

# The Moral Option

by Major Ian Thomas

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*The sermon emphasizes the moral option available to humanity through the Holy Spirit, highlighting the importance of living to please God by reflecting His character in our lives.*

**Duration:** 57:46

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5-6, John 5:19, John 8:28, John 12:44-50, Romans 14:23, Galatians 3:14, Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 11:6, Revelation 4:11

**Topics:** "Dependence On God", "Moral Responsibility"

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## Description

Major Ian Thomas emphasizes the moral option inherent in humanity, distinguishing between the instinctive behavior of animals and the moral capacity of humans to choose dependence on God. He explains that true functionality and satisfaction come from allowing the Holy Spirit to govern our minds, emotions, and wills, enabling us to reflect God's character in our actions. Thomas stresses that faith, which encompasses dependence and obedience to God, is essential for pleasing Him and fulfilling our purpose as created beings. He illustrates that Jesus exemplified this perfect relationship with the Father, and as His followers, we are called to live in the same way, allowing Christ to express Himself through us. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a genuine relationship with God that transforms our lives and actions into a true reflection of His nature.

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## Transcript

The moral of things. In common with all forms of created life, vegetable, animal, and man, God has given to us a body. In common with all forms of animal life, including man, God has given us a soul.

That behavior mechanism which we have described last evening, your mind with which you think, your emotions with which you react, and your will with which you decide. And whoever controls your mind and whoever controls your emotions, ultimately controls your will, and whoever directs your will, governs your behavior. This we know to be true, that's why you have commercials on television, spot announcements on radio, that's why you see placards along the roadside, advertisements in your newspaper.

It's a battle for the mind, the emotions, and the will. This very time, a general election in the United Kingdom, and on radio and television, by literature posts through the letterbox, people standing, shouting in the open air, political debates and public meetings, there is a battle for the mind, the emotions, and the will. For the politician that captures the mind and captures the emotions knows that he has captured the will, and on polling day he knows that he has captured your vote.

That's how we function. But unique to man, the human spirit. For as we saw on Saturday evening, God has marvelously protected the animal kingdom in providing a built-in computerized program which we conveniently call instinct.

An impersonal instinctive thrust with that rigid, unbreakable interlock between that fastest thrust and the animal soul, so that without any consciousness of the principle at work, the bird keeps flying, but is kept marvelously on course across a tractless ocean to find a little island to fail to do which would be to perish out of sheer exhaustion, but having rested, it'll fly on to its ultimate winter destination, marvelously directed by that inner principle of which it is totally unaware, it just keeps flying, but subconsciously kept on course. This is how God has protected the animal kingdom, that we saw on Saturday evening, but he didn't make us that way, because in the animal kingdom, by virtue of the fact that there is this rigid, unbreakable interlock between the instinctive thrust and the animal soul, in their behavior patterns, they're not saying anything to God, because they're not God-conscious. They're amoral, they're impersonal to their Creator.

Functionally satisfying, yes, but they cannot be morally satisfying, because they can't adopt an attitude, they can't adopt or demonstrate a disposition towards their Maker. That's why God made you and made me differently, giving us the human spirit that man uniquely as creature may be inhabited by God, his Creator. That God, by the Holy Spirit indwelling the human spirit, may have access to your soul, teach your mind, control your emotions, direct your will, and by your free consent, govern your behavior.

That is why God is imperative to a man. The Holy Spirit, in co-equality with the Father and the Son, representing the triune Godhead, within residence in the human spirit, given access to the human soul, to teach your mind, control your emotions, direct your will, so that all creation, looking at you, will know that God governs your behavior. And by what you do and say and are, know what God is like.

You're right, Nicodemus, I'm quite exceptional. You're quite right, Nicodemus, there is only one possible explanation for what I do, what I say, and what I am. God.

Not Nicodemus because I am God, though God I am. But, Nicodemus, because I am man. Man functioning, Nicodemus, as I as God created man to function.

That's why I'm exceptional. I am the exception. Because for the first time since Adam repudiated this proposition that it takes God in the man to be the kind of man that God created man to be, my Father, looking down from heaven, sees in my person a real man who is prepared through the Holy Spirit to let my Father as God be God in me as man, tell me what to do, and I do as I'm told.

To everything I do, my Father does. Everything I say, my Father says. Everything I am, my Father is.

Look at me, you've seen Him. You're right, Nicodemus, I'm quite exceptional. I'm a real man.

These are some of the things that we have been discussing already in the two sessions with which this brief series commenced. That's why, of course, we understand to the Lord Jesus in His perfect humanity on earth, setting aside the prerogatives that make God God, and deliberately submitting Himself to the limitations that make man man, the Holy Spirit was imperative to His humanity. He whom God hath sent, said the Lord Jesus, speaketh the words of God.

