

We Are the Lord's

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes our identity as belonging to the Lord and the importance of living out our faith through action and obedience.

Duration: 59:02

Scripture: Malachi 3:6, Luke 24:49, John 17:17, Romans 12:6, Romans 14:1, Romans 14:10, Romans 15:1

Topics: "Self Control", "Holy Living"

Description

In this sermon, Brother Herb emphasizes the importance of discipline and self-control over our physical bodies. He references Romans 12:1-2, which encourages believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God. Brother Herb shares a cautionary tale about a young lady who hastily decides to marry a man she knows nothing about, highlighting the importance of making wise decisions. He then draws a parallel between this story and our own bodies, reminding listeners that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and should be treated with respect and purity. He challenges believers to examine their actions and desires, urging them to align their lives with God's will.

Transcript

Paul to the Romans, chapter 14. I woke up yesterday morning, and after a little meditation, this strange thought came to my mind. Perhaps you've never thought of it, but I wondered if Satan had made any New Year's resolutions.

And after I thought of that, I made up my mind that if he had, he hadn't got one good one for me. And he hasn't got one good one for you. If he made any New Year's resolutions, it was to harass us, tempt us, try us, set up every roadblock he can on the on the way to the spiritual heights, and as far as in his power, bring us discouragement and doubt and everything that's on the dark side of life.

Well, I thought that for a few minutes, and then I suddenly tossed the bedclothes off one side and ran into my office. Because this word came to my mind out of this 14th chapter in the epistle to the Romans, verse 8, for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Now, there's nothing profound about that, is there? Yes, there is. Because, you see, it doesn't say we were the Lord's. It doesn't say we shall be when we die.

It says right now, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, with all the forces of hell against us, we are the Lord's. And I think when you do get up in the morning, whatever time, whether it's 6, or 12, or 3, or I don't know, but whenever you get up, I'd suggest what someone told to me about 40 years ago, that you lean your elbows on the windowsills of heaven, and gaze upon the Lord, and then with that vision in your heart, go forth to meet the day, and serve notice on the devil that whatever's coming up the road, I am the Lord's. Don't you forget it, I won't forget it, and I won't let anybody else forget it.

I'm the Lord's. He's redeemed me. I am, according to his word, his peculiar possession.

Now, if I'd stopped there and said I'm peculiar, you'd have all nodded your heads, but I went on and finished the text. I am his peculiar possession. Now, I don't know how or why men rate the word of God as they do, but you know there are some people, Campbell Morgan for instance, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan said, the epistle of the Romans to the Romans, is doctrinally to the New Testament what your spine is to your body.

It holds the whole of the New Testament together. It's not perfectly true, but others say, well it's the Mount Everest of spiritual revelation. Somebody has said very daringly that every revival since Pentecost has found its source, has risen out of a newly discovered truth that's been hidden there in the book of the Revelation.

Martin Luther did not invent the doctrine of justification, it had been smothered over with false doctrine, and he found it and he propagated it. And the second side of the coin was that Wesley rediscovered the doctrine of sanctification. Now there are some who try to write that off and say, well sanctification just means separate for a holy use, that's not true.

The disciples were already separated for a holy use, they'd given up business careers, they'd given up fame and fortune and home, and yet he says, wait until ye be endued with power from on high. Jesus is praying for them who have left all and followed him, sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth, it means more than that. But it was not an invention of John Wesley's, it was a rediscovered truth.

Now the scripture here begins in the first verse, him that is weak in faith. I personally don't think that could ever be applied to the Apostle Paul. He seems to me to be a Samson in every area, intellectually, morally, spiritually.

I don't think there was a weak spot in his armor. You see, he had the privilege of going again to the famous university where God takes his great men, the school of silence. Moses was there 40 years, I don't know whether he flunked his lessons and had to stay there that long, but he was there for, now that's a pretty long time.

And there were quite a number of others. After all his heroic achievements, shutting up all the other things, God says to his servant, Elijah go hide thyself. I think very often we overlook the fact that God was shaping his own son Jesus Christ for 30 years.

I don't know when Jesus became conscious of his ministry, nobody does. Some people say, well when he was 12 years of age and went to the temple, well that could be it. He did say, wish ye not that I must be about my father's business.

But if so, then from 12 until he was 30 years of age, there was that blank period in his life when he preached as far as we know, his preaching was nil and he did no miracle and he just waited in obedience

to his father. And then again you get the Apostle Paul saying the same thing that when God revealed himself to him, he sent him into the wilderness. Maybe for about three and a half years.

But you see, there's a discussion here and not only a discussion, there's some disagreement. Paul is writing to the church in Rome. I don't know what kind of a church it was.

I would imagine in a great cosmopolitan city like that, they had a thousand problems. But you discover in here, in the immediate surrounding of the text I've given you, that we are the Lord's, that there's dissension about meats and about drinking and about keeping of certain days. A danger of hanging on to legalism.

Now what you notice here, in this 14th, pardon me, 14th chapter verse 1 he says this, him that is weak in faith. You notice that? Not everybody has the same measure of faith. If you go back to the previous chapter, verse 6 in chapter 12, he says at the end of it, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.

You see, faith is one of two things, only two that are a gift of the Spirit and a fruit of the Spirit. The fruits of the Spirit are what? Love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance and faith. And he gave to one the gift of faith.

