

Continuity

by Joshua Daniel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of continuity in discipleship, learning from Jesus, and sticking by the cross in tough times.

Duration: 42:08

Scripture: Proverbs 9:10, Matthew 11:28-30, Mark 16:9, John 8:31, John 15:8

Topics: "Discipleship", "Faithfulness"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of continuity in discipleship, highlighting the transformation that comes from sticking to God's Word and following Jesus steadfastly, even in tough times. It discusses the need for humility, meekness, and trust in God's truth, showcasing examples like Mary Magdalene's unwavering faith. The message urges believers to be true disciples who bear fruit, overcome pride, and stand firm in their faith, especially in a world filled with challenges and temptations.

Transcript

Now dear folks, when we turn to God's Word at John 8, John chapter 8 and verse 31. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed. If you continue in my word, and ye shall know the truth, then the truth shall make you free.

You know, when we consider how fickle people have become, till no one is ready to trust another, one begins to wonder if we have dumped the whole Word of God and the reality of Christ and the transformation which he brings out of the window. Because continuity, you know folks, one of those men whom I came to meet as a young student at the university before I graduated, well, he wanted to convert me. I think I stand in need of being converted all the time, you know.

You know, because I often say I'm not like the Lord Jesus, so I need to be transformed and changed all the time. But this fellow wanted to convert me to communism. He was a communist leader and lived a vile life.

He had come there to recruit people to the party. However, when he heard the Word of God, he said, Will Jesus speak to me? I said, Yes, Jesus will speak to you. There was a little chapel in the corner of that campus, and there I prayed with him.

Subsequently, he went alone and began to seek God. And the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to him, You are crucifying me. And the transformation that came upon that wicked fellow's life began to impact many.

He had been a leader in strikes and was a gambler and lived a very immoral kind of life. But when he became a teacher, he became also an excellent teacher of the Word of God. And to the end of his life, he lived for Jesus.

Now, continuity. You see, continuity in discipleship does not depend on circumstances, whether the economy goes up or down, has no bearing upon your trust in God's Word. Now, if you turn to Matthew, the 11th chapter, you know that scripture very well, I presume.

Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. All right. Look at the 30th verse.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. You know, if those who call themselves Christians appear as though they're all the time battling with this, that and the other, and they have to ward off the devil here and ward off the devil there, like the heathen, you know, the heathen like to have amulets and tie some charms, or I do not know yet this poking of the nostrils and the ears and all that stuff has anything to do with some other little tokens to frighten off the devil. Well, dear friends, what does the Bible say? Learn of me.

You know, it's a wonderful experience to learn of Jesus. By the time people are through with Sunday services, be it an hour or two, they feel that they have a surfeit of religion for the whole week. On the contrary, you know, it was daily manner.

They had to go and collect their daily sustenance. And God moreover said, let not that manner be left overnight by anyone gathering up an excess, because it'll breed worms. So it was a daily experience and a daily practice of faith.

There are certain things which our mothers taught us should be done daily, like brushing our teeth, not once in a month, you know. There are certain things which we have just learned to do daily. Don't we have something to eat in the morning daily or at lunch or at supper time? Of course we do.

Oh, why do you do that daily? Your gut will profit by once weekly supper, I suppose. How many people will quarrel with such a proposition daily? Now here we are told, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. You know, all these tensions that we talk of and the stresses, what, how do you account for them? What is basically wrong? Suppose somebody calls you a fool and an idiot.

Why do you bristle? Why do you keep mulling on it and begin to resent the very sight of the man? Don't we have free speech today? Of course we do. And should somebody decide that you are foolish? Is it a discovery that he has made? I would think I was very exceedingly foolish. And you know, when we go against God's word, we are not only foolish, but we are foolhardy or fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

The Lord Jesus Christ called his disciples fools. You know, that man who made no provision for eternity. The Lord Jesus Christ told us, God said, thou fool.

There are many things in which we are very foolish. You know, we are very concerned, of course, about what we have for the moral. How are we going to figure this matter out, our budget for the month? These

are the things that cause us concern and care.

All right, that's right. But what about the next breath which you take? You take it for granted. Let me tell you that every day I thank God for one more day in my life.

Some of you may think that you're in the pink of health and therefore you don't need to praise God at all. But you know, I find that I can praise him for eyesight. I can praise him for the hearing.

