

Hearts Sprinkled From an Evil Conscience

by Harold Vaughan

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dealing with mind pollution and the evil conscience, and highlights the power of the blood to cleanse us from these issues.

Duration: 58:22

Scripture: Exodus 12:22, Psalm 103:12, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:1, Hebrews 10:16, Hebrews 10:19, 1 Peter 2:24

Topics: "Evil Conscience"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses the analogy of a trapped elephant to illustrate how people can be programmed for failure and defeat. He describes how the elephant, despite its immense strength, does not attempt to escape because it has been conditioned to believe it cannot. The preacher relates this to how many Christians have been programmed to expect problems and defeat instead of victory. He emphasizes the importance of guarding our minds and not entertaining negative thoughts, as they can influence our entire outlook on life. The sermon also touches on the dangers of bitterness and shares a personal story of a man who experienced deep pain and anger after his daughter was killed by a drunk driver.

Transcript

Let's have a moment of prayer together tonight and let's give God permission to speak to our hearts. I know we've had a busy day, but let's calm our hearts and let's invite God to come and minister to us. Would you bow your heart right now and just give God permission to speak to you this evening.

Now, Heavenly Father, we open our hearts to you, speak for your servants who are listening. With expectation and thanksgiving, we pray. Amen.

Joseph's brothers were insanely jealous. So much so that they sold him to a traveling band of Ishmaelites, and they took the coat of many colors that their father had given him and tore it and dipped it in the blood of a goat and went home and gave it to their father and said, apparently a wild beast has devoured Joseph. Well, no wild beast had devoured Joseph.

They had sold him into slavery. Nevertheless, Jacob believed the worst. He believed his son was dead and he grieved and mourned for years because he believed something to be true that was not true.

You know, deception is when you believe something to be so that's not so. That's what deception is. It's believing a lie.

And I believe there's a whole lot of unnecessary grieving and mourning among the people of God because we believe things to be true that simply are not true. We're living in days when people are very concerned about environmental pollution. But I'll tell you, even more epidemic than environmental pollution is the problem of mind pollution or mental pollution.

And the Bible addresses this very thing in 2 Corinthians chapter 10. I invite your attention to 2 Corinthians chapter 10, beginning in verse 3. Now, whether we comprehend it or not, we're involved in a spiritual warfare. And the nature of this warfare is laid out here in 2 Corinthians chapter 10, beginning there in verse 3. Paul writes these words, for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

We're walking in a physical body, but we're not warring after physical situations. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, are not fleshly, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Note the word strongholds, referring to a mental beachhead, a satanic fortress of incorrect thought.

And the Bible says we have weapons that are so powerful through God that we can even pull down these satanic strongholds in the mind. Look in verse 5, casting down imaginations. Note the word imaginations having to do with the thinking apparatus telling us that the war on the saints takes place largely between the ears.

And I want to tell you that when you think wrong, you are wrong. When you believe wrong, you live wrong. But the Bible says we have some powerful weapons here, so powerful as to cast down these imaginations.

Notice what else? Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God. Note the word knowledge having to do with the mind, having to do with the thinking processes, and bringing every into captivity, every thought to the obedience of Christ. Note the word thought having to do with the mind, the mental processes.

Now here we have four key words, strongholds, imaginations, knowledge, and thoughts, letting us know right off the bat that there's a battle for the mind. But we have weapons that are so powerful through God that our thoughts and our thinking can be brought into the captivity of Christ. Now look in the book of Hebrews chapter 10 quickly tonight, if you would, Hebrews chapter 10, another passage with more good news.

Hebrews chapter 10 in verse 16, Hebrews chapter 10 in verse 16, this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds, get this, in their minds will I write them and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Hey, I'll tell you that's good news for a failed saint.

God says, I'll put my sins as far as the east is from the west. I'll not even think about them anymore. I'll not remember them anymore.

That's good news, my friend for bad people, but notice more good news in verse 19, having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest. Now notice how they're going to get into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. I want you to notice you don't get into the holiest by self-improvement.

You don't get into the holiest by trying harder. You don't get into the holiest by rededicating. You get into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a newly slain way.

Uh, the scripture says here, even through the veil, through the cross of Christ. Now, everywhere I go, uh, you know, people all pray just about the same. After you've been in the kingdom for a while, we kind of pick it up from each other, I think.

And everywhere I go, people are praying that the Lord, we just want to get closer to you and Lord, I just want to be nearer to you. And I know what we mean because I prayed the same kind of prayer. But the truth of the matter is you can't be any closer to God than what the blood puts you close to God.

You can't be any nearer to God than what the blood puts you near to God. You can't be any more right with God than what the blood puts you right with God. Closer, closer to God.

I could never be for in the person of his son. I'm just as close as he nearer, nearer. I could never be for in the person of his son.

I'm just as near as he and brother, it's good news to all, to all, to the soul of a saint. When they see the power of the blood to put them in good stead, good stead and good standing with a holy God. More good news.

Look in verse 22, let us draw near with a true heart that is a tested heart in full assurance of faith. No unbelief, no doubting having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. I want you to notice that phrase, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.

I believe tonight it's possible for sincere Christian people to accept and express the thoughts of Satan himself. You recall our Lord when he began to tell his disciples that he was going to Jerusalem and die, that Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, far be it from thee O Lord. And Jesus turned to Peter and said, get thee behind me.

Have you ever wondered about that? Jesus was not rebuking Peter as Peter. He was rebuking the one controlling Peter's mind and Peter's mouth. And my dear people tonight, if Peter could have the devil in him, you think it's possible that we might have the devil in us? Get thee behind me, Satan.