And you remember perhaps that Paul writing to the Thessalonians says, I pray night and day exceedingly that I may see your face and get you all healed so you'll all be happy and have plenty of work and come to church and pay your tithes. He doesn't say that, he says I pray night and day, not for a lost world here, I'm praying night and day that I may see your face and supply that which is lacking in your faith. And then he begins the second epistle to the Thessalonians, the first chapter about verse 3 and he says, I'm rejoicing because your faith growth exceedingly.

I've said often to young people when I'm talking to them, my muscles are hard to find because I've never felt trees, I've never done anything with bars and lifting weights and so my muscles are not developed. Well you might say Sandow, he was once the strongest man in the world, does a wonderful thing on building your body, how to put two inches on your biceps, four inches on your chest, six inches on your calves, build yourself up. Hey you read this book, I'm going away for two years, read it, I'll be back.

The man comes back and I say, hey I've got your book here, take it with you. He says, Ravenel, I don't think your chest an inch bigger and good night, your arms are not what, you don't look a bit different. I say, no, I never read a more stupid book in your life, in my life.

He read it through, read it, I memorized it. I can tell you what's in chapter 3, chapter 5, chapter 7. As a matter of fact, every night when I finish work, I put my feet up on a chair and I take a bottle of coke and a bag of Fritos and I've read it and memorized it and he says, you have? I say, yes. And you've done all the exercise, you didn't tell me to do the exercise, you said, read the book, it'll change your life.

Now that's what we expect about reading the Bible, isn't it? Just read it, you'll become a saint, you won't, you might become more dumb than you've been. He that doeth, huh? Not just hearing but doing the will of God, doing the word of God. You see, we've got so afraid of works that we think, man, it's almost sinful to talk about works.

All right, you're talking about faith, read the fourth chapter of Romans, isn't it all about that wonderful man, Abraham was such a giant in faith. Yes, it is. And you say he was justified by faith.

Yes, he was, if you read what Paul says. No, he wasn't, if you read what James says. He says Abraham was justified by works.

If your faith doesn't work, why in the world should anybody believe you? Faith without works is dead. I had a friend, had a motorcycle, it was always, and it was always breaking down and he said to me, boy, I don't know what to call this thing, I keep kicking the tires, it won't go. I said, well, call it faith.

He said, why? Because if it's without works, it just wouldn't go. Well, a lot of people have an experience like that, it's faith, but it has no works. Now, I'm not going to regiment the works that you have to do or anyone else.

But you know, we always think of faith as something so dazzling. You know, through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness. Oh, that's an exciting chapter, Hebrews 11, isn't it? How many millions of people, of God's people on this earth right now, do you think, walk every week by faith in a situation that may be as dark as hell? It's not spectacular, there's no showmanship about it, it's just solid obedience and sometimes blind obedience.

Let me give you an example. Here's a young lady whose daddy's pretty wealthy and she's just got her hair all nice and done all the things that ladies do, and she's going there into this gorgeous tent where she lives and a man comes along and says, hey, just a minute, and he starts talking to her and she runs in and says, daddy, I'm going to get married. You're going to what? Well, you know, the prince I've always dreamed of, he's sent for me and he's very wealthy and I'm going.

Oh, come sweetheart, sit down, I mean, I know you're getting older, but you sit down, let's talk. Now, who is this man? Which man? Well, first of all, the man that's told you to go with him. Do you know him? No.

Oh. And who's the man you're going to marry? Do you know him? No. Oh.

Do you know where he lives? No. Is he unemployed? I don't know. Oh, you just swallow it.

Rebecca got her a camel and she followed it. Would you have done it? You said no, good for you. This young lady said no.

She's already got her man tied up anyhow, but what would you do? No, we swallow it. You see, if it said lightning came from heaven and paralysed her arm and said, if you'll obey me, when you get to the tent of your loved one, your arm will be restored, she would have gone. But no, no, no dove descended upon her.

The earth didn't swallow up that part of the land that she owned in her daddy's estate. The darling girl just said, all right, I don't know why I feel like this, but you know what, I've got real faith. I really believe this is an answer to prayer.

I really believe I should go with you. And she sets off on the journey. She says, I'm not going to ask you how many days we have to travel.

I'm not going to ask you if the man is tall, if he's blonde, if he's rich, if he's poor. No, no, no. Of course, he did show her after she agreed to go, he showed her a few gifts.

That wouldn't satisfy most of us, would it? If somebody came along and said, look I'll give you a check for a hundred thousand dollars, it's a down payment and my master sent it for you. You see, faith can be just as unspectacular as that. It just walks in complete quiet confidence that this is the will of God for me.

Now, he's talking here again, as we get on in this story, he's talking here about the weak and about the strong, he that eateth and he that doesn't eat, and he that despises the man that doesn't eat, and he that criticizes the man that does eat. Oh my! This isn't an isolated instance. You see, it says there are some, in verse 2 it says, one believeth he may eat all things, another who is weeth eateth herbs.

Not herb, not our herb, herbs. Eateth herbs, we say in England. We put an H on it, you don't, but that's what it is.

He that eateth herbs. Now man never ate meat until after the fall. There are lots of Christians who won't eat meat, they just categorize us with cannibals.

What in the world do you eat dead cows for, dead horses, dead chickens? The sustaining power to Adam in his earliest days, chapter 1 of Genesis makes it quite clear, God says, I've given you herbs for meat. Some of the healthiest people in the world are vegetarians. They've balanced out their diet.

