

I will never know Jesus until I submit to him. He is a gentleman, a wonderful gentleman. He doesn't club you into obedience, but he says, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I'll come in. And when I come in, out they go, the devil and all his imps. But you've got to say the word.

You honestly and faithfully have to face this kingdom and this great king. And when you face him, and when you open the door, it's over with you. It's just all up with you and your moods and your foolishness and your spirituality and your plans and your wishes and your desires and your thinking and your talking and everything.

It's just over with you. That's all. That's all because the first thing the king requires is that you crucify your flesh with its affections and lusts.

And what does it mean? Oh, it means my salvation. It means that I am dead. It means that I partake of his death.

He died for all that they are all dead. Praise God. That's number one.

And that's where most Christians fail. Oh, no, no, no, no, no. They want to go to heaven.

They want to be ready for the rapture. They want to have the baptism according to Acts 2.4. And God gives it to them. And they want to see signs and wonders.

And they want to be healed when they're sick. And they want all that. And they also want to be his witnesses.

But to be dead? Next. To be dead? To have no life? To live no more? Beloved, the Bible talks about salvation. I know how we need the Bible.

You know that the New Testament is the gospel? You know that life everlasting is revealed in the gospel? Life more abundant, immortality and life more abundant is manifested in the gospel. Repent and believe the gospel. What is the gospel? Why, it's the reign of Jesus Christ.

It's the fact that Jesus Christ reigns, that he is king, that he's been crowned. Isn't it a sad thing that we let the devil and the flesh and the world still have sway? But we do. We do unless we really love the cross of Christ.

Look at Philippians. What a short epistle. You can read it through comfortably in 15 minutes time.

And yet that epistle contains all the divine wisdom, all the information, all the direction, all the instruction, all the correction, all the reproof, all the instruction in righteousness that a man of God may be perfect, truly established unto every good work. Why? Because it points the way to the king, to the throne, to the reign of Christ. I'm persuaded.

I'm confident of this one thing, it says, that he that hath begun a good work in you. By that salvation when you let Jesus Christ come into your heart, he begins. What does he begin? Why, he begins reigning.

Not my own, but saved by Jesus, who redeemed me by his blood. Why, Jesus Christ has come into my heart to reveal himself. And he says, now take up your cross daily.

Reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin. You can if you want to. Sin shall not have dominion over you.

I'll take care of that, Jesus says. You can't do it. The Jews were not able to deliver themselves of their sin, but here I came.

All powers mine in heaven and in earth, glory to God. And he that believeth in me shall not want, hallelujah, shall not come into judgment. He's passed from death unto life.

Have you had that beginning? Is Jesus Christ the Alpha and the Omega? No Christian begins anywhere else but with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ himself, we don't have to talk about experiences. No, Jesus.

Jesus is mine, glory to God. He really dwells in my heart. He really does, and he really baptizes me with the Holy Ghost.

He has really immersed me into the stream of life. He has translated me into the kingdom of the Son of God, hallelujah. I've been raised together with him to walk in newness of life, and now he walks in me.

He is the way, the truth, and the life. Isn't it strange that so many people, they may have a start, but they don't continue. But Philippian tells it all.

He that hath begun a good work in you is going to finish it. Now the evangelist is gone. Do you know how many people are converted to evangelists and not to Jesus Christ? I have a good conscience in this sense that I've never invited people to come to myself or to my church.

I don't do that. But I like to invite them to come to Jesus and to experience Jesus Christ. When I've been able to do that, then I'm through.

Then I leave them with God, hallelujah. Someday I'm going to meet them again. And sometimes now I meet them, and it's quite wonderful, thank God.

But oh, when Jesus Christ has begun, is it Jesus? Tell me, is it really Jesus? And do you have time for anybody else but Jesus Christ? Why, he is the way. Why do you, why do you go upon another way? Why do you walk upon other roads? Jesus is the way, the only way. He is the way of life.

He is the only salvation. He is the savior of mankind. Praise God, he says, I came to testify of the world that the works thereof are evil.

