

# Dying to Self (Part 1 of 2)

by Keith Green

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*Keith Green's sermon emphasizes the necessity of self-denial as a path to spiritual growth and true fulfillment in Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:01:53

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 17:12, Matthew 23:12, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 6:38, Luke 14:11, John 3:30

**Topics:** "Sacrificial Living", "Spiritual Discipline"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of committing everything to God. He references Luke 12:35-36, where Jesus instructs his followers to be ready and alert for the return of their master. The preacher emphasizes that God sees everything, even the hidden aspects of our lives, and we should aim to impress Him alone. He also mentions John 12:24, highlighting the need to give up things we love if they compete with our devotion to God. Lastly, the preacher discusses Luke 21:1-4, where Jesus praises a poor widow for her sacrificial giving, contrasting it with the extravagant gifts of the rich.

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## Transcript

This is going to be a pretty in-depth study, going from scripture to scripture. We're going to be studying all the basic facets of denying self. You can title this study, Self Denial or Death to Self.

And it's important that you realize we're going to be going quickly through many scriptures. You're to write the scriptures down and then go back at another time and look them up and study them and pray over them. Some of these are very good memorization scriptures, although I don't believe in a lot of scripture memorization.

I think you can clutter your head up with too much of the scripture without meditating on it, without really... I mean, I've seen people that memorize chapters and chapters and chapters and they can recite it to you, but so can a parrot. It doesn't matter how much of the scripture you have memorized, it's how much of the scripture you have digested in your spirit. I know there's many people that would disagree with me, but I started memorizing scripture and I was more into the memorization of it than the practice and assimilation of it into my life.

But there's some great scripture here for memorization. 1 Kings chapter 17, verse 12. Let's start at verse 8. Then the word of the Lord came to him, Elijah, saying, Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there.

Behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you. So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks, and he called to her and said, Please, get me a little water in a jar that I may drink. And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.

But she said, As the Lord your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar. And behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die. Now this is in the middle of a famine.

It hasn't rained in three years. At this point, it's probably two years, because he stays with them for a year or so. Maybe it's only one year, but it's an incredible drought.

No water. And she's living in a landship. All she's got left from her stores is a little bit, enough to make a meal for her son and her, and then that's it.

They don't have anything else to eat. Then Elijah said to her, Do not fear. Do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake first from it, and bring it out to me, and afterward you may make one for yourself and for your son.

For thus says the Lord God of Israel, Nor shall the bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth. So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and he and her household ate for many days. The bowl of flour was not exhausted, nor did the jar of oil become empty according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke through Elijah.

Now, how rude can you get, right? Now God has already told him, I've commanded a widow to provide for you, in verse 9. And he comes to her, and this is the way God's going to provide for her, by giving him the first cake from the last meal that she has. I find that when we are exhausted, that when we have nothing left to give, when we have absolutely the last bottom of the jar, that's when God will ask us for peace. When you're just about to fall asleep, that's when the counseling call will come in.

That's true. When you have no more room, then God sends the people. When you have no more money, then the bills come in.

This is the test of the Lord. We're going to end, this is really interesting, we're going to end this Bible study with an Old Testament test, and we're going to start, I'm sorry, we're going to start it with an Old Testament test, and we're going to end it with an Old Testament test, with a lot of New Testament scripture in between. This is an Old Testament test.

You want to be provided for, widow? She's ready to die. What's she got to lose? You want to be provided for? Now God's going to use you to provide for me, but I'm going to do miracles in your midst. I think it's incredible, God says, I have commanded a widow to take care of you.

I have commanded a widow to provide for you. Dig that, verse 9. The widow isn't going to provide for him. He goes there, she's got one bit of flour left, and he says, all right, you can provide for me out of a supernatural bowl of flour and a supernatural jar of oil that always only has one serving left.

First you must deny yourself and give it to me. Then I will eat. Every day will be a day of faith.

You'll only have enough left for that day. But he swears to her. In verse 14.

For thus says the Lord God of Israel, the bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty until the day that the Lord sends rain on the face of the earth. Now there's a lot of New Testament Scripture on this that we're going to go through. I think the amazing thing for us in the Scriptures is that the only way for us to have anything is to give everything away.

The only way to be exalted is to humble yourself. The only way to increase is to decrease. The only way to receive love is to give love.

The only way to grow is to get smaller. The only way to be taken care of is to take care of somebody else. It's the rule of the kingdom.

Somebody once said that hell was a place where there was food. There was a big table. There was a feast in front of them.

And their arms had no joint at their elbow. They couldn't bring it to their thing. And there was this thing and they could carve the turkey and everything but they couldn't get it to their mouth.

And they said heaven was the exact same scene with people whose arms couldn't bend either but they were feeding each other. The same situation. But they were saying here, you feed me, I'll feed you.