I think that we have so minimized the nature of Satan's attack on the saint to the point it's become a non-issue in conservative fundamental churches. People today think that demon possession might be in a heathen tribal situation, but not here in a civilized, sophisticated America. My friend, I want to tell you, I believe that Satan is alive and well among the people of God and the Bible seems to indicate that Satan can have a strategic impact upon the people of God and we had better learn how to deal with it.

What about Ananias when he and his wife conspired to lie about the price of the land? And Peter, after Pentecost, filled with the Holy Spirit. It's amazing what a good dose of Pentecostal power will do for a fellow. And he said to Ananias, get thee behind me.

Or he didn't say that. He said, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? What's this? Satan filled his heart to lie to the Holy Ghost. You know, my friend, if you're not controlled by the God of the Bible, you're under direct control of the God of this world.

Luke chapter nine, verse 55, the disciples in Christ were going through Samaria. You know, they were half-breed Jews and they were prejudiced one against the other and they weren't being treated very hospitably. My family and I have been treated royally since we've been here and the lunch the ladies brought in today and Pastor Joe's hospitality yesterday has just been marvelous.

But I want to tell you, Jesus and the disciples weren't getting a very warm reception there in Samaria. And the disciples had been out exercising a little apostolic authority, casting out a demon here and there, and they got a feeling their oats and they came to Jesus and said, Lord, do you want us to call down fire on these people like Elijah? Lord, do you want us to handle this situation? And the Lord turned to them and said, you know, not what manner of spirit year of for the son of man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. You know, not what manner of spirit ye are of my friend.

I want to tell you, your mind is like a living room in your home. When people come into your house, you entertain guests in the living room and your mind is like a living room because all visitors into your life will come in through the avenue of your mind. And I want to tell you when satanic thoughts are introduced into your mind and you entertain them, I want to tell you that they pass through, they enter through the mind, they drop down into your spirit, and before long they flavor and possess your entire outlook on life.

I believe that strongholds are developed first of all by the introduction of a satanic thought. Then comes a consideration, which is simply two thoughts put together. And if not checked, the consideration will yield a desire.

The desire will spawn an act. If not checked, it will yield a habit and a habit is simply an act repeated. And brother, before you know it, you've got a stronghold built up in your mind, a systemized thought of a satanic suggestion that has been fully developed in your mind.

You see, satan has had thousands of years to study the human race, and I believe that with precision timing, he can introduce his thoughts into our minds with such precision that if we're not very alert spiritually, we'll not even be able to detect it. Why else would the Lord have given us the helmet of salvation and the shield of faith if it were not to quench the fiery thought missiles, the fiery thought darts of the devil? Now, I believe that satan has the power to introduce thoughts into the human mind. Obviously, he can withhold information from the human mind because satan has blinded the minds of them that don't believe.

So not only can he blind the mind, but brother, I believe that he can virtually implant thoughts into the mind. Now, we all know that text where the Holy Spirit has the power to bring things to our remembrance. How many of you have ever had the experience where you believe the Holy Spirit has brought something to your remembrance? How many can identify with that statement? How many of you believe that perhaps the unholy spirit might be able to introduce thoughts into our minds as well? Oh, my dear people, 12,000 thoughts go through the human mind on a given day, psychologists tell us.

12,000 thoughts. That's a lot of thoughts. Some of them come from God.

Some of them you conjure up yourself. But what about all the rest? Obviously, God would never have introduced something like that. Well, I don't think I tried to drum it up myself.

Well, brother, if you didn't come up with it and God didn't give it to you, put it down. It must be a satanic implant. And I want to tell you, if you think wrong, you are wrong.

If you believe wrong, you live wrong. And that's why the Bible says here, be transformed by the renewing of your minds. And that's why we have weapons that are so powerful.

God assumes that we're already overrun with all kinds of wrong thought patterns. And we've got to unlearn what we've already learned that's wrong in order to learn the right thing. And I want to tell you, that's what spiritual growth is all about is becoming what you already are in Christ.

And I want to tell you, we need to employ the weapons of God that are so powerful to pull down these strongholds, cast down these imaginations and bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Now, I want to talk to you tonight along the lines of having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. You know, once the sin question becomes unsettled and heaven ceases to be opened and we become more sin conscience than God conscience, we're in trouble.

And I'll tell you how you can detect an evil conscience. It's when you have these gripping, besetting thoughts, compulsive, persistent, preoccupying, plaguing, compelling, obsessive thoughts. Kind of like in the old days when they had phonograph records, remember to get a little Nick in it.

And the, uh, the, the, uh, on every rotation, the needle would fall into the same groove and play the same tune over and over and over again. I got to update because, uh, people under 40 don't have a clue what I'm talking about here, but, uh, explain it to your children later. But you know, when you have a, an evil conscience, you tend to rehash the same old garbage over and over and over again.

You say, well, what kind of thoughts are you talking about? What about accusing thoughts, accusing thoughts? The Bible says that Satan is the accuser of the brethren in the book of Genesis. He accused God to man in the book of Job. He accused man to God.

He's the accuser of the brethren. I was at a church one time and a big old burly kind of guy came out the back door, shook my hand, man. He had his hair slicked back.

He didn't have on a little dab of real cream. He had at least on a third of the tube. I'm telling you, man, his hair was slick back jet black, big old burly kind of guy.

He got ahold of my hand, about rung my arm out of socket, look me right in the face. And he said, brother, Harold, I'm what you call a militant fundamentalist. And I looked at him and I said, well, God could probably give you victory over that brother.

If you'll pray about it. Now, let me tell you what that guy meant. What he meant by that was he couldn't get along with anybody and he was proud of it.

That's what, that's what he meant by that. One time old praying hide, you know, John Hyde, the great prayer, man of India, he went to the Lord and he began to pray for a certain pastor who had kind of fallen away and cooled off in his spirit. And he began to pray.

