

Spiritual Laws

by John Follette

The sermon teaches that understanding and applying spiritual laws through surrender and discipline is essential for a stable and fruitful Christian life.

Scripture: Psalm 18:28, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 15:46, Ephesians 2:19, Hebrews 6:1

Topics: "Faith Development", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

John Follette emphasizes the importance of stabilizing our faith in God during times of trouble, encouraging us to apply Christian philosophy to our daily lives. He highlights the need to surrender all aspects of our lives to God, trusting in His provision and guidance. By surrendering to God, we allow Him to work in us, transforming us into the image of Christ through ministry and service. John reminds us that true life and character development come through surrender and testing, ultimately leading to spiritual growth and fulfillment.

Transcript

I want to help you so that when trouble comes, or when you have difficulties, you will not cast away your faith, but be able to have it stabilized in God, and take of the grace of God, which He has freely given, and does give to tide us along. I want you to have some of these basic Truths in your hearts and minds, and be able to apply, what I call Christian philosophy, to your daily walk.

If we can do that, we get through. But if we are ignorant of the ways of life, and the laws and principles which God has given us, our lives become sometimes quite traffic. This need not be. Even though tragedy may come as a means of discipline to us, He gives us power and grace to interpret it, so that it doesn't leave a scar and mar our spirits. We receive it; get our discipline out of it, and what God wants; then lay it aside as some accommodation which He gave. "That was a tragedy that soured my life;" we say, "and I'll never be the same." Don't do that. That is a very strange and wrong reaction. MEET IT!

As a child of God, I have come back to my Paradise place, where God is responsible for my wherewithal. God was responsible when He made Adam, but Adam, as a creature, didn't like God's way of managing. Now he is dead spiritually, and by the sweat of his brow, he has to get out under the burden of living -- see if you can "pay your taxes..."

God cursed the EARTH. What good would it have done to curse a dead man? The earth now resists man. So many of us that have come back to God -- to our original place -- having been lighted; (for "he has

lighted my candle" Psa. 18:28) have been able to sense that He is all we need.

As a real child of God, we have come back again to the first place, and position in Him where God provides. Paul says so; -- even if it is just clothes and fish, God will provide. He likes to because we are His children. I think He likes to do it, but He is also obligated to! Why? Because we have met a law of spiritual adjustment, in the realm of the Spirit. It was about the very first thing Jesus taught the disciples: "If you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33)

A life is not safe in itself unless it is surrendered to God. Neither are the things which He permits or brings to us, unless they first go through His hands. That is why He calls us so many times to surrender certain things to Him, and we have a terrific time, as we say, dying our death and surrendering the things to God. That is necessary, but it isn't because He wants them. They can't enrich Him; they can't make Him more God because of it. The enrichment comes back as a reflex in us, because we have surrendered them. That which is most choice must be surrendered to Him to its death so that it can come back again safe and sound in its resurrection --in time, when we are ready. He only wants them in His hands: the cleansing medium. We bring the quivering sacrifice which is torn from our hearts, and we think we will die because of it, and we put it with trembling hands into the hands of God. He says, "Thank you." Now that kiss of God upon the sacrifice takes the danger element out of it, and when He gives it back it is safe. Sometimes, though, He keeps it.

So if He sees it is wholesome for us to have it, He cancels the danger point by bringing us to a place of surrender where we can allow it to go to its death. Then He says, "Thank you, I don't want it, really, you can have it." Unless it goes through His hands first, it is still a dangerous element for us to have. Paul, in order to actually maintain what God desired in his pattern, had to SUFFER the loss to make it good. "If there be first a "willing spirit" over a situation, IT {that willing spirit} is accepted as though the whole deed were done. To one He says, "You are not safe with it; it is not good for you; you give that to Me." To another He says, "I can trust you with it. I have not come to rob; I have come to give LIFE -- and that more abundantly."

Too many interests are detrimental to real spiritual life.

All ministry, whether we are preaching or teaching, or whatever our vocation, which is in the will of God, is purely reactionary. It is not to get something done; it is to get something done in you, and in me through the media of our immediate task. God is after you, and after me first. He lets us ride along quite a long time, and then: woe to the flesh; woe to the old creation; woe to this old ego. But I tell you something, there will be life, life, life, but it has to come through that process. Through the ministries and service which is given to us, we are changed, released, and conformed to the image of Christ.