The only way, the only difference between those two things is selfishness and giving, sharing. The situation is exactly the same. You can have hell in a situation by having two people who are afraid to love and give to each other.

By having people who are afraid to give themselves up. And that's hell. That's selfishness.

That's hurt. That's anguish. And the same situation with the same amount of love and need and they give to each other.

Here is two people who have nothing to eat at all. She's got enough to live and he's got nothing. She's got just one last meal.

He says the only way you'll be provided for is if you give me a meal from that last meal first. And that's the rule of the kingdom. Okay, turn to Matthew 10, verse 37.

You have that on the middle speed, right? Four hour speed, right? The middle one. Okay, Matthew 10, verse 37. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

He who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He who has found his life shall lose it.

He who has lost his life for my sake shall find it. He who receives me, he who receives you receives me and he who receives me receives him who sent me. Okay, the key there, he who has found his life shall lose it.

That means he who tries to save his own life shall lose his life. Again, back to the widow. Do you want to be saved? Give away the last bit of your substance.

Now how this reads into our life is that we need to be continually laying our lives down for each other, continually thinking about how we can make the other person in our lives life better. And if we're always

worried about what's in it for me and why, I mean, even reading it into our life here, whether it be the schedule or the job, you know, why is it that I'm always making the salad? Why do they have me cutting the onions all the time? Well, that might be the nastiest job in the kitchen. Be grateful that you're able to do it so somebody else doesn't have to do it.

You're benefiting somebody else. If we would think of the body instead of us, if we would think of the whole, we would be glad to do the nasty job. I'm sure you're glad when the grease is on your hands instead of your face.

You know, when you're working with something greasy and all of a sudden somebody says, hey, you have grease on your nose. And you look down and you had it on your hand and you rubbed your nose. And now you can't see your nose, but you can see your hand.

I'm sure your whole mind is grateful when you realize you didn't rub your face and you see the grease and you catch it first on your hand. Now if your hand had a mind of its own, it wouldn't be grateful. It wouldn't be grateful that it had grease on it.

Boy, I'm sure of that. Well, I'm not. I've got grease on me.

Well, that's the way the body has to be acting. You know, I'm glad I got the grease instead of the more honorable part of the body, whatever that is. They said there's some parts of the body to honor and some to dishonor.

We walk on our feet. It gets the brunt of weight. If we step on something, it gets hurt first.

Our feet, if they had a mind of their own, wouldn't be grateful. They wish that we'd walk on our hands. So it could be up and you could shake feet with people.

You could wave to people, you know. But which part of your body gets more honor? Your feet or your hands? Your hands do. You cook, you sew, you work with it.

You don't cook, sew, and work with your feet. You don't love with your feet. You don't, you know, go up to somebody and give them a foot rub with your foot on their back, you know.

The reason I'm saying this is that there is parts of the body that are supposedly, the Bible calls it, parts to dishonor and parts for honor. There are parts of your body that are covered up. No one ever sees, except your husband or wife.

And those are for intimacy, those parts of the body. There are parts of the Christian body that no one ever sees. Only in the bridal love between the body and the Lord do they get exposed.

Only when God is being worshipped and only when God is blessing and anointing are those parts of the body lifted up and shown. And God sees them only in private. That's why Jesus said, when you do your giving, give in private.

For your Father sees thee in secret and rewards thee openly. You know, anyone who's married will tell you that there's intimate moments between a husband and a wife that they don't share with anybody. But it beams from their face during the day when they're doing other things.

That love, that intimate fellowship between a husband and a wife. It's not sex that I'm talking about. It's the intimacy that's a part of it that makes a man, a husband or a wife at ease.

That when he's not alarmed, he's thinking of his beloved or he's thinking of his mate and he has a peace and a joy about that person even though he's not with them. That is the way it is with Christians. And you probably, whoever you are, are probably a part of the body that's not getting as much honor as Billy Graham or not getting as much honor as somebody in the spotlight or an elder or a group leader or a team leader or whatever it might be.

And everybody sees them and they're the hand that's always getting shaken and they're the hand that's always getting patted on the back and they're the people that are always getting written about and talked about and you're just not noticed at all. But if you remain intimate with God as part of the body, then God will honor you openly at the proper time. And it has to do with this losing your life.

It has to do with this... The only way to find your life is to lose it. And I think that there needs to be... This Bible study is not a rebuke. This Bible study is a remembrance and it's more for me than any of you.

As I read through this, as I'm teaching this, nobody needs to be humbled more than those that are in the public eye. Nobody needs to be at the foot of the cross more than those who are being given honor or being given esteem or being given attention. Those are the people that need to be the humblest because if they're not, they're doomed to fall.

And everybody that's depending on them is doomed to fall with them. Matthew 13, verse 44. Matthew 13, verse 44.

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field which a man found and hid. And from joy over it, he goes and sells all that he has and buys the field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls.

And upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Now, what is it that you seek from the Christian life? Really? I mean, a lot of people that are Christians were losers. In fact, most Christians today were losers in the world.

And they traded in a losing life for what they hoped would be a winning life. That's not salvation. That might be something that will spark you to get saved.

That might be something that will put a desire in your heart to meet the Lord. But that is, I think, the bulk of the testimonies you hear. I had nothing.

I was down and out. I was this and that. And my testimony is very much like that, too.

And that's really not serving the Lord. That might be meeting the Lord, but it's not serving the Lord. I didn't have any happiness.

I was unfulfilled. And I met Jesus, and since then, things have been wonderful. That's the attraction between a man and a woman.

That is not a marriage. I was lonely, and I met her, and my life has changed. She has just thrilled my heart.

That is not a marriage. That's attraction. That's the spark that might bring two people together.

That is not commitment. That is not relationship. People today are so emotional-minded.

People today are so... They need to be fulfilled. They need to have all their goodies. And it's just not like that in a man-woman relationship, and it's not like that between Christ and the Church.

You can be attracted to Jesus. I have nothing. Now I can have everything.

All right, that's valid. Then he's going to say, all right, you really want everything? Give up everything. A man found a treasure hidden in the field.

He sold all that he had so he could get it. He gave up everything to have it. Well, it's easy to give up.

As Winky Prattney says, you know, you say, I gave up smoking, I gave up drinking, I gave up fornicating, I gave up drugs. It's easy to give up your wrongs. But have you given up your rights? Giving up your wrongs is easy.

Those things are killing you anyway. You didn't do God any favors by giving up things that are sending you to hell. God is impressed when you give up the things you love.

It was one thing for Abraham to send Ishmael away. It was another thing for him to put Isaac on the altar. He had to give up his wrong by getting rid of Ishmael.

Then he had to give up his right by getting rid of Isaac. Put him on the altar. Offer him as a burnt offering.

There couldn't be anything more distasteful to a father to do. Nothing could be worse. Nothing.

Absolutely nothing could have been worse. He'd rather cut his own head off with a machete than to burn his own son. Giving up the things that are killing you is a favor to yourself.

Nobody ever did God a favor by getting saved. Nobody. It's when you are saved and you are beautiful Isaacs that God has given you your talents, your riches, your future, your images of what you should have as a human being, your rights, what I could be.

I could be making such and such. I could be a so-and-so. I have the talent to do this and that.

I could be writing books. I could be making records. I could be a great chef.

I could be married by now. I should have married that guy instead of coming to this place. Whatever it was.

I've got four kids. Do the lot. I'm better yet.

I'm glad I'm here. Your rights is what God's interested in. Your wrongs, you can get rid of those yourself.

If you're smart enough. There's people in the world that use self-hypnosis and Est and Eastern stuff. They gave up drugs.

They gave up fornication. They knew those things were killing them. You can give those things up without the Lord.

You can't give up yourself without the Lord. You can't. It's impossible.

Because all you do is benefit yourself. Unless you give yourself up for the Lord. The man found a treasure and he got rid of everything he had to possess this treasure.

What is the treasure? What is it? What's the treasure? What's the treasure? Jesus is the treasure. Jesus is the treasure. I am the resurrection and the life.

I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life.

He is the bridegroom. Who is the treasure? Jesus. You can't have him.

If you have any of yourself. You can have part of him. You can be on your way.

You can be growing. You can be going step by step on the Christian installment plan. But you better, you'll always be making payments until you have that experience where God karate chops you behind the knees and you're on your face.

And the best thing to get you there is to give up the things you love the most. Your dreams. Your ideals.

The things that you always wanted out of life. Throw them away. You know, I always wanted to live in Colorado.

I don't know why, I just always wanted to live in Colorado. And I wanted to have a I wanted to have a ranch up in Colorado with a recording studio and a Learjet. So that I could go up there and do all my records and I could fly to LA or fly out and do concerts and come back.

That would be a little paradise away from everything else. Just my family and my friends. This was in BC days.

Just going up there and partying and so on. That was my dream. And then when I became a Christian all I had to do was get rid of the drugs and the party and put the Bible studies in.

And I could have that. I could still have the ranch in Colorado and the recording studio and the Learjet. And everybody would say how blessed God had blessed me if I did it.

It would be totally acceptable in the body. That's the crazy thing. Today we have a Christianity where you can have anything you want to and just put Christian labels on it.

That's not Christianity. You can have anything you want to and put Christian labels on it. You can say I have a burden for this and I feel led to do this and whatever.

And it's all, you can still, you can Christianize your selfishness. You can stamp a dove and a fish on it. And God is not impressed with your dove and your fish.

He's impressed with nothing more than the heart. A heart after Him. A heart that when finds the pearl sells everything He has.

He sells everything He has to buy it. That's self-denial. That is everything.

