

# The Principle of Behaviour

by Major Ian Thomas

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*Major Ian Thomas emphasizes the necessity of faith in Jesus Christ for a genuine Christian experience, distinguishing between the role of faith, the Bible, and the process of sanctification.*

**Duration:** 1:10:44

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:27, Matthew 6:33, John 5:39, John 14:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 2 Timothy 3:16, Revelation 22:18-19

**Topics:** "Behaviour"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing Jesus as the central figure in Christianity. He compares the relationship between a bee and a television to illustrate the difference between a machine and a being with free will. The speaker highlights that just as a television cannot have a personal relationship with its user, a dead religion detached from Christ lacks true life and meaning. The sermon emphasizes that Jesus is the truth of the truth and that Christianity is only meaningful when we allow Him to move redemptively and regeneratively in our lives.

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## Transcript

Certainly glad to add my welcome to that which has already been expressed to you. It's so good to see you again tonight. I really have been enjoying these opportunities that have been mine to speak to you, both in the evening services and at the lunch hour sessions.

I appreciate, too, the folk who have shared with me on the platform and who have conducted the early part of these services. It's been a great joy for me to chat with you personally as I've had the opportunity of shaking you by the hand and saying good night. It's lovely to meet a sort of friendly bunch of folk who've got a nice smile, and it's really been good to fellowship with you in these days.

I enjoy at the end of a service just chatting with you informally, but I would like to say this, that if in personal conversation or counsel at the end of a service I can be of service to you, the fact that I'm at the door saying goodbye to folk, please don't allow that to deter you from just remaining behind. I'd be more than glad to invest time if that can in any way be of benefit. Last evening, some of you may remember who were able to participate with us.

I indicated that tonight would be just a little bit unusual. We shall continue, of course, in our main thrust of making the obvious obvious. That's the purpose of the exercise.

We talked last evening about faith, the imperative nature of faith, that without faith it is impossible, a sheer, utter impossibility to please God. But having recognized the imperative nature of faith as that moral relationship that links the life of God to the soul of man, we warned ourselves of the other error, and that is to deify faith instead of deifying God. Never congratulate a man on his faith.

This was the conclusion to which we came, because to do so, of course, is to malign God's character. If you once know just how big God is and how marvelous and fantastic is the Lord Jesus Christ, you would never congratulate a person on putting their trust in him. Faith simply lets God be as big as God is in action.

Faith allows the Lord Jesus Christ to move redemptively into your personal experience. Faith, in other words, is the determining factor in your own personal experience of God himself. God exists.

Christ is the Redeemer. But you'll never know it, except through the faith that, by your attitude toward him, allows him to demonstrate all that he is, and all that he's so marvelously competent to accomplish. So, we recognize that nobody was ever saved by faith.

We're very slovenly in the expressions that we use by and large in our evangelical faith, and we say that a man is saved by faith. Well, of course, nobody was ever saved by faith. That's sheer nonsense, because faith can't save anybody.

If a man is saved, he's saved by Jesus Christ, because he's the Savior. All that faith does is let Jesus Christ be the Savior he is, and do the saving. Now, that's obvious, but it isn't always so obvious, because it's so obvious.

And we need to be reminded of these facts. In the same way the Bible never saved anybody, this Bible can't save anybody. It's a marvelous book.

It's God-breathed. It's absolutely authentic from the first word of the book of Genesis to the last word of the Revelation. I believe this to have been God-given, but nobody was ever saved by the Bible, because there's nothing magic about the Bible in itself.

It's a miracle. It's a miracle book, but the Bible is given to us simply to introduce us to the person about whom it speaks, Jesus Christ. It isn't the Bible that supports your Christian life.

It's Jesus Christ. The Bible simply tells you about Jesus Christ, who supports your Christian life. But you would be amazed how many evangelical Christians there are, who are utterly superstitious about their Bible.

They imagine that if they read the Bible every morning and every night, that's going to sustain their Christian life. Nobody's Christian life was ever sustained by reading the Bible morning and night. The Christian life is sustained by the person who is the Christian life, Jesus Christ.

