

O Faithless and Perverse Generation

by Joshua Daniel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of execution, humility, and the power of the Lord in our lives, and calls us to overcome our perverseness and be more like Christ.

Duration: 42:22

Scripture: Luke 9:37

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Christian Discipleship"

Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of faith, humility, and execution in the Christian walk. It highlights the need for disciples to be like their master, Jesus, and emphasizes the significance of true faith and obedience in executing God's will. The sermon also addresses the challenges of pride, perverseness, and the necessity of embracing the cross in the Christian life.

Transcript

If you will please turn to Luke the 9th chapter now, please, from the verse 37. And it came to pass, on the next day, Luke 9.37, when they had come down from the hill, much people met him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech you, look upon my son, for he is my only child.

And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out, and it teareth him, and he formeth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought your disciples to cast him out, and they could not. And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffering bring your son hither? You know, my dear friends, there are many challenges today, which we are not touching all over the place.

There are opportunities and challenges. And we simply just try to get around these challenges by speaking some Christian jargon. You know, something by way of explaining our own infertility, not being able to deliver the goods.

So, here was a complaint made to the Lord. I brought my son and showed him to your disciples, but they could not cast him out, cast out the devil. And they could not.

These words really hurt. You know, in the original plan of when Jesus called out his disciples, three important things are mentioned. One, that they might be with him.

Two, that he might send them out, send them forth, to cast out evil spirits, and to heal the sick, and preach the kingdom of God. Now, that was the purpose, the design behind discipleship. Now, the word Christian implies that we are disciples.

And it is enough if the disciple be as his master. Said our Lord, nothing else is enough. That the disciple should be as his master.

Of course, that's the goal of every disciple. You know, when a man says, I am the disciple of so and so, this great man of God, or whoever, it implies that the purpose of this disciple is to be like his master, to learn from him, and to be with him, and to execute his purpose. Now, look at the failure in execution.

If you're in a company and you cannot execute, you're out. That's it. You're shown the door.

If you claim to be a doctor or a nurse, and you cannot really be proficient at your job, and really help the patients, then you're out. That's it. Somebody complains, and you know what a lot of complaints there are about the functioning of the health service.

And some of those complaints are terrible. Moral infringements, moral harassment, sexual attacks by medical personnel upon the patient. Oh, my dear people.

The newspaper shames us. But I think we have reached the point when we know no shame. The Bible says, the glory in their shame, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

Well, what a record. And of course, it's a very incomplete record, because some of these things are rarely reported. They never come to light.

Just a fraction of such incidents ever surface. Now, my dear friends, execution. Now, we are all hearers of God's word.

And are we doers? These men had been with the Lord Jesus, had seen him functioning. And now when they had to execute, they were failing in their execution. Now, what a serious failure that is.

Now, what is the point of having 10,000 people in a meeting if there's not one of them who will execute? What's the good of that? No good at all. My dear friends, execution comes from, it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. That is, God is working.

He that began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ. God is working. Are you setting up some barriers? You know, friends, in some places, I see barriers on the road, on the highway.

Suddenly you come across a barrier. Why? They do not want terrorists to be able to race along. So they put, the police put certain barriers so that they can see who is the guy in the car.

Who is the man behind the wheel? Is he one of the wanted? Well, you can put barriers. That's up to you. I find the very serious barrier in the very heart of human disposition.

What is that barrier? Pride. Hard to acknowledge your fallen state and hard to acknowledge how the Lord, you know how David describes it, he lifted me out of a horrible pit. Why can't you mention the horror of the pit from which you have been lifted? You know, people don't like to mention that.

The horror of that pit. Now I find that as I get older, my heart cries, Lord, I want to get humbler. The humbler I get, the faster I learn.

And if I'm not going to be humble, I'll just be too slow and will not have finished learning before you call me. I need to learn. I need to learn.

That learning heart. Learn of me. For I am meek and lowly in heart.

Why did not the Lord Jesus say, learn of me my power. Learn of me this or that. He said, learn of me, for I'm meek and lowly in heart.

That's the key. That's the key to power and the key to blessing. But you see, we find it very hard to humble ourselves.

You know, what's the good of going to a retreat and walking away with an empty cup or a half-filled cup? What is the good of that? Sheer waste of time, isn't it? But to go to the Lord and learn of him, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. You know, most of the disturbance in our lives, most of our agitation and frustration is because we are not humble. Somebody says something irresponsible about you.