He doesn't say He sold most of what He had. There's a story that I read once about a guy, I think Winky tells this. A guy comes into the pearl shop, right? He's a pearl collector.

And there's a pearl the size of a globe in the front. And the guy goes, I've been looking for a pearl like that all my life. I've collected pearls.

What does that pearl cost? Oh, it's very expensive. Well, how much does it cost? You probably couldn't afford it. Well, how much is it? Everything you've got.

Is that all? Is that it? Well, that's great. What do you got? Oh, man, I opened up my wallet. \$117.

All right. What else you got? Well, I've got a check here in my bank account. It looks like there's \$40,000, \$50,000 I've saved in stocks and bonds.

All right, write a check. \$40,000. Sign over your stocks and bonds.

Okay. What else you got? Well, that's all I've got. I mean, you know, I don't even have much left to make my house payment with.

Oh, you have a house? Yeah, I have a house. All right. We'll take that.

Where do you want my wife and I to live? In our car? Oh, you have a car? Yeah, two of them. Two cars. Well, where do you want my wife and children to go out in the cold? Oh, you have wife and children.

One wife. How many children? Three. Three children.

Oh, do you expect me to live alone? Oh, yes, you too. That's the whole thing. People, when they think God wants everything, they stop short.

They think He wants my money. They think, well, He wants, you know, this and that, but He wants everything. It has to be under the blood.

Everything has got to be committed. You can't think of just money. You can't think of what I could be doing.

You can't think of who you could be or what you hope to be or any of that thing. It's got to be everything. Okay.

Luke 12, 36. Starting at 35. Luke 12, 35.

Be dressed in readiness and keep your lamps alight, and be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes anock. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will gird himself to serve and have them recline at table and will come up and wait on them.

Now, this goes with the scripture in Luke 17. I just want you to read that first. It says that when we're with Jesus, it says that he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and will come up and wait on them.

Now, this might just be a parable. It also might be literal. At the wedding feast, Jesus might come up and say, what would you like? That's incredible.

The king, the master, will gird himself to serve and have them recline at table and will come up and wait on them. Now, this goes with Luke 17. Turn to Luke 17.

We'll come back to this. Luke 17, verse 7. But which of you having a slave, plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, come immediately and sit down to eat? But will he not say to him, prepare something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me until I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink? He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded, you say, we are unworthy slaves. We have done only that which we ought to have done.

Now, that is the attitude when you serve God. I'm just doing what I'm supposed to do. Remember Paul said, I don't have any reward for preaching the gospel.

Woe is me if I don't preach the gospel. My reward is that when I preach the gospel, I offer it without charge. But think of that.

Think of that. It's like whether it be Kevin on the press, or whether it be Julie Lynn in the track department, or whether it be Carol up in the office, or Terry in the art department, or whoever you are in this ministry. If that's where God has you, you don't get a reward for doing those things.

Not at all. I don't get a reward for playing the piano and singing. Woe is me if I don't.

Woe is you if you don't draw pictures. It's not that that gets us a reward. It's serving God in everything we do with a proper heart.

It isn't the deeds. God isn't going to give art points for him, and car points for him, and music points for me. God isn't impressed with my songs.

He's got better music in heaven. God isn't impressed with any of us and what we do. He's impressed with how we do it.

He isn't impressed that this guy's out tending sheep. He isn't impressed. He isn't impressed that he comes in and cooks him a meal.

He's impressed that the guy says, I'm doing all I'm supposed to do. This is wonderful. He isn't patting himself on the back.

I'm just an unworthy slave. That's the best slave there is. And yet, to tie it into Luke 12 that we just read, I'm sorry, yeah, Luke 12.

It says, he's going to wait on us. The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to prove it. In John 13, turn to John 13, verse 3. John chapter 13, verse 3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come forth from God and was going back to God, that's an interesting start, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and taking a towel, girded himself about.

Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. He dressed as a slave. He took off his clothes and put a towel on the way a foot slave would be girded and then used the towel that was around him.

I mean, it's a pretty big towel to start wiping your feet with. Not only did he say he's going to serve, but he showed his disciples he was going to serve the night he died. He says, now the hour has come for me to be glorified, not until I wash your feet.

He goes on. So he came to Simon Peter in verse 6 and Peter says to him, Lord, you wash my feet. Jesus said, what I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand later.

Thank you. Peter said to him, never shall you wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I don't wash your feet, you have no part in me.

Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head. He's the guy that opened his mouth and changed feet all the time. He came to serve.

Yet our attitude, he says, must be, and when we do what we are commanded, we are to say we are only unworthy slaves doing what we're supposed to be doing. We don't deserve to live with what we have done against God, with the lives we have lived for selfishness. We do not deserve another breath.

We deserve only hell. It's only God's grace that we're saved. We did not do anything to get saved.

We did not turn around and go, okay, God, I promise I'm going to be a good boy now. And God says, okay, I'll save you. It was that God saw that we were lost in our sins and he made provision for us and then he offered us a way out and we said, come and get me.