And he said, Oh God, you know, how cold, Oh God, you know, how cold and praying. I'd said that God put a stay on his lips and said, praying hide, you know, better than the devil that accuses the brethren day and night before the throne of God. Do you realize tonight that we can, we can even accuse the brethren, even in something as pious as prayer.

God doesn't need to get caught up on what's going down here from us, friend. And I want to tell you, uh, there's more to prayer than giving God information. He already knows an old praying hide.

He quit accusing the brother and began to thank God for the times that fell ahead, walked with God and found out that that fellow had a revival that extended to the life of this whole church. But it didn't happen while he was accusing. It happened as he got on believing and thanking and pray praising ground accusations, accusations against other, what other people, what about accusations against yourself? Roy Hessian said, we're all preachers.

If we don't preach to anybody else, we preached our own hearts. We take a stick to ourselves. We take a, take a whip to ourselves.

We beat ourselves. And that's neither healthy nor helpful. You know, the kind of preaching we do to ourselves.

Well, you know, you're a poor excuse for a Christian, man. You're not, you haven't made any progress at all. How long have you been in the kingdom? Two decades.

And look at you, where's your joy. You probably not even saved accusations, brother. I want to tell you when we get full of criticism toward other people or toward God or toward ourselves, it's an indication of an, uh, of an evil conscience of accusation.

What about enticing thoughts, fantasy thoughts, lustful thoughts, immoral thoughts. You know, some people have given so much ground in this area. It's like their minds are just processing the same old stuff over and over and over mental immorality, if not any other kind of immorality.

Thank God, there's power in the blood tonight to cleanse a man from enticing thoughts and evil conscience of impure thinking. What about an evil conscience of jealousy, jealous thoughts? You heard about the little kid one time praying and you said, Lord, help me not to be jealous. And God broke in and said, it's too late, son.

You already are. You know, most of the time we're asking for help. It's too late for help.

We don't need help. What we need is forgiveness. I want to tell you that jealousy is the only sin that nobody gets any enjoyment out of.

You know, most sins you get a little something, but with jealousy, buddy, nobody gets anything. And brother, when we get in this kind of a mindset, an evil conscience of jealousy, what about anxiety, anxious thoughts, worrying, hand-wringing nervousness? How are we going to pay the bills? What are people going to think? What are people going to say? Man, you ought not to have done that. What am I going to do? And then we come along with all these psychological bestsellers to kind of give us letoffs.

And they tell us what kind of temperaments we got. Well, you're just a melancholy. You're going to be depressed and in the dumps all the time.

And man, go get some St. John's Wort or something more powerful. And, and, oh, no, no, you're just a sanguine. You're never going to get serious about anything.

And there's a happy-go-lucky and just an airhead blonde. And you're just a sanguine. You just can't help it.

And, and, oh, no, no, you're a, you're a choleric. You're just going to be bossy and obnoxious and push. Friend, it doesn't make any difference if you're a sanguine or a penguin.

That don't have anything to do with it. And the fact of the matter is when we get in a position where we're full of anxiety and nervousness all the time, I want to tell you, it's an indication of an evil conscience. You know, there's a difference between a burden that comes from God and a worry that comes from the flesh.

What about an evil conscience of bitterness? Dwelling on how people did us wrong and took advantage of us. The Bible warns us about the root of bitterness and the gall of bitterness. I was preaching in Southern California one time and this big kind of guy came and fell on the altar and wept it out for an hour.

After he finally finished, I went up and I said, Hey, brother, what was this all about? And he told me the story, how his little girl, a six-year-old girl had got run over by a teenage driver who was drunk that didn't even have a driver's license. The little girl had been in the hospital, I think for 11 months in a coma for six months. And the doctors told the father that his daughter would never be normal.

Well, he said, I got on my knees and I asked God to forgive me for the bitterness I had in my heart toward that kid that ran over my daughter. And he said, brother, I want to tell you, I think if that fellow came in the back door, I could reach out my hand and shake his hand and look him in the eye and say, I love you. God set him free from bitterness.

Well, I went on home and got back out in that same church. Several years later, that fellow was still there. I went up and talked to him and I said, Hey brother, how's it going with the bitterness thing? He said, still free.

I said, amen. I said, how's your little girl? And he pointed her out. She was 12 years old at that time.

And she was as normal as any other 12 year old. And I want to tell you, the doctors don't know everything, but I'll tell you, God had to heal that father of his bitter heart before he could heal that daughter of her physical illness and physical ailments. Bitterness.

I was preaching one time in Virginia and a lady came up after service and, or she gave her testimony and she said this, she said, I used to be a relatively happy person until eight years ago when my brother was shot and murdered. And she said, I don't think I've enjoyed living a day since. And she went on to give the testimony, how that the night before she'd got on the phone and call the father of the boy who had shot and murdered her brother.

Now I wouldn't recommend doing it this way, but this is what she did. And she asked the boy's father to forgive her for the bitterness she had in her heart toward his son. And she said today, I think is the very first day I've enjoyed living in eight years, an evil conscience of bitterness.

I'll tell you, life is too short to have that stuff. What about resentful thoughts? I was in Oklahoma city and went into a prayer room one night and two 15 year old twin girls screamed out weeping when I went in the door and they yelled out and they said, why did God do this to us? And I said, well, girls, what do you think God did? And they told the story. They were 15 years old.

They had a second grade education because their alcoholic mother kept them out of school and made them clean, clean apartments to support her alcohol and drug habit. The state found out about it, removed the girls from the abusive home. They couldn't understand it.

They were perplexed. They were hurt. They were confused.

And they said, why did God do this to us? Oh, my friend. I said, girls, let me tell you something. God's not the blame.

The judge of the earth will do right. If you want to blame somebody, you ought to blame sin or blame the devil, but God is not to blame. And let me just throw this out for what it's worth.