What does it matter? He is welcome to say what he likes. It might be a madcap. It might be somebody who is so troubled that he must say something nasty.

What if he says something very nasty? After all, this is a free world and he's free to say what he wants to say. Why should that so completely upset you? It's simply because you're not lowly in mind. If somebody called you a fool and you get very angry, you see, you could, you know, laugh it off and say, hey, you didn't quite describe me.

That's an understatement. Let me tell you how much more I can say about my foolishness. That you have deflated the poor fellow.

You see? Now, the Lord Jesus Christ had to say this of his own disciples. Oh, faithless generation. Faithless and perverse generation.

How long shall I be with you and suffer you? Now, you know, that is a serious stricture, isn't it? Perverseness, perverseness. That is something deeply perverse about human nature. You know, some people have a very suspicious mind.

They must suspect that somebody is doing some harm to them. You know? And somebody is bugging their phone or some accusation against somebody. And very often it is against a family member.

That's how it goes. And you can imagine how much you suffer just because of a suspicion or a resentment. You know, folks, when the Lord Jesus Christ said upon the cross, Father, they know not what they do.

Think of that. Forgive them, for they know not what they do. Well, when somebody drives a nail into your hand, certainly he knows something of what he's doing.

And when somebody sees blood spurting out of your hands, he certainly feels some little compunction, some little revulsion at the enormity of his cruelty. Or crime. They know not what they do.

They're blinded. Father, you must needs forgive them. They don't know what they do.

Look at the response of our Lord Jesus on the cross to the driven nails. Now, why can't we also, true, we have never been crucified in that fashion. We have never seen our own bloods splashing all over the place.

But can't we react in some measure, reflect that love, that forgiveness? For we are made partakers in his divine nature. That's what we are told in the scripture. Partakers of his divine nature.

You know, after all, I can't claim divinity. But we are told that we are partakers in that divine nature. But that perverseness of spirit, ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.

You know, this can be applied to a lot of people. They seem to receive God's word. But still, no implementation, no execution.

You know, the letter killeth and the spirit giveth life. The letter killeth. Oh, how people can be so full of scripture quoting.

And they can show the faults of everybody else. Except their own faults. My dear people, that perverseness of spirit is spoken of in Isaiah chapter 30.

Isaiah chapter 30. And we are told here, ninth verse, eight and nine. Now go write it before them in a table and note it in a book that it may be for the time to come forever and ever.

That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord, which say to the seers, prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things. Now here, get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to seize from before me. Look at the perverseness, which says to the prophets, prophesy not.

So we do not want the Lord to put his finger upon those things which are causing us to stumble, that are making us actually powerless. Now we are confronted today by a situation all around us where I see endless opportunities. You know, some people, on the other hand, interpreted this way.

They say, you know, people don't want to know. People are so indifferent to the gospel. No, nobody can be truly indifferent to a practical presentation of the Word of God, because everybody has got awful problems.

People are just sinking with their problems, with their sorrows, with their worries, and their anxieties. In the midst of this, they say, well, we have tried religion. Doesn't work.

We see a lot of these religious people. What is the big difference? They go to church on Sunday. I don't.

That's about all the difference. Now, my dear friends, if that is true, that there is no other difference between you and your colleagues or friends, let me tell you, your Christianity is bogus. There's something seriously wrong.

Christ in you, you know, you can't hide Christ. That's not possible. I had a letter given to me just a few days ago.

This was about a man who was listening to our television broadcast. In his own language, apparently he was a person who hated the Lord Jesus. And suddenly, as he was listening, he felt that he was healed.

He said, let me check this out because he was an AIDS patient. So the very next day, he went over to the big hospital and said, let me test this thing out. And the results came negative, completely negative.

Well, my answer to such people would be, no man can do that. It is only the Lord. So give all the glory to the Lord.

So my dear friends, this is a day of great opportunity. When faith must be put to the test. How long shall I suffer you? Oh, faithless generation.

Perverse generation. You know, folks, there came another case. In Imphal, you've just seen our center there in Imphal.

Some of you know that it was right there that they wanted to stone me. And the Lord showed me to build a center right there. Okay.

Some of our people are having to confront terrorists and extortioners who just shoot and demand half a million or a lot of money which must be paid down or you are a goner. However, some of our converted officials and others are withstanding these men. Unheard of in those areas.