And he saved us. We didn't save ourselves. He saved us.

And we've got to remember that, that we are on borrowed time. It's just like a man, you've heard this expression before, a guy, he gets healed of cancer, you know, or he has an operation, they take out half of his lung and he says, I'm living on borrowed time. I should have been dead a year ago.

All the time that I've had since then is borrowed time. You all heard that expression, I live on borrowed time. Who'd he borrow it from? From God.

We're all, as they say, as Lenin said, Lenin, from the communists, said that communists were dead men on furlough. They were dead men on furlough. And I tell you that Christians are to, already to be living martyrs.

They're already to be dead. You already were crucified with Christ. You've already been destroyed.

There shouldn't be anything left in me of, you know, trying to build Keith's kingdom or trying to build up Keith Green or in you trying to build up you. There's all got to be building up Jesus. There shouldn't be anything left in John the Baptist of trying to build up John the Baptist.

He says, no, I shall decrease and he shall increase. There shouldn't be any looking to what we can gain from being in last days ministries or we can gain from being in this department or being the head of this or the tail of that. It's a got to be.

We're trying to build up Christ. We're trying to expand his kingdom. We are serving him.

I don't care if it's, if it's washing toilets, I want to be the best toilet washer in the universe. I want to clean the parts of the toilet no one will ever see that God sees. I always remember that somebody told me that they were, he says, I was in a C.S. Lewis book.

Has he ever thought about the wildflowers that are in the crags in the hills that no one ever sees that just bloom, they're beautiful flowers that no one ever sees? He says, I meditated on that once and after that

when I had bathroom duties I used to polish the bottom of the toilet, the behind the toilet, I'd polish it. Sounds ridiculous but it's, God sees the bottom of the toilet. Who are you polishing the toilet for anyway? God sees everything, you know.

And I've never forgotten that and when I make the bed, my wife and I make the bed together it drives me crazy when the sheet underneath isn't totally straight. If there's a wrinkle in it, you know I still remember well God sees the wrinkle, you know. We're not really making the bed right because these eyes are under the blanket.

Who do we make beds for? Who do we wash dishes for? Who do we clean toilets for? Is it so that people will go, boy she's a great toilet cleaner. Well they're never going to look behind the toilet. I think Wayne can tell you in the service they have what's called white glove inspection.

Put on a white glove and go to the place behind the footlocker and run a white glove behind it and see if there's any dust back where nobody can look. They want everything spick and span. They do that at McDonald's too I hear.

It's important that we realize that it's God who sees the back of our minds, the back of our toilets, the back of everything. And when we're given a job to do, we're to do it, that he's the one we are to impress. And we are not to try to impress anyone but him.

And if you can impress God, who else do you have to impress? And he, like any loving father, wants you to impress him. Not by impressing others, but just by impressing you. Okay.

This is getting exciting. John 12, verse 24. Just back a chapter.

This is beautiful. Truly, truly, verse 24, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

He who loves his life loses it. He who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves me, let him follow me.

And where I am, there shall my servant also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. Now, look at verse 25.

That's a good memorization verse. We ought to write that up on the wall. He who loves his life, loses it.

This is different than he who finds his life, loses it. And he who loses it, finds it. This is he who loves his life, not just finds it, but loves it, loses it.

He who hates his life in this world shall find it to life eternal. That's getting right down to it. Remember it says, he who loves father and mother more than me, he who does not deny father and mother, he who does not love me more than son, even his own life.

In another place it says, he who does not hate his father and mother or his son and daughter or his wife or husband, even his own life. The word hatred there means by comparison to God's love. Comparison for your love for God.

What's important to you? You know we had to go through a time. I went through a time when the newsletter was important to me, believe it or not. There was a time when opening the mail was important

to me, two and a half, three years ago.

And now I find that I've got to keep my interest in the newsletter up. It's not so much that God is so important to me, it's just that I have had my heart and my treasure in so many things in my life. I think the hardest thing to give up my treasure right now is my kids.

I treasure my kids a lot. First it was music and then it was fellowship in Bible study. Anything but God is wrong.

And then it was ministry and concerts and then it was the community and the newsletter. And then it was administration and so on. Now it's the children and I don't even know, I guess it's the kids and indecision about what to do in the future.

But after a while you kind of get the hang of it. After a while you get something in your hand and God slaps your hand and you let it go. And then you get something else in your hand and he slaps your hand and you let it go.

And then you get something else in your hand before he can slap you and you let it go. You get used to letting things go. It becomes a habit.

You see your heart loving something and you immediately know there's danger because a hand is going to come out of the sky and slap you. And he slaps you lovingly like you would if your kid had a scorpion in his hand. You'd slap his hand and get rid of that scorpion and you wouldn't say please let go of the scorpion.