I can praise him that I can digest the food. I can praise him for so much. And I feel that I'm such a big debtor in the matter of praise.

I'm so slow to praise. You know, it all comes with learning of Christ. Continuity is not possible when you don't learn that meekness.

You know, the fluctuations in your blood pressure, according to the moods into which you fling yourself, they can be very injurious. You see, my wife was remarking today that some people are so fearful of the doctor that when they go to see the doctor, their blood pressure jumps up. All right, there are many other things.

When people get into a bad temper, there are many other things. Oh, the meekness which Jesus gives. Learn of me, for I'm meek and lowly in heart, lowly in heart.

And now, folks, this acquisition of things, the high life, and all those things that we seem to regard as necessities today, which were not necessities a little while, some years ago. But today, we almost consider them to be necessities. We can't do without them.

And what happens? We get stuck to a manner of life which seems to be very far removed from the simplicity that is in Jesus. When we hear of Jesus with no place to rest his head, well, how far removed we are from that. You know, when we choose our accommodation, well, how picky we can be, how choosy we can be.

You know, this is not right. That's not in place. Oh, this shelf should have been somewhere else.

Or the carpet, or something else to blame. You know, a contented heart, a humble spirit that's gone out. The more education you have, the more sophistication you have.

Actually, education ought to make us very humble, because a really educated person knows how little he knows. That's it. A really educated person knows, you know.

There are so many things which we hardly know. And yet, you know, people with small knowledge are the very proudest lot. That's sad.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And to depart from evil is understanding. You know, that kind of understanding which comes from the knowledge of Jesus makes us very humble.

I tell you, if there's one thing I desire today, it is to be more and more humble. And I see that that is the quickest way to learn. Otherwise, I learn nothing.

I feel, you know, after preaching for 65 years, one would think, oh, you know a lot. No, I will tell you plainly, I don't. I've just seen so little of Jesus.

I need to receive a lot more of my Savior. I've just touched the hem of his garment. That's all.

You see, it makes me humble. It makes me easy to live with. You know, when you do not have that spirit which says, yes, I want to sit at your feet and learn, Lord Jesus.

When you don't have that kind of spirit, you're only going to have a stop and start religion, off and on religion. There's no continuity. How would you like if we had a connection given here to the electric supply which just cuts off every couple of seconds? Comes back again, cuts off, comes back again.

You can't live with such an situation. You say there's something wrong here. I don't want to live in this place.

And how horrible it would be to be turning on Jesus for a few moments or a few minutes and turning on the devil the next few minutes. What? What are you trying to do? You're trying to say there is no reality in my experience. You can't say there's no reality in Christ.

But you must admit there's no continuity. There is no dependability. There is no trustworthiness.

You know, one of the great generals of the last war, who was rated as the greatest general in the battlefield of the American forces, was General Patton. General Patton went once into a hospital tent where the casualties from the front were being brought in. And he saw a poor private, I mean a soldier, enlisted man sitting there huddled up, his nerves all shattered.

And he flew into a rage, slapped him, sent this fellow, who is a coward, out of the hospital. And he did it twice over. And, you know, he did not get into the reporter's realm quickly enough to damage his reputation.

But as the general who was in the midst of an awful struggle to recover Europe, he could not tolerate a coward. He was, this fellow, unfortunately, was a sick man. He was a real patient.

However, the general did not understand his case and jumped to the conclusion that he was a mere coward. Now, if we are going to bring that to the Christian soldier, how many cowards do we have? Who need the slapping of the general? How many cowards do we have? Plenty of them. He said, get this malingerer out of the place.

Now, continuity. If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples? Now, the Lord Jesus Christ also said in John, the 15th chapter, you know, the disciple is a man who brings forth fruit. Eighth verse.

Herein is my father glorified. John 15 and verse 8. Herein is my father glorified that you bear much fruit. You know, people are just waiting to find a shoulder on which to weep or someone to curry favor with.

Yeah, as it is said today, it's not what you really are, but whom you really know. What rubbish is that? Whom do you know? Somebody is right on top, will pull some strings. Or are you a person who is capable, hardworking, can deliver the goods? No, it's it's a sad perversion of in Christian society.

You know, these Christian values have become so corrupted. You can't call them Christian values anymore. They are heathen values, heathen values, heathen never trust each other.