But father, he says, they whom thou hast given me, I will that they also be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. Oh, I tell you, salvation means a heavenly life, means eternal life, means an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. We're not finished yet, but he's begun, thank God.

And now the question is, am I going to let him have his way? If I do, he'll finish the job. And that finished job is going to mean the manifestation of the sons of God. We don't know yet what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.

Glory to God, that's the hope, the living hope unto which I've been begotten. That's the hope I'm living in. If you continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

When these women go to the beauty parlor, they hope to look like a Hollywood star. They'll have their face lifted, paraffin put under their wrinkles, their eyelashes tweezed, and then they'll stand in front of the mirror, and then they'll kick, and they'll say, this ain't right, and that ain't right. You didn't make me look like Marilyn Monroe.

Now I'm paying a big price, and you're just not satisfied. But listen, I'm going to be satisfied when I wake with his likeness. That's the beauty parlor I'm in.

Praise God, and I've got to leave myself in his hands, or I'll never be finished. It'll never be done. God's given me time upon this earth to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling.

What is that salvation? Why it's the salvation that God works in me, when he works in me to will and to do of his good pleasure. The thing my nephew spoke of a while ago has been a source of continuous wonderment to me. When I see the people, how dead they are, and how they deliver themselves into the hands of the devil, and backslide and don't mind it a bit, and then to come to meeting and find God take charge of a meeting, and unsheathe his sword.

You know, we don't know very much about it, but thank God we know something about it. And if you want to know more about it, spend more time in his presence. Wait upon the Lord and see what will happen.

I came to the faith home in Zion one time when Elder Brooks was still alive, and he asked me to speak. And presently I raved like a wild man of Borneo. The Word of God was like fire, like liquid fire in my mouth.

And oh, it was terrific. And I've had that experience every time I went to that place. And I knew why, why those hearts were really wanting to be ready for the coming of the Lord, and Jesus Christ unsheathed his sword.

Do you know that he says, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. And when he doesn't rebuke and chasten us anymore, it's a sure sign that he's given us up to a reprobate mind. He said, he has turned to his idols, leave him alone, there's no more use.

Oh, how we need that rebuke and that chastening of the Lord. And after I got through raving like that, Elder Brooks came and he shook my hand. He said, boy, am I glad you came.

He says, for four weeks, day after day, the Lord made me rave like this until the people got sore. And I began to think that I was out of God's will. And now you come along and you continue the work.

Now I know that I was in God's will. Oh, beloved, what grace, what mercy, what mercy when God works in us to will. Do you know, as we heard a while ago, how easy it is to get calloused? You don't have to do a thing about it.

The devil will see to it. And the devil has wonderful emissaries. He has helpers, wonderful helpers.

He's got them in this assembly. Our worst enemies are half-hearted Pentecostal people who don't fight the fight, who don't put on the whole armor of God, who take a chance. When I hear about Christian homes that have no family worship, no time to worship God, to wait upon the Lord, but two and three television sets, then I know that they're ready for hell.

They're ready for judgment. I tell you, backsliding's gone so far. The wrath of God has come upon them to the uttermost.

What mercy when Jesus walks in the midst with blazing eyes, with a face that'll strike you dead like John. He fell like dead. Oh, that we might fall like dead at his feet.

Oh, that we might be awakened to the wonder of our call, the wonder of the work of the Holy Ghost. Beloved, if we don't let him have every moment of our lives, he's going to cast us aside and take somebody else. He will.

It is God who works in you to will. And when conviction comes into my soul, it's a great mercy of the Lord. It's a mark of his great favor.

He says, don't stand still. Flee from the wrath to come. This day the Lord will destroy the city with fire.

You don't have to go to Gomorrah and to Sodom. Brooklyn is worse today. Worse.

When I first came to Brooklyn, we used to walk through the park. We used to enjoy walking through the cemeteries, walking down the street at night, at midnight. Today you don't dare do that.

You don't dare send your women out alone at night. Don't you do it. The murderers, the thugs, the rapists are waiting at every corner, and the cops have no time over their politics.