Why daddy? Well, you know, here's a book. Read this book on scorpions. I can't understand these people, these parents that have children that are six months old or eight months old or nine months old and the kid only understands one thing.

And they pick the kid up and they start explaining to this nine-month-old why they can't touch the wall socket. That can really hurt you. The kid doesn't understand.

He just understands pain and rebuke and encouragement. That's about it. And it's even more the tone of voice than what you're saying.

The greatest thing was when Josiah hit the age of reason when I could sit down and explain to him why he's not supposed to ask why when I say no. So it was wonderful. And it was just wonderful when I realized I didn't have to keep dealing with, at that point, when if I said no you can't do it and he asked why he got a spanking.

I said, and another time he asked me, this is really good, he says, can we go somewhere or something? And I said yes. And he turned around and he said, why? He says, I can say why when you say yes, right? But I can say why when you say no, right? I said, yeah, you won't get a spanking if you ask why when I say yes. And he said, you can ask why about anything.

You just can't ask why when I say no. You can't question me when I say no. I'll tell you why when I say no.

You can't do that because of that and that's it. So it was real. When they reach the age of reason it's not any more pain, rebuke, and encouragement.

It's explanation. And in the Christian walk there's a time when God doesn't explain because it doesn't make a lot of sense. It doesn't make sense to give up something you love.

It's easy to give up something you hate. It doesn't make sense to give up something that is benefiting you. Except it's competing with God.

God is more jealous than you know because he's jealous for our good and the best thing for us is to have God one and only. And that's the whole thing. He's not as jealous in a selfish way.

He's jealous with us the way a husband's jealous over, a godly husband's jealous over a wife or a father's jealous over his children that he doesn't want anybody hurting his children or deceiving his children or misleading his children. So he's jealous for their good and God knows the best for us is to love him with everything that's in us. Therefore, whenever we start loving something else, he's jealous for us because it's harming us.

Not because he ain't getting all the glory. It's because it's not for our benefit. It's not for his benefit which is not for our benefit and when he doesn't get the glory, it destroys us.

We think it feels good for a while when we get the glory but it kills us. Okay. Memorize that scripture.

He who loves his life loses it. He who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. Okay.

Luke 17, verse 7. Oh, we've already gone there. Sorry. Luke 21, verse 2. Verse 1. Luke 21, 1. And he looked up and he saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury and he saw a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins and he said, Truly I say to you this poor widow put in more than all of them.

Now, can you imagine that here comes you know, Mayor Sadie's, you know, the mayor of Jerusalem coming down there and he's writing out a \$40,000 check, you know, putting it in. Hi, I have a \$40,000 cashier's check. Oh yeah, the next guy comes and he writes a \$60,000 check, you know.

They're all standing in line. Yes, yes, I've paid 25% this year. I pledge it to the temple treasury television fund.

Okay. And then here comes, you know, this little widow. She's dressed in rags and she's got two cents.

She puts it in. Get out of the way! You know, we've got more important gifts today. And Jesus turns and says to the disciples, She's put in more than all of them combined.

Why? For they all, out of their surplus, put into the offering. But she, out of her poverty, put in all that she had to live on. Now, that's self-denial.

They didn't deny anything. Do you know how... I do this all the time to Melody. You know, we go out to eat and I don't like something, you know, that she likes.

I'm very generous with it. Here, you can have this. You know, I don't like pickles and I don't like tomatoes, you know, so I'm always giving her my... She's grateful.

She likes tomatoes. She likes extra tomatoes. It's great.

But it wasn't a gift. It's garbage to me. It is.

It's just garbage. It's cluttered up my plate. I don't want those little gooey seeds all over my hamburger.

You know? Pickle juice on my mayonnaise. It's just... To her, it's a gift. She goes, Thank you.

It's great. I have more. And I'm saying, I have more without it.

You know? Really. I have more to eat without that stuff on my plate. And so many people... And the other time, this was our first Mexico outreach that we had in L.A. We didn't really have a... We... Every... The first Christmas, we were going to put together clothing to take down to an orphanage.

And we knew this Mexican brother that knew some people in Mexico and we were going to take it down. And Melody had Josiah and... And... And when... When she was pregnant with our first child, Josiah, she was... We were very well known around the area and people started giving her maternity clothes. And... We had about four or five pregnant girls in the ministry.

And so, we put in the newsletter, you know, we have pregnant girls and if you could send us work clothes for our guys and you can send us shoes and you can send us maternity clothes and baby clothes, we could appreciate it. Anything left over, we'll send to Mexico. Well, she went out and I bought her some maternity clothes and some people had given her some really neat maternity clothes.