Let me throw this out for what it's worth. This extreme theology that makes God to be the author of evil and the author of sin is charging God foolishly. And it is blasphemous.

And God is not the cause of evil. He doesn't tempt anybody and he can't be tempted with evil either. It's almost like we've become a bunch of fatalist and the will of God's always going to be done.

Let me tell you something, friend, the will of God is not always being done. And I'm telling you, friend, when it comes to moral issues, you're either in the will of God or you're out of the will of God. And don't fall into that trap of extreme fatalism, resentful thoughts, resentful thoughts.

What about tormenting thoughts, thoughts of guilt? You know, if you ever confess your sin to God one time and get reminded of it again, it's not God convicting you. It's the devil trying to condemn you. Satan's major ministry to the child of God is a ministry of condemnation.

You know, before you get saved, party hardy, have at it. Don't feel guilty about anything. But buddy, if you ever come into the kingdom, man, he'll bring up every sorry thing you've ever thought or ever done and load you down with a truckload of guilt, tormenting thoughts.

Oh, if I'd only never done that, if I'd only never seen that, these sense of rejection and Satan bringing to remembrance all of our sins and our faults. And it's kind of like raindrops on a tin roof. They come with such rapidity.

They're absolutely overwhelming. Thoughts of guilt and thoughts of torment. I was preaching in Maine one time and we had a prayer room set up where people could respond at the invitation.

And one lady came one night and we had a little share time, a little testimony meeting every night. And these would go on to like one to two o'clock in the morning. It's amazing what was going on.

And, but this lady came and in this particular service and she was deeply troubled and she left without testifying. She came the second night, a distraught countenance, and she left early. She can't respond to the third night, fourth night, fifth night, and nothing ever happened.

But the sixth night she responded and she stayed for the share time. And I want to tell you, her face was beaming. She looked like she'd had an encounter with an angel.

And I said, sister, by this time I was curious, would you like to share? And she didn't go into any detail, but she said something that's troubled me all my life and flavored every relationship I've ever had. God has set me free. Well, she got him from the church, gave a testimony of kind of like that.

And, uh, before I left, I got a letter from her. She had been abused by her brothers as she was growing up. And this had so loaded her down with guilt.

And then that just like the devil to make the victim feel guilty about somebody else's, uh, abuse of them. But God set her free. I was holding in the area later.

And she came over and gave a testimony. Didn't go in in detail, but gave God the glory. And before I left, I asked the pastor, I said, how's our sister doing? And she said, he said, she still got the victory brother.

And I thought, praise God, the power of God to set people free from tormenting thoughts and evil conscience of torment. What about doubting thoughts, thoughts of unbelief, unbelief? Well, you'll never be able to live it. You know, you've tried before you better not get saved.

You'll never make it. And here we are with all of these kinds of thoughts. You know, I heard one time the way they train elephants, very interesting.

When elephants are born, what they do is they take the baby elephant, put a big rope around the front, right foot, drive a post in the ground and tie the baby elephant down. And then the baby elephant will obviously try to escape. So he will pull and tug and pull and tug.

And he'll try to get away. Now, elephants are not known for their intelligence, very small brains in comparison to their body size. So it takes them a long time to figure out he cannot get away.

You know what they're doing? They're programming him for failure. They're programming him for defeat. And after so many days or weeks, the elephant finally figures out he can't get away.

So you know what he does? He stops trying to get away. What have they done? They programmed him for failure. I took my son a couple of decades ago to a circus.

Forgive me. It was a couple of decades ago. Forgive me.

It was a couple of decades ago. I took my son to the circus and we went out behind the circus tent. We wanted to see the elephants.

I'm telling you the truth. There was this huge mammoth elephant that a piece of baler twine around his front right foot, tied around a stick, stuck in a crack in the pavement. And that elephant who could have pulled the whole tent down did not try to escape because he did not believe he could escape because he had been programmed for failure.

I wonder how many of God's people sitting here tonight, we've been programmed for defeat. We've been programmed to expect problems rather than victory. We have been programmed our whole lives with a negative, defensive outlook.

And I want to tell you it's high time people in Bible believing Christianity actually started believing God for something. And we need to get over this idea that if you're faithful to God, you don't have to be a success. You just have to be faithful.

Don't expect any blessing. Don't expect any prosperity spiritually or otherwise. Brother, I want to tell you we need to get out of our mentality of defeat and we need to lay hold on the faithfulness of God.

And we need to start to believe God for things we've never seen or never dreamed. And brother, I want to tell you the sky's the limit. And if you're going to please God, you're going to please God by faith, unbelief, unbelief.

I have a pastor friend that went to Romania and he was with the missionary going to the church. They ran over some character on a bicycle and obviously had to take him to the emergency room. Hope it's better service there than here.

And anyway, they were late getting the service. So the American pastor said to the missionary, said, well, brother, there's no use to go. He said, we're an hour and a half, two hours late.

There won't be anybody there. And the missionary didn't even, didn't even say anything. He just drove on.

He said, he got to the church, no bicycles, no automobiles, no ox carts, nothing. And he walked up to the door. Missionary never spoke a word and said, when he opened the door, the place was jam packed.

They'd been there for two hours without a leader singing hymns of praise to God. He said, they walked in and had to go down to the front to get a seat. So, you know, it was a Baptist church.

And he said about halfway down the aisle, halfway down the aisle, he said, the sense of the presence of God was so overwhelming that he broke out in tears. He said, he wept the whole service. And he said that night to Greek Orthodox women got born again.

And that service that night, my brethren, if God can do something in Romania, if God can do something in communist China, if God can do something in Africa, if God can do something in India, why can't God do something in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Unbelief, unbelief, you know, this whole idea of these are the last days and the lights are out and the apostasy is here and nothing good is going to happen about the best you can hope for is to get a few people saved and the ship's going down and that whole idea. Let me tell you something, friend.