Of course, it's an excellent, excellent practice to read the Bible every morning and every night, but never imagine that that sustains your Christian life. I was brought up on this, alas, for the first few years of my life, and that's why my Christian life was so miserably impoverished. I was told from the moment that I was converted that if I had a quiet time in the morning, I'd have a good day, and if I didn't have a quiet time in the morning, I'd have a bad day.

Well, that's a mere superstition. So I rushed through my morning quiet time. I put the penny in the slot, and I took out the gum.

But if for a good reason or a bad reason I didn't have a quiet time, then I had a bad day. I had to have a bad day. Wouldn't have been fair to have had a good day.

Well, isn't that nonsensical? Let's recognize that the Lord Jesus is the beginning and the end. He's the author and the finisher. He's the root and the fatness.

He's the alpha and the omega. He's everything. Of him, through him, to him, all things, to whom be glory forever.

So we need to have something more than a Bible that we idolize. And you know, there's nothing so sacred, nothing so sacred in the Christian life that you cannot make it the object of your idolatry. And you'll always have somebody come up to you at every meeting, almost certainly, because you haven't worshipped their idol.

And the idol they're worshipping will be something completely legitimate in its true relationship to Christ. But take it out of its true relationship to Christ, of course, and you kill it. Your Bible, evangelism, soul winning missions, all these things can become the object of the idolatry.

The devil doesn't mind what it is that is a substitute for the person of God's son. So we come to the truth. This marvelous revelation that God has given to us, for which we can be so profoundly thankful.

We come to the truth. But we have to allow the Holy Spirit to lead us, not only to the truth, but through the truth, to the truth of the truth, so that the truth of the truth can make the truth true, you see, in your experience and mine. Do you get what I mean? You come to the truth and you allow the Holy Spirit to take you through the truth, to the truth of the truth, so that the truth of the truth can make the truth true in your experience.

When I left England, I flew to Los Angeles. I very often have to fly across the Atlantic, it just happens to be part of my ministry. Very often I fly to Manchester and I'll consult the BOAC timetable, discover that there's a BA flight 357 that leaves it's 537 as a matter of fact, leaves Manchester midday, arrives New York half past three same afternoon.

Well of course, I take the precaution of making sure that the schedule is valid, that it isn't outdated. I'll confirm it with the travel agency, maybe ring up BOAC themselves, until I'm absolutely convinced that the information that I have is accurate and reliable. BA 537 departs midday, Manchester airport, arrives New York, Kennedy airport, half past three.

That's the truth. In fact, if somebody were to come panting up to me in great excitement saying I've just had a cable, my mother's dying in New York, how do I get there? I'd say quite simple, midday, BA 537, and you'll be in New York three and a half hours later, clockwise. I can bear testimony to the truth, I can recite it by heart, whole chunks of it, but does that get me to New York? Have you ever flown by plane schedule? Well no, because that's just the truth.

There's no challenge to the accuracy and the validity of the truth, but the truth in itself doesn't do anything for me, any more than the Bible can do anything for you. You can memorize the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, it won't change your character, it won't get you out of hell or get you into heaven, not unless

you go beyond the truth. To the truth of the truth, in other words to the one about whom the truth speaks.

This is what the Lord Jesus meant when he turned to the Pharisees, who had a very high regard for scripture. The scribes and the Pharisees. He says, do you remember, John's chapter 5 and verse 39, he says, you search the scriptures.

In the authorized version it says, search the scriptures, as though it was in the imperative, but actually, accurately translated from the original, it isn't search the scriptures, it was a categorical statement of fact. The Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees and the scribes, and it was absolutely true, you search the scriptures. This was their stock in trade, this was their business, this was their profession, they poured over the scriptures, they analyzed its page, they drew all kinds of theological conclusions from it, and they had a high regard for its authenticity.

But he said, you search the scriptures. In them, the scriptures, you think you have eternal life, but they are they which testify of me. And you will not come to me that you might have life.

So you've got a Bible that can't redeem, and you've got a Bible that can't regenerate. You've got a Bible that never gave you life. Why not? Well, because they came to the truth and never went through the truth to the truth of the truth, so the truth of the truth can make the truth true.