Now I'm not saying either here or there, but I'm saying this, that there were some who insisted that if you're going to be really spiritual, you just have to eat herbs. Don't eat meat. You don't eat anything with blood.

You see, further in the chapter you'll discover it says that they were observing certain days and some were not observing it. Now I'm convinced in my own mind that if we obeyed the dietary laws of the Old Testament, we'd be 10 times healthier than we are. Particularly if you start doing that with your children when they're young.

I think we still have a book. I hope we have. None of these diseases, we have it.

You should read it. I still believe that swine's flesh, I eat a bit now and again, but I still believe that swine's flesh, crabs, lobster, all that stuff that God has said as not to be eaten in the Old Testament would be a thousand times healthier if we didn't eat it. Because God never said anything in vain.

Now it doesn't mean that by keeping those laws you're more righteous than somebody else. You know, sometimes we despise, I heard preachers say, oh you forget the Pharisees, self-righteous monks that they were. Jesus didn't beat them up for being self-righteous in that sense.

They weren't beaten up for being self-righteous, they were beaten up for living on their self-righteousness and believing it made them independent of some of the things of God. What's wrong with being righteous? What's wrong with being right? Here's a big fine fellow going up into church, okay. The scripture says, two men went up into the temple to pray.

That's all right, I wish more went up to the temple. The big one went up to the front, he always wanted attention. And he not only went up to the temple and up to the front, he lifted his eyes to heaven and he lifted up his voice to heaven and he let everybody in the synagogue know, Father, here I am, once again, finest specimen you have on earth.

Lord, two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a Christian, prayed thus with himself, Lord, I thank Thee that I'm not as other men are. Well, I thank God for that every day. I'm glad I'm not in jail.

I'm glad I'm not a sex pervert. I'm glad I'm not a victim of lady nicotine or tobacco or vice. There are some things I'm mighty proud and thankful to God I'm not in.

I thank God I'm not as other men are. Extortioners? Man, life would be a lot easier for us if there were less extortion around. Putting wrong prices on some of the land that's been sold and it's faked and so forth.

Not only extortioners, unjust. There's nobody works for me can say that I extract too much from it. Fine.

And this is what he said. I'm not an extortioner, unjust, not an adulterer, much more than a lot of preachers can say right now and deacons. What's wrong with being right? The thing was, he thought it made him stand head and shoulders above everybody else.

But no, no, no. It did not do that at all. But Jesus says, except your righteousness exceed, go beyond the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you're in trouble.

Now, some people have seized all the old of this chapter to do just what they like. It says very clearly here, but notice, let's read it from verse 3. Let not him which eateth despise him that eateth not. And let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him.

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Now that text has helped me a thousand times in my life. It's one of my key quotes.

To his own master he stands or falls. If that man doesn't have light on that thing that I have, well, God will do it and I'm not going to hammer him. To his own master he standeth or falleth.

The context says that there are some days that seem to others uh, verse 5, one man esteemeth another day, one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Right, we've got liberty to do as we like.

If you want to spend and do as you like on the Sabbath day, it's up to you. It says so in this, it doesn't say anything of the kind. Now I guarantee if we opened the bookshop on Sundays and said, look you can buy and sell and come here.

I guarantee half the churches in town would raid us for it. They'd say you're breaking the Sabbath, you don't buy and sell on Sundays, this is wrong. And the same people who condemn us would stop as they go out to Mayfields and pick up sugar and butter and all the other things that they didn't have to have, they could have got yesterday.

But you see we strain at naps and swallow camels. It says that one man esteemeth another day. All right, now look up verse 6, it explains the whole thing.

He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord. And he that regardeth not the day to the Lord, he does not regard it. You see what he's saying? If I keep this day, I'm not keeping it because legalistically I think I'm more holy, I'm keeping it because there's only one commandment in which God says remember.

And that's remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. God laid heavy penalties on Israel because they broke the Sabbath. Isaiah 58 I think it is or 59 says that you're to withdraw your foot from the Sabbath from doing your pleasure on my holy day.

If I regard this day, I regard it as unto the Lord. The other man does not regard it and so he does not regard it unto the Lord. It isn't that he has a right to do what he likes.

But the very fact he disregards it, he's not disregarding it because the church says so, he's not disregarding it because of a certain legal institution, he's disregarding it unto God. He's telling God you're not having a way in my life, I'll do as I like on this day. Now when I was a kid people used to talk about Sabbatarianism.

We lived maybe a mile and a half from church. My father and mother would not put their foot on a streetcar on a Sunday if you crown them. And I can remember going when I, you know in England you wear little short trousers up here and boy when I got to church my knees were this color, with the frost.

They used to look at my dad with his long trousers on and think yeah your knees are covered, I'm shivering and I'd sit with my hands like this, oh and my legs would be wet because we didn't have rubber boots in those days and my, oh we'd be soaking wet. But I never rebelled against it. It was a discipline in my life.

We were taught that you observe the Sabbath day. Well, you say some scripture makes it clear you can do certain things on a, on a Sabbath day. Somebody said to a man who kept the Sabbath, well there's nothing wrong in pulling your ox out of the pit on the Sabbath day is there? He said no, unless it fell in on Saturday.