It's God speaking. For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. God the Father has shared Himself in deity with His Son as man on earth in His humanity.

But not only, said the Lord Jesus, has my Father given Himself to me without measure through the Eternal Spirit, I have given myself without measure to Him by the Eternal Spirit. For remember, the Lord Jesus is the truth about God and the truth about man, and the truth about God because He's the truth about man, because the truth about man is that He as God created man to be the truth about God. Anything that you and I can know about man as He as God created man to be, we see in the person of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, anything we understand about our humanity that is not true of Him isn't true. Period. And if man was created to offer himself through the Holy Spirit to God, His Creator, and Jesus Christ came to be on earth the kind of man that He as God created man to be, it must be true of Him that He offered Himself to God through the Holy Spirit.

And that is exactly what we're told in Hebrews chapter 9 verse 14, that He, the Lord Jesus Christ, offered Himself without spot to God through the Holy Ghost, the Eternal Spirit. That's the office of the Holy Spirit. He is that member of the triune Godhead through whom a man offers his humanity to God, and through whom God actually shares Himself in deity with a man.

That's His person working office. If you want to give yourself to the Lord Jesus, you do so through the Holy Spirit, indwelling your human spirit, by yielding to Him your mind to think with, your emotions to react with, and your will to decide with. He then will exercise the sovereignty of Jesus Christ in every area of your personality, and He will motivate, He will prompt what you do and say and are, so it won't really be you behaving.

Your humanity will close His behavior. And other people, by what you do and say and are, will know what Jesus Christ is like. That's what it means to be a Christian.

And in the same way, if the Lord Jesus wants to give Himself to you as He does, He does so through the Holy Spirit. When He wants to share with you His life on earth, so that whether awake or asleep, on earth or in heaven, in time or eternity, in the body or out of it, if you are to live together with Jesus Christ, the way He lives together with you on earth is by His Holy Spirit, through whom He credits you with His resurrection life. So through the Eternal Spirit, you offer yourself to Christ, and through the Eternal Spirit, Christ offers Himself to you.

All there is of God, you see, is available to the man who is available to all there is of God. He made it that way. How available was the Lord Jesus as man to His Father as God? Totally.

How available was the Father as God to His Son, the Lord Jesus, as man? Totally. There was total mutual inter-availability. The Lord Jesus described that relationship as, I am in my Father, and my Father is in me.

But remember that again, and again, and again, and yet again, He offered this relationship as that which must exist between you and Him. I am in you, you in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

He that abided in me, and I in Him, bringeth forth much fruit. That's the only premise, the only prerequisite for fruit bearing, that you are in me, and I am in you in the way that I was in my Father, and my Father was in me. The moment you being in me are prepared to allow me to be who I am in you, as once I being in my Father allowed my Father to be what He was in me, you will bear fruit now as I bore fruit then.

This is the spiritual union that is to exist if you and I are to perform the function for which as man, God created it. So the Holy Spirit was absolutely indispensable to the humanity of Jesus Christ. And if the Holy Spirit was indispensable to the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, quite obviously, the Holy Spirit is

indispensable to your humanity and mine.

That's why the Lord Jesus said, You must be born again. And there's only one basis upon which you can be born again. And don't misunderstand that expression.

That doesn't mean your sins are forgiven. That doesn't mean to say that you're going to heaven. To be born again simply means that God has got back into the man.

Spiritual regeneration. Not by any works of righteousness which we have done, according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, the renewing of God the Holy Ghost. And the renewing of God the Holy Spirit, the coming back of God into the man in the person of the Holy Spirit takes place on this exclusive premise.

Whom the Holy Spirit, He has shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. The Lord Jesus in the perfection of His humanity came into this world to accomplish that redemptive transaction that will allow a holy God to put God back into the man. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Lord being made a curse for us.

Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree. That the blessing of Abraham, all that God had in mind when He made this covenant with Abraham, that in Him all the families of the earth should be blessed. That the blessing of Abraham might be fulfilled in us through Jesus Christ.

That we might receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 3.14 In other words Christ redeemed us that we might become the recipients of the Holy Spirit so that He might credit us on earth as also forever in eternity with the life of Jesus Christ. We were made that way.

But as there is a rigid unbreakable interlock between the instinctive thrust and the animal soul, we have seen that there is a moral interlock between the Holy Spirit and the human soul. This is not a rigid unbreakable interlock. This is a moral breakable interlock.