I say, what's the truth of the truth of a timetable? If I consult the plane schedule and absolutely intellectually convince that there is a service that will get me from Manchester to New York, what's the truth of the truth that makes the truth true? The plane. What's the plane schedule all about? Well, the plane schedule, if it's valid, is all about a plane. Now, I've known airlines that have got plane schedules, but no planes.

Have you ever come across those? They don't get you too far. You see, the plane is the truth of the truth, which alone can make the truth of a plane schedule true. So I go to the airport at the appointed time, and I commit myself through faith to the plane, and by my faith invoke its activity on my behalf, so that it can make the truth true in my experience.

Okay? All right, well, here's the schedule. It contains the truth. It is the truth.

It's divinely inspired. It's God's declaration of intent. It provides for you accurately a detailed list of all the services in a sense that God can render.

But the Lord Jesus himself is the content of this book. He alone is the truth of the truth that makes the truth true. He's the one who makes the truth of God operative.

In your experience and mine. But never unless you and I are prepared to exercise that attitude towards him as the content of this book that allows him to move redemptively and regeneratively into our experience. Now, it is the role of the Lord Jesus as the one who, as the truth of the truth, makes the truth true that we're going to talk tonight.

We've already seen that the Lord Jesus, Christ himself, is absolutely imperative to Christianity. Because the moment you detach your Christianity from Christ, you've got a dead religion. It can be fundamental to the fingertips, evangelical from Genesis to the Revelation, utterly scriptural, utterly biblical.

But you detach that from Jesus Christ, and you may be a fanatical defender of the faith, but you'll be totally, absolutely devoid of any spiritual life. Or for that matter, of course, any likeness to the Lord Jesus. And as I travel all over the world, I bump again and again into people who are fanatical contenders for the faith, but know absolutely nothing of the Spirit of Christ.

A person can master all the evangelical doctrines of the Bible and be the most obnoxious person to live with. Now, you know that's true. Because it's not mastering doctrines, it's allowing the doctrine to master you.

That's what transforms carrot. Now, how does the Lord Jesus, as a person, the Creator God, who in his infinite mercy of his own free volition was prepared to come into this world incarnate and clothe himself with our flesh and blood, how actually does this our Creator God and risen triumphant Redeemer, how does he move into action? How does he move redemptively into your experience and mine? How does he move regeneratively into your experience and mine? Because remember this, the redemptive transaction is designed in God's economy to precipitate a regenerative process. In other words, enable us to be, through his life in us, what we have become through his death for us.

And it takes both, until the climax, when he comes back again and seeing him, we shall be like him. And when you have been restored to his total timeless likeness, then you're way back in Genesis, chapter one. Because that's exactly the likeness in which God made us, created in his image.

In other words, when that consummation of God's salvation purpose is brought about, you've simply been restored from created likeness to recreated likeness. How does it all come about? Well, in order to understand this, we need to do a little little revision. And I recognize that much of what I'm going to say in the next few moments will be very elementary.

It's territory that I'm sure you've covered on many occasions past, and which I have certainly almost inevitably covered on previous occasions when I've been amongst you. But we need to be reminded. Let's turn to the fifth chapter of the first epistle of Paul's to the Thessalonians.

One Thessalonians in chapter five, verse 23. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. Now don't be frightened of that word sanctification.

There are all kinds of strange connotations given to it. It's not a blessing. It's not some exotic experience.

It's the most intelligent possible word, and the obvious one for God to use. It simply means set apart, that's all. Set apart for the intelligent purpose for which intelligently created by an intelligent God.

That's all that sanctification means. Anything can be sanctified. When I put these things on and look through them, I'm sanctifying them.

That's what they were made for. If I were to scratch my ear with them, I wouldn't really be sanctifying my glass, because they weren't really made for that purpose. When I walk around in my shoes, I'm sanctifying my shoes.

That's all. Putting them to the intelligent purpose which they were intelligently created. That's all that sanctification means.

