

Be Encouraged, Die to Self

by James Malachi Jennings

This sermon encourages us to press on and not give up in our spiritual walk, and to die to self and live for Christ's glory.

Duration: 9:31

Scripture: Psalm 139:23

Topics: "Dying To Self", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not giving up in the face of spiritual battles, urging believers to press on, be on fire for Christ, and die to self daily. It highlights the need to examine our hearts, seek satisfaction in Jesus Christ alone, and let go of idols and sins that hinder our relationship with God. The speaker encourages a focus on Christ, not on personal achievements or ministries, and stresses the significance of living for God's glory above seeking man's approval.

Transcript

Well, hey, how's everyone doing? This is James and I'm in the I'll Be Honest office, I guess you can call it, and I just wanted to record something to encourage everyone out there. Do not give up. The devil, I mean, he is real, he really is waiting for an opportune moment to get all of us to fall away, to harden our hearts, to have unbelief in our life, to get us to be lukewarm.

He wants us to slow down. We've got to press on, we've got to be hot for Christ, He's worthy of our lives. And I tell you, going and doing things for the Lord is a terrifying thing to do.

Even recording this is terrifying because self always tries to intrude. Approval of man always tries to get in the way. Even a brother a minute ago was talking about praying at prayer meeting, how he struggles to pray at prayer meeting because approval of man gets in the way.

And you start to construct your prayers on how they're going to sound so others think highly about you, like you're spiritual. It's just amazing. This is a war and we must put to death the deeds of the flesh every day.

We've got to die to self, we've got to have Christ living in us and not us living. I don't want James Jennings to be alive. I want Jesus Christ to be living through me.

And it says in 2 Corinthians 5.14 that the love of Christ controls us. Why? We've concluded that Christ has died, therefore all have died. And I want to be a dead man walking, I want to be as Paul said, I die daily.

I pray that constantly to the Lord. I pray, Lord, search me, O God. Know my heart, Lord.

Try my ways, Lord. If there's any way grievous in my life, Lord, break me of it and lead me in the way everlasting. And the way everlasting is to conform to the image of Jesus Christ, to conform away from our own self.

It really isn't about us at all. It really is all about Him. And with all of that said, I just ask, keep praying for Thou Be Honest Ministries.

I try to put videos out and things to encourage others and to see people saved. And we get a lot of feedback, a lot of people who are struggling with pornography, a lot of people who are struggling with assurance of their salvation. And I'll tell you, there's one answer to every problem.

No matter what you're going through, the answer is always going to be Christ. And that's always the issue. Are we being satisfied in Jesus Christ or are we going to an idol? And one of the biggest trials in my own life has been the idol of performance.

I can sit here and make a video and people can see it and I can get praised for it, and then I start to idolize that and I start to get my joy from what I am doing and not what Christ has done. And it's so important that we examine our own hearts, that we see, are we really being satisfied in Jesus Christ? Is He really the treasure that in our joy we're dying daily to have more of Him, to be satisfied in more of Christ and to be with Him more? I'll tell you, the minute you stop praying, the minute you stop being in the Word of God daily and feasting on those things, your heart gets hard and you start to just go to other idols and other things and no matter what gets in the way, just flee away from it. Even today, I had to come to grips with the reality that I needed to get rid of my Facebook.

I mean, it's incredible the time that was getting taken, the compulsion to log on and check if there's messages or notifications and then you get lost just being a busybody on the internet. It's so easy to browse and a status we put up recently, are you spending more time browsing your Facebook or your Bible? And we need to ask that question, are we spending more time communing with others or with the Lord Jesus Christ? And the reality is, the one we're going to commune with the most is the one we love. And I'll tell you, there's much reason to love Christ.

The fact that He would save us is incredible. Even today, downstairs in the Grace House, talking to a guy who just moved here, the Lord it seems is moving in his life. I mean, to see Him be saved, if God is really saving him, the joys that will bring is just unspeakable.