Because creating man with the capacity to love God back, God built into man the moral option that allows man to say yes or no. That's why you can be a rebel if you like. That's why you can die in your sins if you like.

That's why professing to be a Christian and saying you're converted you can live a carnal life if you like. Because there is a moral option, the responsibility to exercise which God will never relieve you. For in His unchallengeable sovereignty as the timeless creator, God deliberately chose in that sovereignty to limit Himself in that sovereignty by the law of love and the law of faith.

That's why it's possible to go for so long as a member of an evangelical church and be a phony, as we talked about this morning. That's why you can enjoy all the religious entertainment that the evangelical constituency offers you without ever meaning business for one moment with Jesus Christ. But you've learned the language.

You'll get by. Everybody will think you're a keen member of the institution. Except God, who reads you like a book.

Because you're open and naked before the eyes of Him with whom you have to do it. He looks through you like a piece of glass. Because you can deceive everybody but Him.

And most of us are supreme actors. And most of us can get away with most things most of the time. Except with God.

A moral interlock. And that moral interlock is threefold in character. Love for God, dependence on God, and obedience to God.

And dependence on God and obedience to God are the twin ingredients of what the Bible calls faith. Because dependence on and obedience to lets God, out of your love for God, be God in action. In your experience.

Let's just examine that a little closer. In the last book in the Bible, the book of the Revelation. Revelation in chapter 4. And the last verse of that fourth chapter.

Revelation chapter 4 and verse 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

God created all things, and everything is and was created for His pleasure. In other words, to please Him. And that includes you.

Now when do you imagine you'll please God? There's only one way in which you can please God, and that's by being functional. And that doesn't mean that you're caught up in a rat race of religious activity. It means that you do exactly and precisely that for which He created you.

Tell the truth about God. 24 hours a day. At school, at the office, walking down the street, in the home, doing the washing up, driving a car, using your typewriter, playing football.

24 hours every day, fulfilling the function for which God made you. Telling the truth about God. Let us make man in our image and in our likeness, and in the likeness of God made in Him.

Sin is telling lies about God. That's how it's defined in the Bible. Falling short of the glory.

The moment you say that you're a Christian and lose your temper, you're saying to all who look at you as a Christian what God is like. The moment as a Christian you lie, you're telling everybody who looks at you as a Christian that God is a liar. The moment you're jealous, or greedy, or selfish, or proud, or arrogant, or dirty, and you call yourself a Christian, you're saying to all the world, look at me, now you know what God is like.

He's arrogant, stupid, dirty, that's what He's like. Because I'm telling lies about Him. God created man to tell the truth about God.

That's when you please Him. When by what you do and say and are, other people in your presence become compellingly aware of what Jesus Christ is like. As nearly 2,000 years ago, everybody in the presence of the Lord Jesus became compellingly aware of what the Father was like.

That was normality. He was functional. Because He was man, as He as God created man to be.

He created you to please Him. And because the Lord Jesus was totally functional, the Father of God could look down from heaven and say, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. He pleases me.

Do you know what that meant for the Lord Jesus? It was no hardship to Him, of course, it was a sheer delight to Him. Because there's nothing so fulfilling as being pleasing to God. That is the ultimate, in sheer joy, sheer peace.

Sheer wonder. But this is what it meant for the Lord Jesus. And of course, this is what it will mean for you and for me.

Because as the Father sent Him, He sends us. Romans 15.3. Don't turn to it. This is what it says.

Even Christ. Christ! The Word who was in the beginning with God and was God, by whom all things were made. The Creator.

The Redeemer. The Word incarnate. Even Christ could not please Himself.

Even Christ could not please Himself. Why not? Because the office of man is to please God. And you please God when you're functional.

24 hours a day. Displaying His character. Giving a valid expression of His likeness.

So that's the first thing. Created to please God. And you will only please God when by what you do and say and are, you give a valid expression of what God is like.

I don't mean that you put on a religious pose. I don't mean that you adopted a posture. Jesus Christ didn't do that.

He was the visible expression, we're told. Colossians 1.15. He was the visible expression of the invisible God. In other words, at any time, day or night, you could look at Him and know what God was like.

He didn't have office hours. He didn't say, if you want to see what God is like in me, come around tomorrow at half past two, I'll be in position. The image that He gave of His Father was in motion and in color and in sound.

There wasn't a time, day or night, when He didn't give a valid expression of God's character. Whether He was eating His lunch or preaching the Sermon on the Mount. Whether you looked at Him from the left or the right, from the front or the back, from above or from beneath, whether He was aware that you were looking or whether He wasn't, at any given moment, by everything He was doing, the most menial task, when He got down and washed His disciples' feet, when He raised Lazarus from the dead, when He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle anointing the blind man's eye, at every moment of every day, look at Him, see God.