Withstanding those terrorists. Do what you like. Yes.

And I was taken to what is called, what has been labeled a needy home for some of these girls who have nowhere to go. One of our converted brothers is running this home and he said to me, would you please pray for this girl? She has been paralyzed. The upper part of her chest is paralyzed.

She can't do anything. She can't sing. Well, her father evidently had committed suicide and this poor girl I prayed for her and in the evening the choir of the needy home was going to sing at the meeting and she was one of the singers but could not sing.

But after prayers the Lord instantly healed her so that in the evening she stood with the rest of the choir and I was informed by this brother who is also my interpreter that she was healed and could immediately function. Now, for every touch of God, every work of God, we must praise him and especially when this is a demonstration before a lot of people who were once headhunters. So this is the Lord at work but I still feel, my dear friends, that my faith is very poor.

I tell you honestly, I do. You see, you can say all power is given to my Lord in heaven and in earth and he is my Lord and in the same breath you say, but, but you know, this is how it is and this is how it has been and then you go into your long story of woe. Now these two things don't jive, do they? There's something wrong there.

My Lord is risen. You see, that was the battle cry of the early church. My Lord, our Lord is risen.

Now just think, nobody could stand before that battle cry. The Roman government could not stand. The Sanhedrin could not stand and all the restrictions that were placed upon them just turned out to be matchsticks.

They were broken. Now is it still our battle cry? My Lord is risen. It should be.

It cannot be otherwise. My Lord is not risen. If you believe that in your heart, you're not going to bring much conviction when you say, my Lord is risen.

So when I say, my Lord is risen and all power is given to him, I say, how much of that power am I using? Now suppose you have all these lights, we are using some power here, you know, but is there any danger to the electricity system of the land, the grid, that we are going to exhaust all their power? This little meeting is going to be disastrous in terms of expending all the power in the land. See, some of the things that we do ask God are very small things and yet we go to him with a very doubtful frame of mind and the Lord was so grieved about this bed. Then he tried to tell them, the very next thing is, the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.

I'm going to be delivered. They're going to understand the cross. You know, my dear friends, we cannot have a Christian life without the cross.

The cross is still the symbol of sacrifice. Some people want cheap blessing. There's no cheap blessing.

There's nothing like cheap blessing. As a matter of fact, one of the sad facts that we have to encounter is this. Our retreats tend to be rather cheap.

No doubt, many people receive very little blessing. There's nothing like cheap blessing at all. In all these 62 years that I've preached Christ, I've seen no cheap blessing.

You take the cross out, you have taken the heart out. And they couldn't understand what was the cross. The next thing was, who is the greatest? What do you mean? Instead of saying, hey Lord, because of the perverseness of our spirits, we could not handle this case.

Instead of saying that, they were soon talking about who is the greatest. And the Lord Jesus Christ said, he that would be the least among you, he is the greatest. See, some of us don't like the idea of being the least.

You know, we don't feel happy till we have a lot of security. And the kind of security we often think of is the security that we seem to imagine money will bring. If I had this amount of money, I would do a great deal for God.

That is a lie of the devil. I have seen that it does not work that way. So, let us get to the Lord and say, Lord, I don't want to be saying, all power belongs to my Lord.

And in the same breath, say, Father, I have failed here. I have failed there. Let us pray.

Loving Father, we do not want to be afflicted with a perverseness in our spirits. We want your word to address us. In plain terms, we want your living word to speak to us.

We are spirits, Lord. Tell me, would you give me pass marks tonight for my faith? Or am I just a borderline case, barely likely to pass? Father, how utterly contradictory this is. When I say all power is given to my Lord.

And then in a day of such opportunity as this, when the word of God is failing to be wrung out in every corner of this country, what is wanting? Lord, I find myself wanting in faith. Have mercy on us. At a time when people are groping and people are covering up all their misery and trying to say, okay, I'm going to the ballgame tonight or I'm going to some other entertainment tonight, some way by which to forget my

misery.

Oh Lord, at such a time, please teach us to lift up Jesus. Give us an understanding of the cross. Let us not imagine that there is cheap blessing.

No blessing without the cross. And we want to carry the cross. We want to humble ourselves at the cross.

We want that all nature of ours destroyed, crucified at the cross. Hear our prayer in Jesus name. Amen.

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