So she had about five or six really neat like, you know, maternity blue jeans and a blue jean skirt and really nice, you know, maternity plaid vests and then she had all these goofy maternity stuff and the stuff that she wouldn't be caught dead in Tijuana wearing, you know. And she was going to give that all away, you know. And she had all the good stuff put away for when we had our next child and she had all the other stuff ready to go to Mexico and then we had the revival and, uh, and lo and behold, the week of the revival, the guy comes to pick up the stuff from Mexico and she's in the back going through it, you know, well, Lord, you know, and she goes out and she goes, guess what I just did? I go, what? She goes, I gave away, I kept the bag from Mexico for myself and I gave all the prize stuff that I was saving to Mexican orphans, you know, and I knew it wouldn't matter to them but it really mattered to God.

I knew that they'd be grateful to get the big polka dot bow tie maternity pass, you know. The stripes with the dots on it. But, uh, she goes, I knew, and I knew it really mattered to me that I wanted those but I knew it mattered to God that I gave something away that was really giving that's denying self.

When the person works so the other one can eat. It's not, okay, you, you work and I'll eat and then I'll work and you eat, you know. It isn't, that's a trade, that's not giving.

I'm not saying you should not eat and only work, I'm not trying to, you know, lay any of those things on you. I'm just saying that giving is a final, giving is painful. Real giving is painful.

That was painful for Melody. For weeks and weeks after that she kept kicking herself. She didn't grumble, she just kept going, how am I going to wear those clothes, you know.

And she kept saying, well, you know, I know it's the right thing and, you know, she gave it up to the Lord and finally got through but it was like, it was painful, it cost her. Real giving, that widow could have gone out and I bet you two cents would have bought a lot in those days. I bet you she came and followed Jesus.

I mean, it doesn't say she did but I bet she became one of his disciples and was there when he split the five thousand, when he fed the five thousand. I bet you she, you know, she's probably one, she's probably

one of his followers because she had a right heart after God. Okay, um, 1 Peter 4. 1 Peter 4. Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose because he who has suffered in the flesh has sinned from sin so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lust of men but for the will of God.

Self-denial is suffering in the flesh. Self-denial is putting to deeds the lust of the flesh. Self-denial is putting away the appetites of self.

It's saying God is more important. You are more important. Others are more important.

Spiritual things are more important. And there's nothing wrong with eating and there's nothing wrong with joking and there's nothing wrong with playing games and recreation but those are some of the things that are fun that are also beneficial for us to give up in part at least and sometimes like when we fast in totality for the sake of arming ourselves with the purpose of suffering in the flesh because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. I'm not talking about you know becoming a sage you know with a long robe on and living in a cave and so that then you become spiritual.

I'm talking about putting aside your own selfish and physical lust and desires and it makes it conducive for prayer and it makes it conducive for fellowship because you're a lot easier to live with when you're not hard to please. You can write that down. That's important.

You're a lot easier to live with when you're not hard to please. And somebody who's willing to suffer in the flesh is very easy to please and they're very hard to wrong. You're a lot easier to live with when you're not hard to please.

Okay. Revelation 12 verse 11 starting in verse 10 Revelation 12 verse 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come. For the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down who accuses them before our God day and night.

And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony and they did not love their life even to death. Now this is an after this is the end of the world. Here's the testimony of God concerning the testimony of the saints.

They overcame him by these things by the blood of the Lamb by the word of their testimony and the fact that they did not love their life even to death. That's pretty important for you to understand. The blood of the Lamb that's the death of Christ the word of their testimony that means the explanation of praise to God and telling of the deeds of God which helped them overcome and build up their faith and their hatred of their own life.

Their inconsiderateness of themselves. You know the great saints we read books and biographies about. Hardly ever considered themselves personally.

Okay, finally we're going to end the study in Jeremiah 35. Going to read the whole chapter. Incredible story.

Jeremiah 35 The test of self-denial you can call this part. This is an incredible story of God testing the self-denial of a group of people. God testing not the devil.

This is I love the parts of the Bible that don't fit in with our concept of God. Those are my favorite parts of the Bible because I love having my concept of God expanded twisted stretched that God's much bigger than I can put him in a box. I love when parts of the Bible when God does things says things reacts to things in ways that are inconsistent with our 1981 church western United States concept of God.

Anything like that in the Bible alerts my attention flags my view because it shows me that God is bigger than we have allowed him to become in reality. Okay, chapter 35 let's just read it through. The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah saying go to the house of the Rechabites or the Rechabites and speak to them and bring them into the house of the Lord into one of the chambers and give them wine to drink.

There's the test. Why is it a test? You'll find out in a minute. Then I took Jeazania the son of Jeremiah son of Habezinia and his brothers and all his sons and the whole house of Rechabites and I brought them into the house of the Lord into the chamber of the sons of Hanun the son of Igdaliah the man of God which was near the chamber of the officials which was above the chamber of Messiah the son of Shalom the doorkeeper.

Just in case you don't know where it is. Then I set before the men of the house of Rechabites pitchers full of wine and cups and I said to them drink wine.