Don't please imagine that your Christianity is to be confined to certain meetings that you have in a certain building called church. That's the place where, more often than not, we are least real because we've got a pose, we're putting on an act. Where God is really studying your life is at school, in the office, at the home, amongst your brothers and sisters, down the street with your girlfriends.

That's where He's watching you to discover whether you're telling lies or telling the truth about Him. That's why, of course, the spirituality of what you're doing doesn't have a religious connotation. The spirituality of what you're doing has absolutely nothing, whatever, to do with the nature of the act, only its origin.

From whom does it flow, from whom does it stem, who's the author of the act? That's why the most menial task can declare the glory of God. Which of those activities of the Lord Jesus was the more spiritual? When He preached the Sermon on the Mount, raised Lazarus from the dead, washed his disciples' feet, or spat on the ground, which would you say was the more spiritual? Silly question. He said, I do only always those things that please Him.

That was His testimony, John 8, 28. Because as man, I, as God, created man to please God. So I have no other option as man, being man as I, God, created man, but to please God.

So I do only always those things that please Him. That's why I can't please myself. And when my father is pleased to preach the Sermon on the Mount, it's my privilege to be pleased to place my humanity at his disposal, so that he can put what he wants to say into words and make them articulate through my lips.

And when my father wants to raise a man from the dead, it's my privilege, with my lips, to give the commanding word, Lazarus, come forth, and my father, God, by me, raises that man from the dead. And when my father, God, wants to get down his hands and knees and wash the disciples' feet, and do what the other disciples were too pig-headedly proud to do, because they didn't want to lose face, or station, or status, it's my privilege to offer my humanity to my father, so that he can get down his hands and knees, gird himself with a towel, take a basin of water, and wash the disciples' feet. And when my father, God, in heaven, wants to spit on earth, I spit, and anoint the blind man's eye.

So tell me this, was he called to preach, or called to spit? He was called to neither. He was simply sent to be a man. Available to his father, 24 hours a day, preach or spit.

Nothing ostentatious, nothing pious, nothing priggish about the Lord Jesus. He was just real man, flesh and bones, real man. 24 hours a day, available to his father, who by the Holy Spirit indwelt his human spirit, gave himself in totality to the Son, who through the same Holy Spirit gave himself in totality to the Father.

And by the way, said the Lord Jesus, unless you want to be a phony, as my father sent me, so send I you. That's normality. How does it work? Well, here's the next thing.

First thing, he created us to please him. Second thing, you'll find in the epistle to the Hebrews, 11. 11th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews.

And this is the most obvious passage, of course, next to turn to. It tells us about a man, in the 5th verse of that 11th chapter, who pleased God. By faith, Enoch was translated that he should not see death.

He was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation, he had this testimony that he pleased God. But, but, if he pleased God, please bear this in mind, says the apostle.

Without faith, it's impossible to please him. Without faith, it's impossible to please him. What faith? The twin ingredients, dependence on him and obedience to him.

It's your dependence on him, and it's your obedience to him. God doesn't do that for you. God can't obey himself through you.

He commands you to obey. God commands all men everywhere to repent and be converted. And if God commands all men everywhere to repent and be converted, it's because all men everywhere can repent

and be converted.

In other words, it's within the moral capacity of every man, woman, child ever born to yield obedience. Dependence on, obedience to. And without that, it's impossible to please him.

Why? Well, because God created man to provide a valid expression of his likeness. And man can't imitate God. Man can't ape his maker successfully.

All that man can do, being made as he was, with a body and a soul and a human spirit, is to allow God by the Holy Spirit from within the human spirit, have access by his own free volition to his soul, teach his mind, control his emotions, direct his will, so it is God governing his behavior. And that's the only way you can be functional. So without faith that lets God, as God, be God in the man, it's impossible to please him.

That's what is meant in the Proverbs, chapter 3, verses 5 and 6. Do you remember? Trust in the Lord with all your heart. What's your heart? Your soul, mind, emotion and will. What does it mean to trust God with your heart? Well, exactly what it says.

Somebody came to you and you had a car and says, excuse me, but my car's in the garage and I'm desperately in need of transport. I wonder if you'd trust me with your car. And knowing him to be a competent driver and a reliable individual, you trust him with your car.

What do you expect him to do with your car that you trust him with? Drive it. Use it. And when you trust God with your heart, what do you expect him to do with it? Use it.

You say, God, thanks for the mind you've given me to think with. Thanks for the emotions you've given me to react with. Thanks for the will you've given me to decide with.