They've got to watch the traffic violators. That's easier. Makes more money that way.

You'll whistle for a cop when somebody hits you over the head with a brick and you won't see any for miles. But you go through a red light and you've got a whole gang of New York's finest on your neck. Sodom! Gomorrah! Beloved, we're ready for judgment, but we ought to get ready for a marriage of the Lamb.

His wife hath made herself ready. He that hath begun a good work in you. Who is he? He is this bright room whose eyes blaze like the lights of God.

He sees the slightest discrepancy, and beloved, he is able to keep us from falling and to present us spotless before the presence of his glory. And all the dazzling lights of the new Jerusalem will not discover one spot or one wrinkle in the bride of Christ. Beloved, it takes Jesus to do that.

It takes Christ to take a poor lost sinner, lift him from the mighty clay, and make him holy, even as God is holy. How is it going to happen unless I bow to him? And that's why we ought to be so thankful for the King. One King, one King alone shall reign.

And in the third chapter we heard about that we are the circumcision. We rejoice in Christ Jesus. We come to a place where Jesus is our only joy, our only interest, nothing else interests us anymore.

Don't talk to me about anything in heaven or on earth or under the earth, but Jesus Christ, oh he has become my life. He is my righteousness, my sanctification, my redemption, and how beautifully Philipians expresses it. And the Apostle Paul talks about these half-hearted Philipians.

He says, many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, enemies of the cross of Christ. What does he mean by they don't bear the cross? They don't reckon themselves dead. They want to be alive a little bit.

When I was a little boy, we had our carnivals on the 2nd of February and Fasnacht, and then the fools in town, they put on masks and all kinds of funny faces, and they walked around town. And my father didn't allow us to look through the window. We were shut in our home, and he told us that that was of the devil.

That was of the devil, and we shouldn't look at it. I'm so thankful for parents who were very careful of our souls and brought us up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. But one day I sneaked away from my father.

I sneaked out of the room, and I peeked through the Venetian blind, and I saw the whole show. And then I was smitten with such conviction. I still remember it.

I was, oh, my heart was beating like everything, and I came running back to my mother and said, but mother, mother, I want to go to heaven again. I had my fill now. How many there are like that? They'll take a little bite now.

Like Eve said to Adam when he didn't want to eat the apple, she said, just swallow the juice and spit out the pulp. They do that. They take beloved the cross, enemies of the cross of Christ, whose God is their belly.

They mind earthly things after all these things. The nations of the world seek. What are you seeking after? What is your interest? What are you beloved? Are you seeking the Lord? Why, yes, we all do.

But beloved, who seeks him with fear and trembling, whose heart trembles at his word? We don't realize what it means to be saved. We don't realize that the world is in the devil, lies in the wicked one, that the God, the prince of the bottomless pit, rules our educational institutions, our movies, our television programs. The God out of the bottomless pit is spewing out his poison.

Those mills of hell are developing poison and spitting them out and filling the atmosphere and blacking it, like we see in the book of Revelation. The whole atmosphere was blackened by the smoke that ascends out of the bottomless pit. You don't have to be surprised at the wickedness in the world, at the lowering of the standards of morality.

You don't have to be surprised at the stuff the world swallows today. Why the movies couldn't do it? Business. Television couldn't do business if they didn't produce and present the thing that people want to swallow, murder and rape and adultery and fornication and all the wickedness of hell.

That's what they want to swallow. And the devil is seeing to it that they'll get the broth that hell has cooked up. Don't be surprised that that the whole world lies in the wicked one.

And when the king of glory came down to this earth, the devil roused all the world and the world was at his beck and call and the very religious world was at his beck and call and they crucified the son of God. And they said, we don't want this man to reign over us. And yet God raised him from the dead and gave him a name that is above every name.

That is the name of Jesus Christ. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus beloved. It means to take the cross.

It means to follow him. It means to work out my salvation by obeying God. And in that wonderful third chapter, he tells us about the king who is able, who has power to subdue all things unto himself.