It's amazing how many things are convenient on a Sabbath day isn't it? I noticed where a preacher said he's going to write to some of these drug companies that sell you know these magic things will cure you. He said I want to tell you something, they only work Mondays through Fridays. They don't work Sunday.

Everybody gets a cold on Sunday. Can't go to church today, I've got a cold, or they'll have a cold Monday but they'll go. But how convenient it is? Well, it doesn't matter much.

No, no, no. Look, if somebody stayed here out of this fellowship today for any other reason than that God himself told them to, they shortchanged God, not me. I preach to you the best I know how, if there's only two here.

You won't have me. First you'll shortchange God, secondly you'll shortchange yourself, because if God wants you here, He had something for you. And if you miss it, you won't pick it up next time you come to church.

No sir, that won't happen. But you see, they have become bound. Oh, it's not the only time.

You remember Paul asked to talk to young Timothy, because they're putting him under pressure about eating and drinking. And Paul writing to the Corinthians says in chapter 8, verse 8, But meat commendeth us not to God. Now if it did, some of us would be standing well, wouldn't we? But meat commendeth us not to God.

Neither if we eat are we better, neither if we eat not are we the worse. But he that taketh less by any means, this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. Now again, there are things you could do perhaps, and you say it wouldn't trouble me, but that's not the secret of living before God.

You see Paul says some things are lawful, but they're not expedient. Paul says look, if eating meat causes another brother to be offended, I won't eat meat as long as I live. Now that guy's pretty desperate about guiding another man in spirit.

I don't want to become an offense in anything. Somebody says, well I went to see a movie. Somebody else says, I've heard them say, well I never go to a movie house because it might be a stumbling block, somebody else may see me and do this and that.

Well you can't live in bondage to everybody. Sure you can't live in bondage to anybody. But you see, if I begin to get a little disturbed in this, that I'm spending too much money on that, or too much time on that, or too much something, well let me take care.

Because I might become a stumbling block to a weaker brother. It's not how it affects me, it's how it affects somebody else in the body that I'm concerned about. And so perhaps you remember that Paul says later on, right into the Corinthians, whatsoever you do in word or indeed do all.

Boy that's a big word. I spoke on it once, I don't know what I said. But one young man, reputedly one of the most brilliant men in America today, it got through to him and he sent me a piece of walnut, just about five by five I think, and all it has on is A-L-L, all.

I have it on the wall in my office I think. And he said that got through to me, all. You try and read the New Testament without that word in, it's a strange book.

Things work together for good. No, no, no, all things. What? Now listen, Paul was never in the jam I'm in now, he'd never have written that.

No, and you were never in the jam he was in 10,000 times either. I'd rather go for it that Paul had more trouble and perplexity and persecution and heaviness and despondency and difficulties than all the bunch of us put together. But he said all things work together.

Our brother was praying earlier in the first part when we were praying as a bed and he was saying that even Madeleine Mary, the very fact she mentions Jesus Christ, disturbs some people. Carter said a silly thing in the Playboy magazine, but he let the whole world know the standard of Jesus Christ on a man who thinks about a woman and lusts after her. The world didn't know it.

And preachers don't say it anymore. So, I nearly said a dumb man. No, a man said it in a silly situation and the whole world began to ask questions.

Isn't this the secret of it all? After all, read this chapter. It says in verse 6, he that regardeth the day, regardeth it what? Unto the Lord. Right after that he says, to the Lord he doth not regard it.

He that eateth, eateth to the Lord. He that giveth thanks. And he that eateth not unto the Lord, eateth not and giveth God not thanks.

So, whatever I do in word or in deed, in my actions, I do it as unto Him. Again, the question is at the end of every day. I don't know if you take stock of yourself.

I've often said if women jumped on the scales, as much to see how much they're increasing in spirituality as they do on the scales. Oh, I've gained half an ounce. Oh, it's a tragedy.

Oh, I've gained half an ounce. Oh, I'll have to watch this. I'll have to cut this.

But what if we all stood on the scales every day and measured ourselves and weighed ourselves spiritually? You know, it's so easy to be hard on others and generous on yourself. Do you know why? Because you understand yourself, at least you think you do. I doubt it, if any of us do.

But we think we understand ourselves, we don't understand the other person. And as Shakespeare once said, it's always easier to bear the other man's toothache. You don't have it.

But notice this, again now verse 7, he says, none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. You know, sometimes we think the only way to straighten children out is with thundering at them, shouting this, do that, don't do that. Oh, I can remember one time in my life, I wondered where my mother got all the donuts from.

Not if they'd been donuts, I'd have been as big as a barrel. It was, don't this and don't that and don't the other. And then one day she took me and I had a real counseling session.

It did me a world of good. You know, my dad and mum never knew how many times I watched them. They didn't know how often I opened the bedroom door when I, I slept up on the second loft and they didn't know how often I listened to what was going on downstairs either.

There's nothing ever to be ashamed of. You see, the scripture again says, we are his workmanship. Again I ask you, what's your goal for this year? You know, some people are killing themselves to try and get the world saved.

And I was reminded today of, somebody came in the office when I was with Dave Wilkerson and said certain things and Dave says, brother look I want to tell you something. I can't get the whole world saved but I'll do as much as I can for the Lord. There's not much I can do the size of this world.

But wait a minute, what is the first purpose of God in your life? You're redeemed, what's his purpose? Oh actually, service, service. No, no, no, no, you missed it brother. Well, I remember a group who used to say every time they testified, oh it's tough but you know, I'm hanging on, I'm hanging on, I'm going to make it, I'm going to make it.