I want you to know that I recognize your presence by the Holy Spirit within my human spirit, and I give my mind for you to think with. I give my emotions for you to react with. I give my will for you to decide with.

I trust you with my heart. Please use it. He made you that way.

Because the Holy Spirit from within the human spirit having access to the human soul is to play the role within the human soul that instinct plays in that of the animal. But never ever except by your consent. That is your moral option.

That is the moral capacity that lifts you out of the animal kingdom and makes you man. And therefore not only functionally, but morally satisfying to God. And when you trust in the Lord with all your heart, give him your mind, your emotions, and your will to use by his Holy Spirit.

Leaning not to your own understanding. Not considering yourself smart enough to get by without God. That's what the devil told Adam.

But not leaning to your understanding. But in all your ways, in the totality of your being, acknowledging him, saying, God as my creator, you're my God. And he that cometh to God must first believe that God is, and that he, the God who is, is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

In other words, all that God is, is genuinely available to the man who is genuinely available to all that God is. So trusting him with all your heart, mind, emotion, and will. Leaning not to your own understanding, but acknowledging him as God, to be God in you, in all your ways.

What does it say? He'll govern your behavior. He'll govern your behavior. He'll direct your powers.

Other people looking at you will see God behaving. There'll be no problems about guidance. No problems about which college you go to study in.

No problem about whether or not you say yes or no to this engagement. No problem about whether or not you buy that house. No problem now about whether you enter into this business transaction.

Because you see, trusting him with all your heart, leaning not to your own understanding, in all your ways, acknowledging him actually, practically, experientially, really, letting God be God, he governs your behavior. And the moment you're prepared for those terms of reference, you stop pleading with God for guidance and trying to wring it out like blood from a stone, you thank him. You thank him.

And say, Lord Jesus, this is the most hilarious life. This is the most fantastic adventure. I never, ever in all my days imagined that the Christian life could be so exciting.

To live together with you. Not a single business transaction in which this business now is engaged, of which I am the owner and the founder or the manager. There's no football game, dear Lord, as a kid at school that I'm to be engaged in now.

There's no little evening to which we've invited friends to our home. There is nothing now in life that we don't live together with you. And know your total, complete and utter adequacy.

There's no financial problem that we don't share together. There's no glorious opportunity. There's no open door of possibility, Lord Jesus, that we don't now share with you.

Trusting you with our hearts, leaning not to our own understandings, but acknowledging you in all our ways, you governing our behavior. What a fantastic thing that our humanity, our flesh and blood, our hands and feet and lips and eyes and ears can actually clothe in reality. Not in pious evangelical jargon, but actually, in fact, 24 hours a day can clothe your divine activity so that by virtue of my availability, all thorns let loose in the world.

Man, who wants to sit in a stodgy pew and just have meeting after meeting after meeting when you can enjoy that? But it's dangerous. It's very dangerous. It'll probably destroy all your ambitions.

It'll probably disturb all your programs. For all I know, it's going to take you out of Australia and put you in the heart of Ecuador. For all I know, it won't be the girl you think that you're going to marry because God's got another one around the corner.

It's dangerous to let God be God, because do you know, the moment you let God be God, a strange thing happens. God is God. And you discover that he's big enough for the job.

This is why, by and large, the average evangelical institution never allows Jesus Christ to run the show, because it would be dangerous. There are very few church communities where Jesus Christ ever has a real say in how to run the church. It changed too many things.

And we're not prepared for that. It's been like this for the last 10, 20, 30, 50 years. It'd be a terrible thing to let the Lord Jesus actually run his church.

He might do it. And a good number of us would be out of business without faith. It's impossible to please him.

That's why faith isn't optional. That's why faith isn't a luxury. Faith is an imperative.

Because faith, in response to your love, yields obedience to, out of your avowed dependence on, the one who is imperative to your being, God. Simply let God be God in action. So what's the alternative to faith? Revelation 4.11, created to please him.

Hebrews 11.6, impossible to please him without faith. So what's the only alternative to faith? You'll find it in Romans 14.23, in the last half of that verse. Because the last half of that verse speaks of the principle in particular, which is applied by the apostle in the earlier part of the chapter to a situation in general.

Last sentence of Romans 14.23, whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. What's faith? Depending on God and obedience to God.

And I don't care what it is. I don't mind what the activity in which you engage. It may be pious.

It may be within the context of your church. You can get up into a pulpit and preach the most fundamental Bible-believing, orthodox, evangelical sermon. But if it doesn't derive from that attitude, that disposition on your part, which prompted by love, makes you dependent on God and obedient to God in the very act of preaching, that's sin.