Now if I came here wearing the shoes on my hands, you'd think I was a little quaint, because I wouldn't be sanctifying. They might make good gloves if it was really cold, but they weren't really designed for that purpose, and they wouldn't fit too well. And of course, if I stood up here with them on my head, you wouldn't think I was just quaint.

You'd be worried. Now do you understand what sanctification is? When you are sanctified, it doesn't mean that you put on a parsonic face and talk with a peculiar accent, totally unreal and unrelated to the normal business of asking for the cornflakes. It's most extraordinary how people somehow, when they get into a religious context, use a different tone of voice.

Most extraordinary. Now that isn't sanctification, that's just enunciating fraud. Sanctification is to be completely natural in the context in which God as your creator intended you to be, being used functionally for the purpose which he made you.

Then you're sanctified. 24 hours a day. It isn't reserved for certain religious occasions.

It's sanctified at the washing up, sanctified mowing the lawn, sanctified sitting at the school bench, sanctified on the football field, sanctified every moment of every day because you are allowing the God who made you, re-inhabiting your humanity, to use you for the purpose for which you were designed. Sanctification. So Paul is always concerned that those whom it has been his privilege to lead redemptively to Christ should enter into the good of that for which they have been redeemed.

In other words, it may genuinely begin to be what through regeneration they have been born to become the children of God. And he says the process of sanctification whereby God once more is able to put you to the intelligent purpose which he made you will involve all parts of your being which are threefold in character. Spirit, soul, and body.

In other words, you're not a monocycle, you're not a bicycle, you're a tricycle. You're a three-wheeler. Spirit, soul, and body.

This is the trichotomy of a man. There is a dichotomy. There's a part that you can see and a part that you can't see.

This is the physical visible part that communicates the invisible part. So there is a dichotomy in that sense, the tangible, the touchable, the visible, the audible. That's the one part.

And the intangible, untouchable, invisible, that's the other part of you. That's a dichotomy. But the other invisible part is divided into two.

It's your spirit and your soul, neither of which are visible, nor are they divisible, because the one is inextricably bound up with the other. You must never try to divide the one from the other, but don't confuse the one for the other, because they have two completely different functions. Spirit, soul, and body, says Paul.

The very God of peace, sanctify you wholly, I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body. A conjunction in each place, because a conjunction, you see, links two different things together. Spirit and soul and body.

That you be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then of course, in the next verse, he strikes at the very heart of the matter. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it.

He's going to be the dynamic of all his own demands. He demands that he be in you the source of his own activity. He must inevitably, if you are to function healthily, be the origin of his own image.

He in you, as God, has got to be the cause of his own affair. And to that end, you will create it in a certain way. Now of course, most folk in the world don't even know they've got a spirit.

The vast majority are vaguely aware of the fact they've got a soul. They don't know what it is, but they've learned somehow they've got a soul. And of course, everybody knows they've got a body, because they look at it with wonder, love and praise in the mirror every morning.

And they feed it, and water it, and occasionally wash it. Depends how old they are. So everybody's very cognizant of the fact they've got a body.

They go out to work, to earn money, to sustain it. Billions of dollars are spent on servicing the body. And the average individual knows that somehow he's got to keep body and soul together.

Because if he doesn't keep his body and his soul together, somebody's going to come and bury the body. And so he tries to keep them reasonably intact. Well, the body of course, and we needn't pause to consider this too much, is simply the house in which we live.

You know that we are described, so far as our physical part is concerned, in the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians, as being this earthly house. We shan't have it forever. Some of us may have it for longer than others, but it's purely temporary accommodation.

And it doesn't really matter how long we're in it. Absent from the body, present with the Lord. Says Paul the Apostle, I'd much rather be home in the conscious, visible presence of my wonderful Lord.

But so long as my body has a function to perform down here on earth, in which the Lord Jesus can communicate his life to others and be glorified in the process, says Paul the Apostle, though I would rather be away, I'm perfectly happy to remain. So it's purely temporary house, temporary accommodation. And no real, genuine, born-again Christian, of course, is ever afraid of physical death.