You're going to make heaven anyhow. You may get there blistered and bruised and baffled and bewildered, but brother you're going to make it if you're redeemed. He didn't save you to go to heaven, he didn't save you to be a witness.

What did he save me for? That I may be conformed to the image of his Son, that's what for. I hadn't read Malachi, the last part of it for a while, I read it this morning, I read it yesterday. You know what he says, it's beautiful, made me feel so precious.

He says he's going to take care of me and count me when he makes up his jewels. Isn't that nice? You may be nobody else's jewel, but you're his jewel anyhow. When he makes up his jewels, the Queen of England came to the bicentenary meeting I was going to say, celebration in July.

And I saw a picture of her the other day, we were waiting I think for a little thing done on the car. I picked up the magazine, it showed her in her royal robes and it said, the most illustrious visitor to our shores in 1976, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. She had a gorgeous crown on.

It had something around the edge, plastic, oh no pardon me, what was it, cotton wool? No, no, no. Did not she had, she had a little strip of ermine about an inch wide, just round her crown. Because ermines aren't as big as cows, they're not even as big as rats.

It's one of the slenderest, little, most precious thing. And do you know how they catch them? They wait till they run out to eat. And then they take a lot of dirt and slime and they smear it over the hole that the ermine has to go in.

And as soon as that ermine comes, it won't go in. It won't soil itself. It's not easy to catch it.

You can sit there with a neck and just pounce it on the little thing, you've got it. It won't defile itself. Remember three Hebrew children, wouldn't that defile themselves with the king's meat? We're precious in his sight, sure, but everything that makes up his crown and in his kingdom is precious.

Why the word of God says we're redeemed with precious blood. In Scotland they have an old sheepskin. And when the king said that the preachers were to do this and do that, they rebelled against it.

And every man, as they stretched the sheepskin out on a table, he had to sign it. Some men slit their own fingers and wrote with their own blood. They put their names there.

They still have it in Scotland. There isn't a bank in the world could buy it. It's the most precious thing in Scotland.

Why? It's signed with the blood of those covenanters. Who not only covenanted but did die for the sake of Christ. I understand there's a little piece of a girl's dress, maybe worth a dollar, maybe not worth that, up in Washington or in Smithsonian Museum.

And there's a brown stain on it. Why is it there? Is it worth something? No, no, no, no. Queen wore it.

I don't know the name of the girl who did. But as they carried Abram Lincoln out of that theater when he had been shot, his blood soiled the dress of the little girl. It's a national treasure.

Why? No good. Can't do anything with it. You couldn't take it out and use the blood for something.

It's no good for a child. Bad. It's symbolic of something.

Possibly the greatest man that America ever had in the eyes of some people. A little guy that I remember as a boy seeing a picture of him lying on his tummy with a shovel and a piece of a charcoal stick trying to write. Your boy won't have to do that.

Your girl, you'll have to buy them a calculator to go to school before long. They're not even teaching them to reckon in some schools now. You have to take compulsory, you have to take a calculator.

So when we were in a place a while ago, the machine broke down and the girl just sat on the counter. My wife said, well, could we go please? We're on the road, could we? Can't do anything, machine's broken down. My wife said, well, can't you reckon it up? I mean, I can reckon it.

No, I'm not reckoning it up. It wasn't that she couldn't, I think she wouldn't. I think it was she couldn't.

Oh, you know, nobody, nobody, nobody, and I don't care what class of it. You can put it in the spiritual realm, the spiritual realm, the psychological realm, the mental realm. The man that has it easy never

makes it.

Life is a battle from A to Z. It was for the Son of God, wasn't it? Every time you feel you're having a raw deal, read, what does it say in Hebrews? He, he, he, the spotless, holy, Son of God, learned obedience by what? By the things that he suffered. Suffered? Oh, that doesn't mean somebody chops your ear off or this, but you see, it's pressures, it's difficulties, it's the challenge that comes. This is a text we need to remember, none of us lives to himself.

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, I know there's a book written, wasn't it, wasn't it, Thomas Merton that revived and wrote a statement, made it modern, popular, a modern, popular modern statement. No man is an island. He borrowed that from John Donne of England about 300 years ago.

He has a poem in which he starts with, no man is an island. I've got to tell you something, every man is an island. You're an entity, you'll never be made again, thank the Lord.

There'll never be anybody like you, isn't that a blessing to the world? There'll never be anybody like you, or like me. God made one and that's all he could put up with. He says, never, never another one like that.

Every man is an island, every man is a personality, every man has a will, every man God has a purpose for. And it says that, no man liveth unto himself and no man dieth unto himself. I quoted where Paul says in 1 Corinthians 8.8, meat commendeth us not to God, for neither if we eat are we better, neither if we eat not are we the worse.

That doesn't have anything to do with spirituality. They were arguing about keeping new moons, they were arguing about keeping certain dates. I think they're good.

One thing that, the first time I came to the States, 1950, I was amazed that shops were all open on Good Friday and everybody worked. If there's a holy day in the year, it's sure not Christmas Day. If there's a day when we ought to take time out and just meditate and think, and as they do in many churches in Europe, they take a whole three-hour service just to meditate on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

I think that's a good thing to do. Heavens, if they only do it once a year, we're not in good shape either. It's a holy day.