You know, when I was a little boy going to school, at the post office, quite a big post office, occupied a part of our grounds. It was carved out of the grounds where I played my games and lived as a little boy. And

that postmaster said to my father, a Hindu, a Brahmin is a priest, man in a priestly class, never trusts another.

Well, have we become a continent of Brahmins then? Ha ha, that would be something. Nobody wants to trust the other. What's wrong? The yes of a person has no validity.

The no of an individual has no truth in it. Oh, how sad. So, my dear friends, the disciple is a person who brings forth fruit.

And don't you think that this downturn of today, which has plunged many people into an awful gloom and pessimism and fear, don't you think this is the time when, if Christianity, if your Christianity is real, you can and ought to inject some hope into people? Are we also going to be submerged by this tide of war and fear and frustration? No. Great peace have they that love my law, love my word, and nothing shall offend them. Continuity in tough times.

Now, that's all, we see in the Bible. Tough times producing men and women of faith who were able to grapple with those problems that submerged others. Now, that's what happens when we live with Jesus.

Now, I am surprised that the Bible, when it speaks of Mary Magdalene, this is what the Bible says, you know, in the concluding chapters of the Gospels, we find Mary Magdalene being mentioned in Mark the 15th chapter and verse 40. There were also women looking on afar off, among whom was Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James the Less and of Joseph and Salome, who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him and ministered unto him. And to think that during the hours when the Lord Jesus Christ suffered so much, here was a group of women that stuck by the cross.

Now, think of that, a mother who sticks by the cross and the blessing which she begets. And here the Bible tells us in the 16th chapter of Mark, again, then the ninth verse, now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast out seven devils. Well, if Jesus was going by past record, he should have said, well, you know, here's a woman that was into the occult and demon possession, and I had to cast out seven demons out of her.

Can I trust her to be the very first to carry the resurrection message? Yes, he did, because she stuck by the cross. You know, folks, just think of what kind of hour do you want to stick by the cross when it is all so comfortable and lush and plush and you have every wish catered to? Is that when you want to be at the cross? Is that when a real disciple wants to follow? It's in the tough times. It's when people are denying Jesus, you see.

So is Christ and Christianity going to be pushed off the radar here in Canada or in the United States? This land that produced such great missionaries and men of such sacrifice, are we not going to see people who can stick by the cross? Mary Magdalene stuck by the cross at an hour when there was danger, imminent danger for her. That was no time to stick by the cross. You would have advised her probably saying, save your skin, get out of here.

This is no place for somebody who wants security. What kind of cheap Christianity have we got today? I don't want to have any part of it. Folks, if you continue in my word, if you continue at the cross, then are you my disciples indeed.

Otherwise, you're just people who give lip service, time servers, self servers. What will I get out of it? No. What shall I do to minister to my savior? What shall I do at this hour of trial and peril? You know, friends,

we seem to have gotten a wrong idea of our calling, completely wrong idea of our calling.

If you continue in my word, if you continue in the battle and the forefront of the fray, then are you my disciples indeed. So, when I look at these examples of people who stood steadfast, you know, Florence Nightingale had to face a lot of opposition from her high-born family. What are you doing with these poor people? Come on over to the party.

The queen, the king wants us to join him in one of his garden parties. No, I have something better to do. I will go and serve.

You know, we belong to a different nature altogether, a different caliber. Oh, folks, let us not fail our master at such a time as this. The Lord will teach us not only to overcome circumstances, he will teach us to overcome that inward nature which is replete, full of pride, and that is an awful impediment for discipleship.

Let us pray. Let us tell God, Lord, I want to count in the day of battle. I want to be true to you.

Precious Lord, we hate to run away from the battle. You did not run away from the cross. We want to bear that cross and be steadfast and stick by the cross at such an hour as this, when nations are renouncing their old faith and their traditional charity to accommodate every manner of evil and abominations.

At such an hour, oh Lord our God, help us to stick with the truth, knowing that the truth sanctifies and discipleship consists of continuity. So, Lord, hear our prayer and help us to be true and not just lip worshipers. Save us.

Let us not look at the weak or the weary, but let us see our calling to lift up the faint-hearted. Please, Lord, hear our prayer. In Jesus' holy name, amen.

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