God has not foreordained us to be a bunch of Laodicean deadbeats. Don't you blame God. Don't you come up with a system of theology that accuses God of foreordaining us to be half dead and half alive.

God is not to blame. And God told the Laodicean church they needed to repent. And that's what God, God saying to us tonight, we need to repent as well.

Unbelief, unbelief. Well, an evil conscience of fear, discouraging thoughts, depressing thoughts. Somebody asked me one day, what's the difference between discouragement and depression? I said about two weeks, about two weeks.

Now, listen, friend, I want to tell you something. We can have an evil conscience concerning any sin that exists, but our text says having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Now, how do we get delivered from an evil conscience? What does it mean to have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience? I believe that Hebrews chapter 10 is a new Testament reference to an old Testament incident, a new Testament reference to an old Testament incident.

And I want you to look over in the book of Exodus very quickly. Then I look over, if you would, the book of Exodus chapter 12. And here we have the story of the Passover Exodus chapter 12.

Now here are the directions for God's people concerning this Passover. Look in chapter 12, Exodus verse 22. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and strike the lenthil in the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin.

And none of you shall go out the door of his house until the morning, for the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians. And when he seeth the blood upon the lentiil and on the two side post, the Lord will pass over the door and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you. Now, notice what was going on here.

That father was responsible for his home, and they took that spotless sacrificial lamb. They slit the throat. They drained the blood in a basin.

Then the father went over to the doorway and he put the blood on the side post and on the lentiil, the top of the door. He was not ashamed to have the blood in the most conspicuous place. And after he had painted that doorway with that blood, he walked through that crimson stained archway into the house where he stayed until the morning.

And his family followed after him through that blood stained doorway. And when he got inside, I want to tell you when the death angel came through that night, those Israelites weren't hanging their heads out of the window and saying, Hey God, you know, we're law keepers and we're, we're pretty good people. If they'd stuck their heads out of the window, they'd have been struck dead.

I want to tell you a friend that the blood was for God. They couldn't even see it once they got in the house. But when God saw that blood, it was a sign of judgment passing over.

The innocent had died in the place of the guilty. And the Lord said, when I see the blood and brother, I want to tell you some of us tonight, we need to get a clear view of the blood of Jesus and it's wonderful wonder working power. But God said, when I see the blood, I'll pass over you.

And he said, I will not suffer the to come into your houses, to smite you. Now, friend, if you're saved tonight, the blood has already been applied from God's side. And when God looks at you, he sees through this sacrificial atoning death of his son, which paid your sin debt in total.

But yet tonight, the responsibility lies with us to appropriate the blood for our own conscience, to buy faith, see the doorpost of our mind sprinkled as it were from an evil conscience. My dear people, when you get your mind under the blood, hell and all its demons can't defeat you because the destroyer cannot smite you. And I believe tonight that what we really need is somehow by faith to see our hearts and minds sprinkled with the blood of Jesus from an evil conscience.

Now you said, brother, how do you get how do we get our minds under the blood? How do we have our hearts sprinkled? I say it's already judicially, legally done in the mind of God. But as far as the practical personal application, I want to give you some ideas tonight I think might be helpful. We've got weapons tonight, so powerful to pull down these imaginations, cast down these strongholds, bring our thoughts captive.

How do we get our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience? Number one, you have to recognize the enemy. You have to recognize you have an enemy. And when thoughts come knocking on the doorpost of your mind, you don't have to swing the door open.

I grew up out in the country. You can probably tell that by the one time, by the way, I was preaching in Iowa one time and God took me out to lunch and he said, brother, Harold, do you have any formal education? I said, yes, but I try to conceal it as best I can. And apparently I'm doing a good job.

And, um, I grew up out in the country and you know, when people would knock on the door, you know what my parents would say? Oh, screen door, you know, country farmhouse, come on in. They wouldn't even get up when they got old. They didn't even get up.

Mormons come on in Jehovah's witnesses. Come on in. Encyclopedia salesman.

Come on in. Now I bet up here in Milwaukee, you don't let everybody that knocks on the door, enter your home. I wouldn't recommend it anywhere, but how many of God's people, every time a thought comes knocking, they just swing the door wide open.

Come on in friend. You don't have to entertain every thought that comes into your mind. You know, when I first got saved, man, I had a problem with thoughts.

And if I prayed it once, I prayed it a million times, Lord, help me not to have these evil thoughts. How many of you ever prayed that prayer right there? Yeah. There's a book back there by that title.

You want to check that out? Lord, help me not to have these evil thoughts. And you know what? God never helped me not to have those evil thoughts. You know why? Because God didn't give me the evil thoughts and God gave me the weapons to get rid of them.

And don't ask God to do for you what God told you to do for yourself. You know, we pray a lot of silly prayers, you know, you know, prayers like, well, Lord helped me to read the Bible. You know, that's, that's what you read pray in the morning.

What do you expect God to send an angel and to levitate the Bible off the dresser? You know, come floating through the atmosphere, you know, some of that outer limits music, man, coming down through there. And it just opens up right in your lap. And, oh, hey, thank you, Lord.

I appreciate you helping me read the Bible. No, I'll tell you how this thing works. It's really mystical.

What you got to do is you got to win the battle of the blankets and you got to get up out of the bed and you got to walk over here and you have to lift the Bible up with your hands. And then you go back to wherever you're going to read it. And then you can pray an intelligent prayer.

Now, Lord, speak to my heart while I read your book. But I want to tell you, don't ask God to do for you what God told you to do for yourself. And dear people, you've got to recognize we have a real enemy.

And I fear tonight. You know, we're so we're so hung up on terms, obsession, possession, brother. The issue tonight is not ownership.