And then we not only keep Christmas Day and Easter Day, we keep Whitsunday, White Sunday, because they were all made white in the upper room, they were purified. We don't keep Whitsunday, it slides right past. It's a great festival in Europe, that doesn't make Europe any better.

But I'm saying there are certain days when I think, it's good for my own discipline, it's good for my mind, it's good for my spirit. You see, Paul in that 7th chapter of 1 Corinthians, I haven't read this for a while so it kind of stuck me. In the middle of verse 37 of chapter 7 in 1 Corinthians, he says, Nevertheless he that standeth fast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will.

Now you just take that home and chew over it, will you? He that hath power over his own will. Oh, I thought it was my will that made me go, not necessarily. I need power over my own will.

For instance, if you're not careful, your body will take control of you. I'm thirsty, I've got to have coffee, Englishman, I've got to have tea, have you? But what if you exercise your will over that and say, hey body look, your body will demand too much sleep if you don't watch it. You know, it's amazing how people get

angry at things you say.

You know, somebody really came up to me one day and I think if they had a pitchfork they'd have stabbed me with it. Do you know what I said? I said, you'll get no rewards for lying in bed. Boy, this man came after me, he said, hey what do you mean no rewards for lying in bed? I said, exactly what I said.

Well, I don't get up till 10 o'clock in the morning. Oh? If your preacher did that, you'd fail him, wouldn't you? You'd say, the lazy brute, getting up at 10 o'clock. It so happens your neighbor has a bunch of children and she gets up at 6 and you get up at 10, you lost 4 hours.

365 days in a year, how many is that? Brother Herb, you're a quick mind. There are 40, 1,500 hours, you lost in one year, 10 years? You see, again, discipline comes in. This body of yours will run away with you, with its appetite, if you don't watch it.

It's your body, or is it? Or is it his body? Romans 12, 1 and 2 says, present your body a living sacrifice. Now I've got a will, I've got emotions. You see, again, when somebody sings, no, no, it's not an easy road.

I wrote an article on it a while ago, few years ago, it's not an easy road. It became a joke in a certain Bible school. Hmm, here in Ravenhill's article, it's not an easy road.

They happen to be riding the crest of the wave. In about 3 years, a tremendous disaster hit that school. It cost the lives of about 9 of the leaders in that school.

You know, they began to moderate a bit and say, you know what? My Ravenhill said, if God opens the windows of heaven on you, the devil will open the door of hell and you'll be caught in the middle. You know, really, it's not an easy road. Now get this clear in your mind and let me get it in mind, Satan hasn't got one good thought for you this year, not one.

But get this in your mind to balance it up, God hasn't got one bad thought against you this year either. And he works everything after the counsel of his own will. And whatever comes as that hymn says, so beautifully, he's only seeking thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

All right. None of us liveth to himself, we're an island. You're an exhibition, I'm an exhibition.

Do you know when people catch me out best? When I'm not prepared for them. Hmm? You know, the lady that's been doing a job, maybe legitimately washing a floor, doing everything, and somebody comes at that, oh boy, why didn't you call at the shopping center the time that you were coming? What would you have done? Well, I'd have gone washed, I'd have changed my clothes, got my hair straightened, look real nice. Listen, you look just as good with a scrubbing brush in your hand to me as you do with a gold comb and diamonds in it.

Doesn't make a hill of beans different, doesn't change you or change me. We reveal our inner personality best when we're caught off guard. That's me.

Otherwise, I'll get my defenses up, I'll get ready and I'll be nice and I'll condition myself and, you see. Now, if I do all to the glory of God, I won't care a hill of beans about others. I won't try and rough them or be ungentlemanly, anything else.

But you see, if I start living to others that what they think about what I wear or who I am or how I preach or something else, I'm out of kilter. Again, God is not concerned that I get to heaven, the number one

concern. His concern is not that I become a great witness or a great preacher.

His first concern is that I become conformed to the image of His Son. He wants to see a little Jesus Christ in your life and in my life. And the beauty of the Lord our God rests upon us.

All right, whether we live or die, we're the Lord's. That's beautiful. Whether we live or die.

Paul says in Philippians 1.20, do you remember what he says? Well, he says, I'll tell you what, this is my, this is my philosophy of life. That Christ may be magnified in my body whether I die or whether I live. Now look, if a man stopped me down the road tomorrow night or after I've been to a prayer meeting or somewhere, he has a red light and I pull up to help him and suddenly he pulls a revolver and says, give me a purse.

He'd have the shock of his life. All I have ever in my purse is a half dollar and it's Bahamian, so that would break his heart anyhow. I kept it because it's a kind of a souvenir.

And if he says, all right, I'm going to kill you. You know, at that moment I might have a question in my mind. Hmm, whether I live or die, how is this going to glorify God? But if you line me up with a bunch of others and said, look, you know the communists have taken over.

Now look, you have to raise your hand and swear allegiance to communism and say, Brezhnev is Lord. Or you turn that way and raise your hand, your right hand and say, Christ is Lord. Make a choice.

I don't think I'd have any difficulty. I'd make my choice. And in that circumstance I'd feel whether I live or die, I'm going to live or die for God.

I don't know so much about looking down the nozzle of a gun when a man stops me. In all that you do, glorify the Lord. And you know what? He'll make everything in your life glorify Him.

You know, I read a story today that I've read many times. I guess you've read it many times too. It's about a man that Jesus loved.