Because you can get up into a pulpit and give a carnal exhibition of your own scholarship, your own gift of the gab, your own verbosity, your own personality thrust. You can learn all the gimmicks of the trade. You can go to Hollywood and learn how to get them down the aisle.

And whatever activity does not derive from your disposition toward Jesus Christ that makes him the author of the act and the author of the word, is a prostitution of your humanity. The Lord Jesus, though God himself walking this earth, never once claimed the right to say a word that the Father didn't tell him to speak. The Lord Jesus, though created God, walking this earth as man, never once, ever once claimed the right to do a thing that his Father didn't motivate.

The Lord Jesus, as man walking this earth, though created God, never once, ever under any circumstances exercised his own initiative or made a single decision that didn't reflect in obedience the decision that his Father had already made. Because he was man. And he knew that anything but utter dependence on his Father in total obedience to his Father, out of complete love for his Father, would have disqualified him and numbered him as man on earth with the sinful men he came to redeem.

How much then could Jesus Christ do as man without the Father as God? Well, I won't tell you because you might not believe me. I'll let him tell you. In John 5, verse 19, and the same chapter, and verse 20, Then answered Jesus and said to them, verse 19 of John 5, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself.

How much? Nothing. As God, everything, he created all things. By the word of his power he upholds all things.

As man? Nothing. But what he seeth the Father do, for what things soever he the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. Because the office of the Son is to clothe the Father's activity with his humanity.

Verse 30, I can of mine own self do nothing. How much? Nothing. The spirit of the world in which you and I live, which is populated by a fallen race of fallen men, who are the seed of a fallen Adam, the spirit of that world says, I can! Because, you see, man, never ever more than man, behaving as though he were never ever less than God, repudiates the sincere necessity, the imperative necessity of God to the creature.

Jesus Christ, never ever less than God, coming to this world of pain as though he were never ever more than man, knew the nature of the man that he as God created. And as man said, I can do nothing. I can of mine own self do nothing.

As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If the Father was imperative to the Son, and the Son is now going to send you and me as the Father sent him, how imperative to us will be the Lord Jesus? If the Lord Jesus as the Son could do nothing without the Father, how much can you and I do without the Lord Jesus? Well, he tells us, I am the vine, you are the branches. He that abideth in me and I abide in him bringeth forth much fruit.

But without me, I'll tell you exactly how much you can do. Just exactly as much as I could do without my Father. Nothing.

Because for 33 years I demonstrated how I as God made you. That's pretty humiliating. It exposes us for the petty little brackarts we are, so capable of doing so much without Christ, when he, the Creator God, as man could do nothing by his own testimony without the Father.

Just how smart are you? That you can do so much better as creature than Christ as your Creator. Or who are you kidding? Who then did everything? We've already learned from the lips of the Lord Jesus, the words that I speak unto I speak not of myself, my Father that dwelleth in me. He does the work.

Please don't credit me, credit him. That's why in John 7 verse 16 the Lord Jesus said, My doctrine is not mine. Please don't give me a PhD, I don't deserve it.

My doctrine is not mine, his that sent me. All I do is make it articulate. There was nothing the Lord Jesus ever said that he didn't learn from his Father.

Amazing. He tells us that. Maybe you never noticed it.

John's gospel chapter 8. Said the Lord Jesus, verse 26, I have many things to say and to judge of you, but he that sent me is true. And I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

Verse 28, then said Jesus unto them, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, speaking of his crucifixion, then shall ye know that I am he, the one whom the Father sent, and that I do nothing of myself. I simply make my humanity, as perfect man, available to my Father, as perfect God. So when you see them nail me to a cross, you'll know that I am doing nothing.

I'm simply being, it's my Father that's acting. And as my Father sent me, I send you. He continues in that 28th verse, as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

Everything the Lord Jesus said, he had to learn. And he had to learn from the one who taught him, because he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. He had to learn to do as man what he had never done as God.

Be told what to do and do as he was told. The hardest thing in the world for you and me to do. The first thing that we rebel against in our earliest age, as we come into this world as little babies, almost, almost before we can make one single word articulate, the one thing that we find harder than anything else is to be told what to do and do as we're told.

Right? And you never get over it. You never get over it. It just becomes worse and worse.

And of course, this is why so many parents have so much trouble with their teenage kids. Because it is inherent in fallen human nature to resent at any time being told what to do and doing as you're told. Why? Because that's exactly where man fell into sin.

Because God said to man, I've created you in such a way that you can be inhabited by me as your creator. And so long as out of your love for me, you'll be utterly dependent on me and always obedient to me. You can share my life, share my eternity.