The issue as far as God's people are concerned is control. And if Peter could be under the control of the devil, to where Jesus had to rebuke the devil in Peter, I'm telling you tonight, brother, that Satan can influence us far greater than some of us may have thought or dreamed. Why all of those admonitions in the New Testament, let Satan get an advantage over us, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Are these just allegorical metaphorical? No, brother, they're personal things that God has told us through unforgiveness. We Satan gets an advantage over us. Paul said 10 times in the New Testament.

It says, be not deceived, brother. If it was an impossibility for a Christian to be deceived, it wasn't a told us 10 times, be not deceived. And we better recognize that we're, we're, we're, we're, we're up against an

adversary.

And brother, I want to tell you, we've got weapons. And the moment, the thoughts come into your mind that are not of God, but are of the devil, you better zero in on them because Satan is out to rob you of your joy. Well, not only do we have to recognize the enemy number two, we have to renounce the hidden deeds of dishonesty to Corinthians chapter four, renouncing the hidden deeds of dishonest dishonesty.

You know, friend, if you're not taking ground from the devil, he's probably taking ground from you. The Bible says, neither, neither give place to the devil. Don't give topos.

Don't give topography. Don't give ground. Don't give room to the devil, because if you give it to him, he'll take it.

And I want to tell you, if you're not taking ground from the devil, he's probably taking ground from you. You say, how do you give ground to the devil? Well, all kinds of things in the new testament, but let me give you a few practical things through wrong music. I believe we can give place to Satan through astrology and all of these kinds of things through past sins, through drug taking.

I was on a meeting one time and a lady came forward and she was a brand new Christian. And she said, I don't have any new Christian friends. And she said, I went out with my old friends the other night and she said, I smoked marijuana.

And she said, I feel real bad about it. And you know what I was thinking? I was thinking, this is a good sign. This was a good sign.

It wasn't a good sign that she had smoked dope. It was a good sign. She couldn't smoke dope and get away with it.

That was a good sign. We led that girl in a prayer of renunciation. Do you understand when you dabble in that kind of stuff? That's witchcraft pharmacy.

If that's what that's talking about, sorcery, drug taking, it's witchcraft. Don't get too spooky about it, brother, but don't go so far the other way to where everything is psychological and the devil's not even a player. That's where we're at.

That's where we're at tonight. We got more counseling and the more, more, more, more, more confidence in the psychologist's couch than we do the mourner's bench. And I'm all for helping people, but I want to tell you something, friend, when people met God in the Bible, they were changed.

And you listen to me tonight. If you went out here and got run over by an 80,000 pound semi-tractor trailer, you would be changed. You would be changed.

And you listen to me tonight. When you meet the great high God of heaven, I want to tell you, friend, you will be changed. You'll not be different, but you will be marked for time and eternity.

And brother, I want to tell you something. A lot of these people were trying to counsel. What they need is a good dose of conversion, renunciation.

You've got to take back the ground you've given to the devil. This is not passive. This is not just, well, okay, whatever's going to be is going to be.

No, this is something you've got to do. That means you've got to refuse every lie, burn every bridge connected to the old life, break every contract you've ever made with the devil himself. And when thoughts come knocking, you can reject them.

You can refuse them. And you can say no. Remember the old Testament when Elisha, they were building the Bible college.

And, and there, the axe flew off the axe handle and went into the murky water and they couldn't find it. And they told Elijah about it. And he said, well, where did it fall? And he took that handle and put it down in the water.

And man, that axe head swam up there. I'd like to see something like that. Wasn't you, man, that thing got on there.

No doubt. He felt it probably like a big fish or something. And he felt that thing.

He pulled, he pulled it up. You know what, you know what the lesson there is. I want to tell you what the lesson is.

The point of recovery is at the place of departure. The point of recovery is always at the place of departure. And where we, where we get off track with God, it's where we got to get back on track with God.

And brother, I want to tell you, that's what repentance is all about. Where we lost the axe head is where we're going to recover the axe head. And dear people, that's by humility, renunciation, owning up and repenting in the presence of God.

Well, not only do we need to renounce and recognize, but number three, we need to make restitution to get our hearts sprinkled and clear with God. The Bible talks about a conscience void of offense toward God and man. Friend, I want to tell you, the only thing that'll put you right with God is the blood of Christ.

In the strict sense, you don't get right with people in order to get right with God. You get right with people because you are right with God. And in the strict sense, the only thing that puts us right with God is that atoning sacrifice that Jesus made on Calvary.

If you go chasing around trying to put things right with people before you put it right with God, you probably put more wrong than you'll put right. You'll make a bigger mess than what you've already got. And that's why we need to humble ourselves on the mighty hand of God and go to Calvary.

And then we go to clear our consciences up. I have a dear friend of mine. We've labored for years in the ministry.

Would you believe he got on a chat room? He's a pastor and got hung up with some woman. And over the prayers and pleadings and tears of his family, he went out the door and took up a relationship with this woman he didn't even know. He lost his ministry.

He lost it all. But you know something? He came to himself. He came to himself.

And he called me up and I was all the time, I was so burdened about this. I was so burdened about it. I said, no wonder he's going to wake up and get on the side of the bed and put his hands in his face and

realize what he's done.

And one day the phone's going to ring and he's going to be repenting. And then I settled on it. Well, he may never repent.

I was grieved. But the phone rang and it was Brad. It was my friend.

And you know what he said? He said, I want to come home. I want to come home. And brother, he came home and his wife is very, very gracious in taking him back.

But can I tell you something? He had to clear a lot of things with his wife, with his family, with his church, with his friends. He had to clear a lot of things. And dear people, if you want to get clear with God, you're going to have to put things right where things have gone wrong.

This disarms the devil. I was at a church in Pennsylvania one time and a lady stood with a very non-emotional premeditated testimony. And she said, I've come tonight to ask the church to forgive me for violating my marriage covenant 10 years ago when I got a divorce.