And you know what happened to him? You'd hardly believe it. He died. His sister sent unto him saying, Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick.

When Jesus heard that, he said, this sickness is not unto death, but to the glory of God. That the Son of God might be glorified thereby. And then they go on asking questions.

Jesus says, look, let me tell you quite plainly, he's dead. And I'm glad. What? Does it say that? Well, it's not the whole sentence, but it's what he said.

He says, Jesus said unto them, in John 11, uh, 14, 15, John 11, 14. Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes I was not there.

Now previously he says, you know what? God's going to be glorified in this. Oh no, Lord, you, you, you didn't get it straight. If you'd added this miracle unto the end of the others, you'd have been plucking dead things out of ears, and giving eyes to the blind, and curing with a dart.

If you added this on the end, man, they'd believe in you. I think you missed it. Jesus says, listen boys, this sickness is not for death, but for the glory of God.

All right, Mary and Martha, go to the sepulchre, put the brother in, seal it up. Now, now, honest to goodness, what do you think they were most conscious of for the next three days? Jesus, or the tomb? Jesus or Lazarus? Jesus or the chair at the end of the table that was empty, and every time they, Lazarus, you were to sit there. We're never going to see him till the day of resurrection again.

Lazarus. I'm going to make a guess that they were Lazarus conscious, tomb conscious, death conscious, more than they were conscious of Jesus. Well, isn't that the trouble with all of us, every one of us? The problem gets bigger than him, and when it does, we're in trouble.

Well, Martha, you say that this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. We used to have a precious Pentecostal past in England. I prayed days with him, prayed a week with him once, prayed nights with him, one of the greatest men I've ever met.

Never went to Bible school, he just fought things out with God. And I can hear him singing sometimes with a rusty voice, when my secret hopes have perished in the grave of years gone by, let this promise still be cherished, I will guide thee with mine eye, I will guide thee. My mother used to sing it, when I was a little mite, my friend used to sing it, your secret hopes have perished in the grave.

Lazarus is dead. Oh, and it costs so much to put the stone up, and flowers are expensive. Not to get a new dress for the funeral, as though he could see, he wouldn't care if you went in rags.

But you see, you have to be stylish, you have to be stylish even at funerals, that's another thing we're slaves to, you see. If I should die, everybody come in white, and nobody cry. If you cry, Brother Herb, shoot them.

Pardon me. You just stand there, and I'll tell you what you can sing, crown me with many crowns, and I'll look down and join in, and one or two other wonderful songs, the Hallelujah Chorus, don't worry. D. L. Moody said, somebody will stand over me one day foolishly and say, D. L. Moody's dead.

Brother Heath said, it'll be the first time I've been alive. I'll be really alive. You're going to be glorified in this, how? You know what, we say an awful lot about Peter, don't we? Yes, because Peter made his confession at Caesarea Philippi in the 16th chapter of Matthew, didn't he? They're like the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Well, do you remember that Martha said that? She usually gets blamed for running around and preparing things for everybody. Martha said unto him, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Mary hadn't said that yet, wasn't he glorified in that? Hey, did you hear what she said just now? Martha, she just said to this man, you know, everybody's asking questions, she says, I believe you're the Christ, the Son of God.

It says in the next chapter, chapter 12 and verse 10. No, it's not there, it's a bit further on, let me look. I've forgotten the chapter.

It's somewhere there, where it says that the disciples came, that the people came, not only to see Jesus, but to see in Lazarus whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Now, if he hadn't have raised them from the dead, they'd never have been there. They'd never have heard what he said, they'd never have seen what he did.

Now listen, was Jesus as real, when Mary and Martha were crying and saying, you know, he can't have been the friend he said he was, he wouldn't have left us in this mess. I mean, everybody hates us, we've left the synagogue, we've left the church, and brother, are we in a mess? And when we needed him, he didn't come. Is that friendship? Well, I don't think it is.

Not my idea of friendship. And Jesus says, I'm going to get glory out of this. I'm going to be glorified in the fact, I'll show you that I have power over death.

Secondly, your sister's going to make one of the greatest confessions of all time. Thirdly, a multitude is going to come, not just to see me, but to see Lazarus whom Jesus has raised from the dead. I've tried to tell you that one of the most treacherous things in the Christian life is feelings.

You know, in 1977, if you go up like that, and your circumstances go up like that, and you have spiritual prosperity, and material prosperity, and all the other prosperities, do you know what? You won't be any more precious to God than you are at this moment. And if it should happen in 1977, your prosperity goes down, and your feelings go down, and your health goes down, do you know what? You'll be as precious in this sight as though you made a million every hour on the hour, right through the rest of the year. It'll make a hell of a bean's difference to him.

I am the Lord, I change not. Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord. Let me tie this up with the 15th chapter, verse 1, in which he says, therefore, whether we are strong, we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

You see, the danger of the strong is to despise the weak. And the danger of the weak is to envy and criticise the strong. Now there are weak and strong people in every church as far as I can see.

And do you know what? If you start measuring yourself as you ought to measure yourself, and I measure myself, this is why Paul says, you see, you're all judging each other here. Now he says, I got over that. Do you know why? Because I judge myself every day in the light of God, so I've no problems with your judgment.

You can't tell me anything more about myself than God in His faithfulness tells me. And if you tell me something God didn't tell me, I'll wait, and if it's not right, get out. I live each day judging myself.