And not only that, I've created you as my creature to be inhabited by your creator, to exercise dominion over all the works of my hands. You're going to exercise a derived authority. But that derived authority will derive from your submission to my authority.

And the devil said, stuff and nonsense. Kick over the traces and demonstrate the fact that you can be your own god, master in your own house, and king in your own kingdom. You can be a man without God.

And the first evidence of man's rebellion in believing the devil's lie that a man can be man without God is that he kicked over the traces because being convinced now that he was a man without God and gloriously self-sufficient, he could afford to be independent. And if he could afford to be independent, he could afford to be disobedient. Why should he now do what God tells him when the devil has already persuaded him that a man can be man without God? Man didn't fall into sin when he ate the fruit.

He ate the fruit because he'd fallen into sin. The act of disobedience was simply the evidence of a new attitude of arrogant self-sufficiency. Independence.

And if sin is independence, now you know what repentance is. The measure of your repentance is the measure of your dependence. Man opted out of life into death when he stepped out of dependence into independence.

A man opts out of death into life when he's prepared before God to trade independence for dependence. That's repentance. And lots of Christians have never yet learned to repent.

Baby repentance. Yes, I'm sorry for what I've done, especially if I'm found out. But I haven't fully grasped yet that what I do is the result of what I am.

So I'm sorry for what I've done, but I've never yet been sorry for what I am. That's why I always make excuses for what I do. It's always somebody else's fault.

Of course it was wrong and I've admitted it, but it wasn't really my fault. It was her fault, his fault. You should have heard what she said.

That isn't repentance. That's baby repentance. Most people get converted into church members for 50 years only on the basis of baby repentance.

I'm sorry for what I've done, so I need what he did. So they come to the cross. But they've never yet been sorry for what they are, and that's why they've never seen the need for what he is.

So they're prepared to trade places. Christ on the cross and me in heaven. But they're not prepared to trade personality.

I on the cross and Christ on the throne. That's what it means to be a Christian. The Lord Jesus learned everything he said.

As God, he'd never have done so. He could have stayed with his Father and the Holy Spirit in the triune Godhead. Never had to learn a thing.

That's why in a passage that you may never really have noticed, but which you should underline, you'll find it in the 12th of John, you'll find something that you probably would never understand unless you can grasp some of the things that I'm talking about. Supposing I said to you, please take a piece of paper and a pencil and complete this sentence. Jesus said, he that believeth on me, complete the sentence.

Well, one way in which you could complete the sentence would be hath everlasting life. Any baby Christian could write that and it would be true. Gloriously true.

Or he that believeth on me shall not come into judgment. Condemnation. Any baby Christian could write that and that would be true.

Gloriously true. That isn't what he said. Not in this instance.

Do you know what he said? You'll find it in verse 44. He that believeth on me, believeth not on me. Got that underlined in your Bible? Does that make sense? He that believeth on me, believeth not on me.

Why not? Because he was talking as a man and not talking as God. And a man, when he's being true man, only has the right to say what God's telling him. Have you grasped that? Can you honestly say as you look back over the last 24 hours that you've said only what Jesus Christ told you to say? The measure in which you haven't is the measure of your sins.

The measure in which you're still a caricature of the real thing. There was never a word that the Lord Jesus spoke that his father did not command him to speak. So said he, when you believe on me, you don't believe on me.

You believe on the one who tells me what to say. He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. Because what I say, my father says.

And he goes on in the next verse, of course, to say, He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me. Because everything I do is what my father does, as everything I say is what my father says. Oh, and by the way, as the father sent me, I send you.

Tell me, quite frankly, you're a company of Christian folk and your presence here this afternoon indicates your desire, in the majority of cases, to know more about the genuine Christian life. Are you prepared to settle there? Are you prepared to settle for these terms? The Lord Jesus isn't exhibiting before you a life that is beyond your grasp. He's simply saying this is normality.

What I'm telling you, says the Lord Jesus, is this, that what I'm doing and what I'm saying and what I am is not a demonstration of my deity, it's a demonstration of my father's deity in terms of my humanity. And all I'm asking of you is to be to me as man what I'm prepared now to be my father as man. Why aren't you prepared to let me, says the Lord Jesus, be God in you, as I let then my father be God in me? If you really mean business.

If we're not prepared for that, of course, we can call ourselves converts, maybe, but we'll never call ourselves disciples. Because a disciple learns of his master. It's enough, said the Lord Jesus, for the servant to be as his Lord, the disciple as his master.

He that rejecteth me, verse 48, and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. Because what I say now, says the Lord Jesus, will still be the truth then.