And she said, I've already asked God to forgive me, but I want to ask the church to forgive me for bringing shame and reproach upon the name of Jesus. Personal sin, you confess to God. Private sin, confess to whoever's involved.

Public sin, public confession. Keep it within those guidelines and you'll always come out right. Restitution, restitution.

And brother, I want to tell you, once you get your conscience clear, this disarms the devil because he's got nothing to throw in your face because you've already cleared it up with God. And as much as possible on the human level, it disarms the devil from having anything to throw in your face. Now you're ready to go on the offensive, which brings us to the fourth point, resist the devil and he will.

Hey, wouldn't it be good if that was true? Wouldn't it be a blessing to see the devil hoofing it off from you instead of running you down for a change? Wouldn't it be a blessing to see him fleeing instead of following? Well, how are you going to resist the devil? Well, revelation 12, they overcame the accuser by the what? The blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. They overcame by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. Let me just throw this out for what it's worth right here.

Don't get so technical with the terms of scripture that you lose the heart and the intent of it. Are you with me on this? Don't academicize the whole thing. See, I can't even pronounce the word.

Don't intellectualize the whole thing to the point where brother, you're robbed of the meaning and the felt application that God intended. They overcame by what? The blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. I'll tell you what we have delegated authority.

All power in heaven and earth is given into Jesus. And he said, low, I'm with you always, even to the end of the world. I had a neighbor one time was a state trooper.

He's a little guy. Uh, but when he got that uniform on and that badge and that light flashing, Oh man. And that siren, he was a, he was a, he was something to contend with.

I was coming home one day and there he was two semi sack tractor trailers pulled over on the side of the road. Here's this little guy out there. Two semi tractor trailers pulled over on the side of the road.

Now all he had to do was blink the light and point his finger and there they pull over. Now I could have gone out there and blink the lights and blew the horn and jumped up and down and screamed and danced and pointed and carried on. And I couldn't get a, I couldn't get a me out of the pull over on the side of the road.

But this guy, all he needs to do is to point the finger. You know why he has delegated authority. People don't respect him.

If he hadn't been in his, had his badge and his car, they wouldn't have respected him either. But child of God, you and I have delegated authority. All power is given unto Jesus.

God and the devil are not battling out to see who's going to win. I want to tell you that Satan is a defeated foe. The prince of this world has been judged.

Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. You're not a victim of the devil. You're more than a conqueror.

And brother, it's high time. The people of God put on the whole armor of God and recognize the authority that we have in Jesus. And brother, we can overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony.

When the Lord Jesus was tempted of Satan in the wilderness, how did he overcome the word of his testimony? He quoted the scripture. Now I'm not for carrying on lengthy conversations with the devil, but let me tell you something, friend Tozer wrote a book called. I talked back to the devil and I want to tell you, it's all right to tell the devil what's what and who's who and where to go.

And I want to tell you, if you're a child of God, he's got no authority over you. You don't have to accept all that wicked stuff that comes into your mind. You can refuse it.

You can reject it and you can turn away from it. You say, well, what are you talking about? We shouldn't do that because Michael, the archangel didn't bring a railing accusation against the devil and, and we shouldn't either not follow me. Michael, the archangel was not in Christ, but we are.

And I want to tell you that next to the God head, God has given tremendous authority to the people of God and the church of God. And we are not a smooth road for the devil to run off her brother. I want to tell you, get your mind under the blood.

And when those thoughts come knocking, you know what you do? You point to the blood and speak to the enemy, point to the blood, speak to the enemy, because when you recognize the covering and the protection that God has provided, brother, you can quote a scripture. And as Martin Luther said, he will flee. And brother, that doesn't mean he won't come back, but brother, you you're in a warfare.

Why did God leave the devil in the world? Let me tell you why to perfect the church he's defeated, but he's still on the field. The execution execution hadn't been carried out yet, but brother, he's the sandpaper divine sandpaper that God's using to smooth out the saints, because if we're going to become overcomers, we've got to have somebody to overcome. And I want to tell you, we're being groomed right

now to occupy.

We're destined to rule and reign with Christ in ages to come resist the devil and he will flee from you. Number five, rejoice. Now here's here's don't miss this weapon.

Oh man, this weapon of rejoicing. What a weapon. What a Christian seeing anyhow.

You ever heard Muslim saying, brother, I can't understand the language, but I'm telling you, man, it's a monotonous thing when you're over there and they got that stuff blaring out there and any joy in that. What a Christian thing, because God inhabits the praises of Israel. It says, God, God, God abides.

God shows up. God lives in the midst of praise. You and, you know, in heaven, what's going on, brother, every worship service on earth is choir practice for heaven.

And I'll tell you what's going on up there. There's a lamb in the midst of the throne. And you know what the redeemed heavenly host and the seraphim and the cherubim and the angels, you know what they're doing.

They're praising the lamb in the midst of the throne. And brother, some of you sophisticated people are going to have a spell when you get to glory, praise God. And I'm just telling you, it's not going to be all this proper, I'm just telling you, it's going to be unbridled praise in the presence of God.

And let me tell you something about this, man, this Satan is allergic to praise. He likes to get around murmuring and complaining and unbelief and griping and carrying on. But brother, I want to tell you, he can hardly stand to get around praise.

They say in the Shang Tung revival, they had so many demon possessed people in China, they couldn't deal with them. So they brought them into the midst of a bunch of revived Christians singing praise to God. And they said no demon could hold its ground for more than an hour when they got into that kind of an atmosphere of wholehearted praise.

Now listen to this. Praise is a weapon. And the word Judah in the Bible, you know what it means? It means praise.