But they said we will not drink wine for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us saying you shall not drink wine you or your sons forever and you shall not build a house and you shall not sow seed and you shall not plant a vineyard or own one but in tents you shall dwell all your days that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn and we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he commanded us not to drink wine all our days we our wives our sons and our daughters nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in and we do not have vineyard or field or seed we have only dwelt in tents and have obeyed and have done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us but it came about when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against the land

that we said come and let us go to Jerusalem before the army of the Chaldeans and before the army of the Syrians that we have dwelt in Jerusalem in other words the Babylonians came to occupy Israel and they rushed ahead of the occupying army to find shelter with the people of Jerusalem then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying thus says the Lord of hosts the God of Israel go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will you not receive instruction by listening to my words declares the Lord the words of Jonadab the son of Rechab which he commanded his sons not to drink wine or observe so they do not drink wine to this day for they have obeyed their fathers command but I have spoken to you again and again and yet you have not listened to me also I have sent you

all my servants the prophets sending them again and again saying turn out every man from his evil way and amend your deeds do not go after other gods to worship them then you shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your forefathers but you have not inclined your ear to listen or listen to me indeed the sons of Jonadab the sons of Rechab have observed the command of their father which he commanded them but this people have not listened to me therefore thus says the Lord the God of hosts the God of Israel behold I am bringing on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the disaster that I have pronounced against them because I spoke to them but they did not listen and I have called them but they did not answer now as I read this I was hoping that God would somehow

give a nice word to the poor family that couldn't live in houses and so on then Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites thus says the Lord of hosts the God of Israel because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab your father kept all his commands and done according to all that he commanded you therefore thus says the Lord of hosts the God of Israel Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before me always test passed who tested them God now God wanted to use them as an example he said he looked all over the land let me find a righteous family around here he sees them and before I use them as an example I better give them one last test so he has Jeremiah the heaviest righteous man most righteous man in Israel bring them into the house of God set wine before him and

command them to drink it in the church here is a righteous prophet who is never listed as sinning in the house of God asking them to drink wine which is commanded in the law of Moses for people to drink wine except for the Nazarenes wasn't against the laws of the land it wasn't against the laws of the temple they can drink wine in the temple and he said uh uh our father said it and we are not going to do it and you can see it wasn't would you like to drink wine it was drink wine there will come a time like with Balaam when God will say go ahead and go there will come a time when God has made it clear to you not to do something and God will tell somebody to come to you and say drink do it there will there will come a time in your life that is consistent with the word of God and you will

jump at the chance because it is something you always wanted to do this family always wanted to drink wine especially the kids that weren't around when grandpa said don't drink it you know all my friends drink wine the priest drinks wine even Jeremiah probably drank wine it was part of the culture it was part of the religion how unreasonable for our father to make us outcasts and weirdos there will come a time when God says to you deny yourself don't raise your standard of living raise your standard of giving when God blesses you and some other man of God will come through and say feed yourself bless yourself some other man of God will come through and God will say and then God will say okay what did I teach you originally what did I teach you about not raising yourself up what did I

teach you about not dressing yourself up bringing attention to yourself don't ever change that God never changes his principles sometimes he changes his ways and sometimes as in the case of you know Paul says I've learned the secret of abounding and abasing I've learned the secret of having much and enjoying it having little and enjoying it some people like that I'm not talking about money I'm not talking about anything I'm not talking about there being any benefit in giving up things I'm talking about there being a benefit in worshipping God through putting down everything else but God you must understand there is no benefit in giving up food and giving up sex or giving up money or giving up anything in its proper place there is only benefit in worshipping God above all else and denying

him nothing and denying yourself everything so you can have him okay any questions yes in the scripture John it says six to ten we talked about Jesus washing the disciples feet something is a little confusing to me about the symbolism of the washing the feet because Jesus says later on after verse ten that anyone who needs anyone who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet apparently the symbolism the way I read the symbolism is that Jesus has washed our entire bodies and we're clean and dim because of his sacrifice yet our feet have to be we're touching the ground with our feet you take a bath and you walk around your feet get dirty but you don't get dirty yet you're still clean and he had to keep washing there's a lot of different interpretation of that can you no I wouldn't expound

on it all I would say it also has been explained as just being his reaction to Peter saying wash my hands and my head he says no your hands and head are clean you took a bath earlier your feet you walk you're

walking in the dust that's what needs to be washed I don't need to wash I mean it could just be a practical physical thing that he was telling Peter you know I'm not saying it couldn't be spiritual I'm just I wouldn't want to get into it especially now yes Laura when you were saying about the coming time when God told you something and then he'll send someone or allow someone to come on an anaphylactic or something that would look like it's really okay to not do what he said I thought about that prophet that prophesied about Josiah and prophesied against the altar and the other

prophets even that's a heavy story I don't God told him not to go and the other guy said well God said you could go you know you could come into my house and eat God told him

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