And it'll judge you. That's why I'm not one preacher among many. I'm not one philosopher among many.

I'm not one theologian among many. That's why you can't compare me. That's why you can't pick and choose.

Because what I say, my father says. And what I say, being what my father says, will be true then as it's true now. And that will condemn me.

I have not spoken of myself. 49th verse. I have not spoken of myself.

The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. I know that his commandment is life everlasting. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Could it be any less ambiguous than that? Could you from ever on doubt that every word the Lord Jesus spoke made articulate what his Father wanted to say? Well of course not. How did it happen? He let him. He simply let him.

Out of his love for the Father. In simple childlike dependence on the Father. In utter unquestioning obedience to the Father.

He simply let the Father be the Father in him in action. That is the Christian life. For the Lord Jesus died then, gave himself for you.

That being risen again from the dead, now he might give himself to you. And all he asks, in your home, in your office, in your school, at your university, out of your love for him, in childlike dependence on him, in unquestioning obedience to him, to let Jesus Christ simply be Jesus Christ in action. So that every morning when you get up you're excited about what the Lord Jesus is going to do in and through you.

Every time you get into your car and sit at the steering wheel you're saying Lord Jesus thank you for this new opportunity in this car to show other road users what you're like. It's going to be an exciting opportunity. For the first time a pedestrian is going to be exposed to courtesy.

Instead of a car aiming at her, it's going to stop. A hundred yards away in case she's threatened. And for the first time that woman will know what Jesus Christ is like.

No place I suppose on earth where Christians tell more lies about God than behind the steering wheel. Especially in Australia. I've been watching very carefully from Perth to Adelaide to Melbourne.

Every time you go into the kitchen you say Lord Jesus this is another lovely opportunity in the normal business of a housewife to allow you to show what you're like. Thanks Lord Jesus as I cross the threshold of my office block. There are many opportunities in business today where somebody who's a total stranger to the grace of God, though I never quote a verse, though I never mention your name, will go away quaintly fascinated, baffled and bewildered with a holy curiosity aroused in the heart to discover what it was that made me different.

It's going to be exciting, it's going to be real fun Lord Jesus. Just letting be you be who you are. Thanks for that boy I'll bump into maybe on a plane.

Thanks for that weary broken hearted lady I'm going to meet and they'll never be the same again. Because though they didn't know it at the time they met God, clothed with me. Because Lord Jesus that's exactly what you made me for.

Nobody to be congratulated except yourself. That is the Christian mind. I've spoken in a church in Canada on a number of occasions.

One man who's now moved from that church is elsewhere now he's in Woodstock, got the message. And we still feel the repercussions in the expression of Christ in his life. He put it this way once, when Jesus died for me on Calvary he paid the penalty for all my sin.

He suffered all the pain my sinful heart to gain. And now his spirit witnesses within. I'm just a suit of clothes that Jesus wears.

My body is the house in which he lives, my voice is his to talk, my feet are his to walk. I'm just a suit of clothes that Jesus wears. He rose again to bring abundant life.

To justify before his father's face I live no more but he lives out his life through me. I'm just a vessel fashioned by his grace. As life goes on I fear not come what may.

He carries all my burdens and my cares for me the battle's done. For he's the victory one. I'm just a suit of clothes that Jesus wears.

I am crucified with Christ. I've said yes to God to put me where he put his son. In my place.

That's all I'm fit for. Nevertheless I live. Live man, live.

Not exist. Not just crawl by. Live.

I live. Yet not I. Christ lives in me. You see he died for me that whether I wake or sleep I should live together with him.

And I'm entering into the good of all that for which his blood was shed otherwise I'd sell him down the river. Not I. Christ lives in me. The life that I now live in this body I simply live by disposition.

All that he asks of me. An attitude that trades independence in all its arrogance for dependence that says in continuing repentance I can't. You never said I could.

No more can I live Lord Jesus without you by your testimony than an oil lamp without oil or a car without petrol. Thanks for the revelation. Now I realize what repentance is.

It's not morbid introspection. It isn't bringing out my dirty linen and boasting about it. I realize repentance now is facing the facts of life created as I was by you as God.

Without you I can't. You never said I could. But thanks for the faith that now burns in my heart that says you can.

You're God. You always said you would. It's all you need is a suit of clothes.

Thanks for the privilege Lord Jesus of being that suit of clothes. My humanity at your disposal offered through the Holy Spirit through whom you offer yourself to me. That should be quite exciting.

And it is. Because at last the world will see no longer what you can do at your best for Christ. The world at last will see what he at his best can do through you.

That's why he died on the cross. Not just to get men out of hell and into heaven. But to get God back out of heaven into man.

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