Now follow this. In Chronicles, the tribe of Judah prevailed above his brethren. In Judges, Judah, the tribe of praise defeated its enemies.

In Numbers, Judah, the tribe of praise was first in battle. You know, they sent the choir out before they sent the born, the born air crowd. That's always the way it is in spiritual warfare, man.

Praise pays the way for victory. And then it says in Revelation that Jesus is the lion of the tribe of, oh, he's the lion of the tribe of praise. And I want to tell you that God loves to be praised.

And let me tell you something, wherever people are praising God from their heart, God shows up. And this is why you ought to learn in your personal devotions to sing to God and to magnify God and to praise the Lord, because brother, I'm just telling you, never mind how you feel. Go on and do the right thing.

Anyhow, this is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice. Don't wait till you feel like it.

You'll be on value. I mean, just go ahead and praise God anyhow and praise God until you do feel like it. And, and, and you know what God draws near when we are praising him.

Are you with me on this point right here? And I want to tell you, some of us are melancholy types and we need, we need a double dose of this point right here. We really do. And brother, brother, I want to tell you what a tremendous weapon, this weapon of rejoicing when all else fails, try praise, but finally a renewal, a renewal, the inward man is to be renewed day by day.

It's the believers daily renewal Ephesians four, be renewed in the spirit of your mind. Colossians three, put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. You know what George Mueller, the great prayer man said, what was it? 55,000 answers to prayer, 35,000 answers to prayer to prayer list that this guy had.

He never prayed a prayer, but what God answered it. Some of some of them after he died, they said, you know what George Mueller said, who prayed in millions of dollars for orphans. You know what he said? He said the first order of business every day was for him to get his soul happy in God.

Breakfast wasn't first Bible reading. Wasn't first praying. Wasn't first.

The first order of business every day was to get his soul happy in God. Ah, brother, I want to tell you that the purpose of devotions is not to get them over. The purpose of devotions is to secure the presence of Christ for the whole of the day.

That's why we meet God in the morning is not to check the block. Well, we got that done. No, it is to secure the presence of Christ that he might go with us throughout the day, be transformed by the renewing of your minds.

Listen, child of God, you're not a victim. You're more than a conqueror through him that loved you. You know why some of us sitting here tonight are so beat down and we're so, we're so, we're so defeated.

You know why? Because we had believed things to be true that are not true. And that's why we've got to take back the ground we've given to Satan and believe what God said and just go with it and bank on it. Brother, bank on thanks, raise with praise and pray without ceasing.

I'm telling you, friend, I'm telling you, we have a savior tonight that has given us a way of victory that is available. You know why a lot of people drop out of church and they don't come? It's because they can't make the Christian life work. They've done what they've been told to do.

They've rededicated, they've tried harder, but they've never seen it's the blood that puts them into the holiest. It's not doing better. It's not trying harder.

It's not making more promises. That's not it. That's not the way.

The way is to bow our hearts and to bow our heads and agree with God about whatever sin there might be and get that under the blood. And then brother, get up and go on in Jesus conquering name, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. How many of you sitting here tonight know what it is to have a polluted, violated, offended conscience? We know what it is, don't we? We know what it is to be loaded up with guilt, do we not? We know what it is to be defeated in our minds, to not be happy in Jesus.

We know what it is, don't we? Well, brother, here's the way out. Recognize the enemy. Recognize where you're giving ground to Satan.

Renunciation or repentance, that means to turn from those things and to come clean with God. Restitution, that means to seek to put things right where things have gone wrong on a human level. Then we begin to resist the devil.

How? Satan is not a material being. He's an immaterial being. You can't fight him all physically.

How are you going to resist him? You have to do it with the weapons God gave you, and that is the blood of the land and the word of your testimony. You say, well, I'm not comfortable with that. Okay.

Ask the Lord to rebuke the devil if you're not comfortable with it. But I think you can because all power is given to him and he's with us always. We are richer than we think.

I'm telling you, dear people, it's high time that fundamental Baptist people begin to believe God and get a dose of the joy of God's salvation. It's high time we begin to cash in on the resources and the treasures that God has given us. And brother, you're richer than you think, child of God.

And I'm here to tell you tonight, you're not a victim. You're more than a conqueror. And there's authority in the son of God.

And I'm telling you, he's defeated the devil. They're not battling it out to see who's going to win. Satan is already a defeated foe, but we got to enforce the victory that Jesus has already secured.

Resist the devil. And then don't miss this one. Rejoice.

I mean, what a weapon, the weapon of rejoicing. I'm telling you that there's something about it. There's something attractive about it.

Enthusiastic. You know, God has never used a discouraged saint and he can't. But brother, when we reclaim that ground and get back on praising ground and go ahead and do it right, I'm telling you, your emotions will catch up sooner or later.

So don't worry about it. Go ahead and do right because it is right until it becomes natural. Rejoice.

And then this business of renewal. Now, listen, it's not a chapter a day that's going to keep the devil away. It better be a verse or two that God breathes on.

And I want to tell you when this book, the words kind of come off the page and get enlarged, that's God breathing and that's God speaking. And brother, we can hear the voice of God and we need to hear the voice of God each and every day. It's the believers daily renewal, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.

Thank God for the legal victory, but hallelujah, hallelujah for the inward experiential cleansing of the blood of Jesus. And I just want to say this. It's good to be clean in the presence of God.

It is flat out good to be clean in God's presence and to feel the blood applied. I know you can go too far on the emotional thing. I want to tell you, you can go too far the other way to where it uses as cold as an iceberg.

And brother is a balance between truth and grace. And God wants our hearts to sense of freedom in him, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Let's pray Lord.

Oh Lord, tonight may hearts be liberated and may ground be retaken from the enemy of our souls. And father, may there be a cleansing of soul, a sprinkling from an evil conscience. A couple of questions, heads or bottoms.

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