To the disciples, who were under a tradition of a King, quarreling about reigning and ruling over this city and that city, He Would say, "Don't be too sure about that. Have you exhausted the study of a Paschal Lamb? Do you know all that pertains to the Lamb before you get so intrigued about reigning and ruling?"

That Kingship will come, but we surely have to know a Lamb before we know a King -- a Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. How liberating that is; how broad; what a universal thing!

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Some day it will be: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh." You will never have a Bridegroom without a Lamb.

Life only comes through death. That is a spiritual law. Character takes time to build, under a law of testing and proving.

God works with indirect methods; not from frontal attacks. In Paul's time, as now, the world was just as rotten everywhere. We don't find him making a direct attack on one of those existing conditions. It has to come indirectly through the life of the individual. "Overcome evil by good" -- and good is the life manifested continually in such an individual, overpowering the other. But you can't legislate it. It is slow, but it is His way.

Peter and all the rest of the disciples were fishing all night in disobedience after Jesus' crucifixion. Jesus knew every nail in the boat, and every scale on the fish. Jesus saith unto them, "Children, have ye any meat?" (John 21:5) He wasn't asking for information at all. Why was He asking? Here we have a little principle: a question asked, provokes an answer. The answer becomes the platform upon which the blessing is released.

"Have ye any fish?"

"No."

"No" is one of the most difficult words to pronounce in the English language!

The two disciples on the Road to Emmaus had sold out everything. They had followed Him, but didn't get Him on the throne. They loved the Lord, but they loved their own lives too. They were afraid of losing their investment, and so, when He spoke of death, Calvary: "I must go;" -- they didn't want that. They wanted a kingdom. But He died! He was not going to make a kingdom. The kingdom had become a fixation in them. The resurrection was the most profound thing that had happened. Do you think that moved them? No, not at all. The very last question those disciples ever asked the Lord, after the tragedy of Calvary, and the miracle of the resurrection, was: "When wilt Thou restore the kingdom?" Even that marvelous resurrection did not budge the fixation. It still held until the very hour He was taken up. They still "grab at His garments and ask, "Will we now have a kingdom?"

I think those are the most tragic words in the New Testament as far as the disciples are concerned. What a picture of their attitude of heart! He has a marvelous Substitute, (the Holy Spirit), but if we are not willing to wait for the revelation of a Substitute, we move out under a poor premise, and collapse. Peter went back, {they all did}, to the nets. Misery loves company. One disciple could not bear it alone. When we fail in the Spirit, we always react in the natural. If we can't move in the power of the Spirit, in faith, we will revert to the natural -- it is a law.

The law for building the temple -- the building which we are -- is testing and proving. He has no other way. It is an established law by which we grow. Salvation is a gift; the baptism of the Spirit is purely on the gift level; healing is on a gift level; all those lovely, elementary things, the first principles which are presented to us at the base of our mountain climb, all those are purely on the basis of gifts. But we cannot remain there, and be on the mountain. Paul says, "Leaving behind; forgetting; dropping these 'elementary' first principles, (not in the sense of value, but in their position). Don't forsake them; don't belittle them; don't throw them out the window; let them be exactly where they are, but "Let us go on to completion." (Heb. 6:1) How will we get there? A law works right away. We will never get away from it; we might just as well own and accept it. If you have to quarrel, go to the Lord with your quarrel, and say, "Lord, You could have made it easier." -- A stone has to be chiseled and hammered before it can be put in the building. (Eph.

2:19, 20, 22)

A spiritual need cannot be satisfied by a natural application, as was the case with Adam and Eve making aprons. Man has a material outlook today, extremely too much so; so that he has very little appreciation or understanding, not only of spiritual things pertaining to God, but of spiritual Values in the world. We know there are spiritual values in the world, as well as spiritual values in God. We fall back upon nature to supply a spiritual need. Wherever there is a spiritual need, nature always comes in, though broken down, trying to remedy it. "That which is spiritual is not first, but natural, afterward that which is spiritual." (I Cor. 15:46) Man (the flesh) has to have a fling at the natural first, as shown in the disciples first counting the bread and fish, and in Adam bringing out a natural display of fig leaves. First the natural, fig leaves, then the spiritual, a lamb.

Don't be afraid of your limitations (five loaves, two fishes). Let God get hold of them; put your limitations in the hands of the Miracle Worker. Five thousand are fed and blessed!

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