There's all the teaching we need about sanctification and about divine healing. He is able to subdue the germs that trouble your body, the weakness. And if we would see to the health of our souls, beloved, we wouldn't need to bother about the health of our bodies.

He'd say your health would spring forth speedily, but it's because we don't discern the body of Christ. We don't submit. We don't give our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God.

We don't understand. How are we going to understand unless God speaks to us by his word? And that's why I do like Edwin, thank God for the word of the Lord. I have marveled in these 31 years at the things God has given us in this assembly.

That was one thing I marveled over. And the other thing I marveled over was the deadness of some aides, the awful utter deadness of some saints that think they're going up in the rapture and they're licking the dust and they've mined earthly things and their God is their belly and there's no hope when there's no salvation. But beloved, when God, if God can make my heart to tremble, to tremble, to tremble, he says to this man, will I look? Oh God, that's what I need.

I need you to look upon me, my God. He says we should look to the mercy of our Lord for everlasting life. It's his mercy.

Oh, when God shows me mercy, he won't let me get away with it. He won't. Somebody else gets away with it.

Don't judge them. Love them. Maybe the Lord doesn't ask it of them, but oh, the bride of Christ is altogether lovely.

It's pure within. Lord, thou desirest truth in the inward part and in the hidden part shalt thou make me to know wisdom. How many times people have gotten mad at me when I've talked.

Why, you ought to be happy. Glory to God. If I went to a beggar that's rolling around on the donkey and I say, listen, there's a king that's built a beautiful palace and you can move right in and you'll have an imperial and you'll have a Cadillac and you'll have a Rolls Royce and you'll have a constellation at your command with Pilate and all.

Come on, forsake this pile of manure. You say, hey, you get me mad. Who do you think I am? You call me a beggar? You tell me I smell bad? Well, you do.

That's the way we are, beloved one. We don't heed the call of ye shall be holy. Oh, hallelujah.

Pure and spotless. Oh, how we ought to love the New Testament. You find all those three teachings, all this truth in the New Testament.

We don't need any other books. I know there are books that are a great blessing, but we ought to first of all graduate from the Bible. We ought to make the Bible our own while your name is at the top.

It's a New Testament. It's the everlasting covenant sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ. Here's the command of the king.

Here's the king himself coming to you in his word. He that has my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father and I will love him and we will come

unto him and make our abode with him. Jesus, how long do you have to say these things to us before we even wake up? Before we even take a first step? We are still wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

As long as we can still talk about one another, unlovely and unkind. As long as we can still have unkind feelings and pride and conceit and backbiting and gossiping and careless talking and all these things, beloved, we haven't even taken the first step. He says, wherefore, beloved, as newborn babes, having put aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, all envies, and all evil speaking, those things you put aside, now desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby.

And here is the great goal, the great hope. Our conversation, our life, our living, our walk is in heaven, thank God. From whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change this vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

Do you know what Jesus Christ is calling for in this assembly? A mightier, holier, clearer manifestation of his presence. And it will come when we look for him. Every saint coming to meeting ought to come to Jesus.

We ought to look for Jesus Christ to be manifested. That faith will bring him. And that was the faith that God demanded of the church from the very beginning.

He turned to God from idols to serve the living and the true God and to wait for his son from heaven, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come. And how is he going to come? He's going to come to those that are looking for him. And in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, this vile body of ours will be putting on immortality.

Glory to God. Oh, the work of the Holy Ghost is tremendously wonderful. And beloved, we ought to treasure the word of God.

We can go through the whole epistle of the Philippians and find every substance, everything that's needed for life and immortality, right in that little epistle. God, my father, can you do something for me and my heart this morning that will wake me up? Oh God, that will strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die. God, how wonderful it would be if this place was packed this morning with people that are perhaps looking at the television set and interesting themselves in a ball game or some other tomfoolery.

How different, how different. But you know, one of these days the news will spread, he's come, he's come. And those that were ready have gone in and the door's shut.

Then you can knock all you want.

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