Nor should we sorrow like others when one of our beloved, believing friends, or relatives, is called to be with Christ. What a parody of the truth for us to moan and groan simply because somebody has gone into his maximus presence. We're not to sorrow as those who have no hope.

It's no good telling how marvelous it will be when the Lord comes, how marvelous it will be to get into his presence, and then cry your eyes out because somebody's gone there. Isn't it extraordinary? Most extraordinary. But we've learned, we've learned to be totally inconsistent in the way we behave.

So the body is simply the temporary housing which we possess, but of course it's possessed by us in common with all other forms of created life. Every form of created life, vegetable, animal, and man, have got a body to live in, and by the peculiar shapes of the bodies in which we live, we detect the different species within their species. As, of course, we recognize each other by our peculiar shapes.

Some more peculiar than others. You know the difference, as I indicated last evening, between a carrot, a cat, and a king? By the bodies they live in. The pathologist looks through his microscope and he can

determine the disease from which you're suffering by the virus that he has detected, and which he identifies by its peculiar shape.

Well, that's the body, and it's the means, as we have discussed in our lunch hour services, whereby the invisible is communicated in a tangible, visible, and audible form to the world outside. And if it weren't for our bodies, we could never communicate. Now what is it then that distinguishes between the vegetable kingdom and the animal kingdom? Well, what distinguishes between the vegetable and the animal kingdom is the fact that all forms of animal life, including man, possess a soul.

This comes as a surprise, almost as a shock to some people, so much so they almost resent the suggestion. But the soul is simply the behavior mechanism that enables an animal, in all its varying forms--birds, beasts, insects, and so on, fish--to behave in a way that a vegetable cannot behave. You've never seen a tree get angry.

You haven't seen a pineapple laughing. You say, of course not, don't be so stupid. Well, why of course not? Why is that so stupid? Well, only because God hasn't endowed that part of his living creation with a behavior mechanism capable of thought, reaction, and decision.

The soul, you see, is threefold also in carrot. It's your mental, emotional, and volitional capacity to think or calculate, to react, and to decide. And your will, which is your volitional capacity, operates to bring the physical members of your body into certain behavior patterns under the influence of your mind and your emotion.

And this is true of all forms of animal life. If you don't believe me, here's a very simple experiment. Find a wasp's nest, and get a stick and poke it, and then hang around.

And you'll discover that those wasps, as they come out white with rage, have a very highly developed emotional capacity. Not only that, you will discover they have a very highly developed intellectual capacity to discover who did it. And not only that, but under the influence of a highly aroused emotional capacity and an alert intellectual capacity, they have a very distinct volitional capacity to wreak vengeance upon the culprit.

But you probably wouldn't be hanging around by then. You'd be running as fast as your legs could carry with three smarting reminders behind the ear. Now, this is true of all forms of animal life.

That's why, of course, we're told in the 30th verse, first chapter of Genesis, that this is the way God distinguished the one from the other, the animal from the vegetable. Genesis chapter 1, verse 30, to every beast of the earth, to every fowl of the air, to everything that creepeth upon the earth wherein there is life, said God, I have given every green herb, the vegetable kingdom, for meat. And it was so.

In other words, the vegetable kingdom was made available by God as nourishment for the animal kingdom. And the way God in this verse distinguishes between the animal and the vegetable is by the expression, wherein there is life. And if you happen to have a marginal translation in your Bible, or care to look it up in a lexicon, you'll discover that wherein there is life, as it's here translated, is simply the Hebrew word soul.

It's exactly the same word as used in the 7th verse, 2nd chapter. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his, man's nostrils, the breath of life, and man became exactly the same word, a living soul. It's the word that is translated, for some strange reason, throughout the rest of the first

chapter of Genesis, as living creature.

It's exactly the same original word. One case, living creature, next word, life. In the second chapter, soul.

But exactly the same word. You'll find that it's the word that is translated, living creature, in the 9th chapter of Genesis, when at God's command, Noah took two out of every creature into the ark. So what distinguishes the animal kingdom from the vegetable kingdom is the possession of a behavior mechanism that the Bible calls the soul.