To see someone come from darkness to light, from child of devil to child of God, I mean, what more can you ask for? What more can you pray for and plead with the Lord to save people, to open their eyes, to rip the blinders off? What will we not give up to see that? What will you not give up? What in your life, what in my life still hinders me from serving the Lord full of zeal, full of a love for Christ? What gets in the way? Hebrews 12 says to let go of every weight, let go of every sin. Ask yourself, what is that? It could be anything, it could be music, it could be anything can get in the way of us knowing Christ more. Anything can be an idol.

You know, when the Lord first saved me, I thought, wow, I'm free of pornography, I'm free of the lust of the flesh, and I thought, well, that's incredible, and it is. But you know what's another big sin? Idolatry, idolatry of the heart. It's not about are you only sexually pure, it's about are you emotionally pure? Are your emotions being satisfied on Jesus Christ, or are you going to another system for those to be satisfied? And so, you know, I just wanted to make a short clip to put it out, just to be honest, to just encourage you guys, I mean, everyone's going through a war, I myself am going through a war daily over here, to keep pressing on, to not give up, to not throw in the towel.

I mean, it's amazing, the devil will slander, it'll feel like hell is crushing in, and sometimes I just want to delete, I'll be honest, I just want to get away from the weights that are on me, and the reality is the next morning, the Lord's new, there are new mercies every morning. It's so encouraging, and if you're watching this right now and you're in the pit of hell, no, the reality is the Lord, He will redeem you out of that. It says in Psalms 25, my eyes are ever towards the Lord, for He will pluck my feet out of the net.

There is confidence there, and we need to have that confidence to know that He will pluck us out of the net. There's always a way of escape. I tell you, be ready to give anything up for the Lord.

If the Lord deleted I'll Be Honest and the Grace House that I run burnt down today, I would still be satisfied because I have Jesus Christ, and I used to get too much joy out of the ministry, too much joy out of doing things, but the joy only comes from Christ, and for all I know, one day the house is going to burn down, I'll lose all my video equipment, I'll Be Honest will be completely gone, and I'll be satisfied in the Lord, because I have Christ, and that's what matters, it's Him. We cannot be living for big ministries, we cannot be living for our names to be known, we must be living for Christ's name to be known, and to be proclaimed to every end of the earth, no matter what it takes, and what it's really going to take is dying. Are you dying daily, or are you compromising? We must be beyond all reproach.

Do you have a clear conscience? Do I have a clear conscience? Do I have a clean slate? If this video camera was watching my mind, my heart, everywhere I'm at, 24 hours a day, would you see someone striving to enter through the narrow door, or someone compromising with the world? And may that not be said of us at all. I tell you, don't live for the approval of man, live for God's glory. It says in Galatians 1.10, am I now seeking the praise, the approval of man, or of God? If I was seeking the approval of man, I wouldn't be a slave of Christ, and I tell you, I am so happy to be a slave of Christ, I am so happy to have His love binding me up and controlling my life, and only abiding in Him can I endure, and only with more love for Christ will I be able to press on in this race.

So if you're out there and you've been watching, I'll be honest, be encouraged, be challenged, and press on. Don't give up, don't grow tired, no, your labor is not in vain. Whatever it is, no matter if it's mopping a floor, do it all for the glory of God.

Don't live for big ministries, live to know God much, to be much with Him, to be much with Christ, and that's what it all matters, to know Him. Nothing else really matters. So you know what, I pray it now, Lord, whatever it takes to break me of myself, that I can be more like Christ, to bear more fruit, do it Lord.

And I pray that we would all pray that. You know what, this world can really be turned upside down if we really count the cost and let go of every weight, not just the sins, but the weights that so easily entangle us, and we look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. So don't account your life of any value, don't count it precious to yourself.

If only you can complete this course that you've received from the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify to the Gospel, that's it. Testify to that Gospel. And I tell you, that's what it's all about.

So be encouraged. If you need help, if you need counsel, I'm here to help, and I'm here to serve. Not to serve myself, but to serve others.

And so, pray that I am doing that to the extent that God gives me the grace to do so. So pray, seek the Lord, seek to know more of Him, and be less and less about yourself and everything. So may God help us, may God help us indeed.

For the Lord, He died, God actually sent His only Son and slaughtered Him for the sins of many. And if that doesn't motivate you, what will? What will? So, Amen.

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