And if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged. Because if judgment comes to you today, you'll be a fool to do the transgression tomorrow that you did today. You say, I learned a lesson today.

Well, hallelujah, thank God you learned it. Do all to the glory of God. Whether we live or die.

Hey, how do you know at this minute some man isn't lying on a dirty rotten colt floor in the Gulag archipelago with urine there, and human excretion here, gasping for his breath, and he hasn't had a meal for days, and hasn't had a drink of decent water, and he's gasping out, and maybe saying that very thing, whether I live or die, I am the Lord's. I tell you, I kind of think that makes the devil mad. The thing I have to be sure about is that he has all of my being, he has all that he wants in my life.

A few years ago in this country we lost one of the great preachers, Dr. Barnhouse. He was an inveterate traveler even before there were planes. He used to go to so many countries, and he went to North Korea.

There's a town there called Pyongyang, one of the strange names they have, the capital of North Korea. And he ministered there for, I don't know how many days. And at the end they were saying, we want to give you something.

He said, well look, please sit down. Give me, give me one of the richest experiences of your Christian life. And somebody said, yeah well, we have one man here, he is not a preacher, he is a businessman, but he's an elder in a church, he's an outstanding man, and we'll give the floor.

Brother Kim, you tell your story to the preacher. So Brother Kim stood up and he said, well I am a businessman and I get asked all kinds of questions, and I was in a place a while ago where they asked me to tell them something about the Christian life. He said, let me share it with you.

He said, down in Seoul, the capital of Japan, there was a young Christian man. He was quite smart, he didn't have many advantages, but he worked his way through university and became an outstanding dentist. And he sent a letter to Mr. Kim one day and said, would you find me a house? I'm going to set up a practice.

I have my qualifications and I want to come back to town where I'm known and become the best dentist in town. Let them know there's a Christian around. Now you get me a house.

Mr. Kim said, I went around and I looked and I couldn't find anything. And then down in the poorest section of town, the next house was what they call a house of singing girls, and you can guess what they were. And the house, it had a hole in the roof, the windows were broken, the door was badly battered, the inside was anything but attractive, and the price was exorbitant.

But it was the only empty house, at least it was the only house for sale. It wasn't actually empty, but he was told it was for sale. So he went along and he said to the man, is this place for sale? And he said, yeah, I'm going to leave town before long, the house is for sale.

Can I see it? Yes. And he said, there's not much to it. It's the only house in this area for sale.

Everybody else is holding on, the prices are going to go up and this is the house. And he tried to reason with the man, he couldn't. And finally he said, if I sell, I want a very, very large down payment.

The good Christian man paid it, on conditions that the man got out in six days. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I get out in six days. Yeah, very gladly I go, I got all this money.

He went back in six days and the man was still there. He was still there in six weeks, he was still there in six months. The only change was, he'd painted the door a bit better, he'd bought his wife and children all new dresses and he was eating polished rice instead of the rough stuff that the laborers have to eat.

The Christian man kept saying to him, well, when are you going to keep your side of the deal? Why, why, why don't you do as you said? Now look, this man is coming now in so many days and he's got to have this house. Ah, the man said, I read some Christian papers some people give me. A Christian cannot go to judge and cast me out.

You can't do that, you, you love, you, you can't get me out of this house. Oh, Mr. Kim brought this up in the church meeting and he said, stated the case and said, my friend's coming and I can't get him out, I can't get him out with threats, I can't get him out with reason, I can't get him out anyway, unless I go to court

and get a police order and evict him, what shall I do? Shall I, oh brother Kim, oh, you spoil the testimony for Christ in this heathen country. No, no, no, you can't force him out, you can't force him out.

No? No, no, no, no. All right, he said, I'll, I'll take your advice. And the young man came to set up practice and he was told what had happened and after a few weeks he said, you know, this is an embarrassment to me.

I, I, I told my friends I'd given nearly all my life savings to buy this house, the man won't go out. But, he tells everybody it's my house. There's a hole in the roof, the rain comes in, the door doesn't fit right, the windows are broken, it's a terrible place, it needs changing.

He won't go out. Mr. Kim said to that bunch of people, gentlemen, you've told me that this man should force his way in and take the house and drive the man out and his children and patch the roof and repair the door and clean the house. It stinks, it's abominable, it's his house.

Well, he said, gentlemen, could I remind you of this fact, that that body in which you live is his house? He paid a king's ransom to get it and he's been waiting for years to come in and he doesn't force the door down. And some of you have a testimony, you stick over your knife, Christian, that your deeds are evil and your desires are ungodly and your habits are unclean and you're malicious against your brothers and you condemn them for everything. And he says, the son of man stands there and says, you know, I went through the cross for that man, I went through Gethsemane and I died for him and I rose and he won't let me come in and he dishonors my name because his life is unclean and unfit and uninhabitable for my spirit.

Gentlemen, he said, don't you think it's time that you consider the reproach you're bringing on his name? And let him come in and do some repairs and do some cleaning and fix the thing up and you know what he says, if you do, he'll come and live inside himself. You know, that's the greatest thing this side of eternity. Miracles are all right, signs and wonders are all right, but listen, I'll tell you what, there is no substitute for the abiding presence of the Spirit of God.

And when he abides, we're going to please him continually. It's going to be our goal and we're going to bring joy to his heart.

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