That's what also we describe as the heart. In other words, when you say Jesus Christ lives in my heart, what you really mean, and it may not necessarily be true, Jesus Christ, as God, has the right, through his Holy Spirit, to control my mind, my emotions, and my will, and therefore my behavior. Because you control the physical members of your body to produce external behavior patterns by the exercise of your will, under the influence of your mind and your emotions.

Except that God has protected the animal kingdom in a very marvelous, fantastic way. We don't understand it. We've described it, we've coined words to describe the process, but we don't understand the process.

We call it instinct. And this is absolutely fascinating. God has deliberately chosen to protect the animal kingdom by programming them.

I suppose that's how we would best put it today, in our computerized age. Each individual animal within its own species has a computerized behavior program built into it, so that each individual species is governed by a built-in impersonal, instinctive thrust. So that although the individual within that species has certain areas of liberty of action, it never goes beyond certain distinctive behavior boundaries, which are characteristic of it within its species.

Mating seasons, feeding habits, migratory paths, building skills, all of which are characteristic of the individual within the species. And that's a wonderful thing. Just about 18 months ago, I was in a place called Portland, Oregon, on the northwest Pacific coast of the United States.

And I went up the Columbia River, beyond the mighty dam there, which has been built, one of several, that provides power for a vast part of that country. And beyond the mighty dam there, there are the salmon hatcheries, the famous Colombian salmon. And when these fish reach a certain size, they're placed in the Columbia River, and they immediately swim downstream until they reach the open ocean.

And then they make their way north to the Alaskan coast, and off the Alaskan coast, they swim around for four years. And after four years, they return to the mouth of the Columbia River, where they remain between three and six months, during which time they double in size. And then, having doubled in size from the mouth of the Columbia River, they fight their way back upstream until they come to the dam.

But they've got to get beyond it. So the engineers, knowing the habits of salmon, have built a fish ladder. And I stood there and watched them.

You can do the same. Lean over the rail, and 167 steps, torrents of water, of course, pouring down. But the salmon, all shapes and sizes, fight their way up, one at a time, until at last they reach the top.

167 steps, and there there are plate glass sides to a funnel-shaped entrance to the balance of the river, and men on either side counting the salmon as they go back. And those salmon will get to the place not approximately, but precisely and exactly where they were placed in the Columbia River as tiny fish. How do they find their way back? I mean, supposing you were a salmon, and I'm not suggesting you look like one, but supposing you were a salmon, and you'd been floating around, swimming at large in the ocean off the Alaskan coast for four years, do you think you'd find your way back? No, you're not that smart.

Salmon are. God made them that way. Of course, this isn't only characteristic of the Colombian salmon.

Any salmon will always go back to the place where it was spawned. You can catch a salmon on a mainstream and take it to a tributary where it wasn't spawned, and it won't be deceived. It'll go immediately back to the mainstream and go up to the tributary where it was spawned.

How do they do it? It's very, very simple. Instinct. Just as simple as that.

1968, I was in Central America, in Costa Rica, and I discovered that on the Costa Rica-Nicaraguan border, the turtles come out of the ocean, and they go up the beautiful sandy beach a hundred yards, and they dig a hole between one foot and two feet deep, and there they lay between 100 and 200 eggs. Then they disappear and go back into the ocean. And the warmth of the sun and the sand hatches out the little turtle eggs, and the babies arrive on the top, and they go into the ocean too.

But they always come back to the place where they were hatched. So these turtles have been captured by putting wire netting around their depositories, and they've had special marks painted on their backs. They've been taken by air, by truck, by ship, and distributed over a vast territory.

But you'll always find turtles with those marks on their back at the sandy beach where they were hatched. How do they do it? It's very simple. Instinct.

Just as simple as that. When a bird strikes out across a trackless ocean to find its way at last to a little island, to miss which would be to perish out of sheer exhaustion, it'll rest and fly on many, many other hundreds of miles to the distant land where it will winter, and then find its way back. Never flown that way before.

No radar, no navigational aids, no maps, no charts. How does it find its way? It's very simple. Instinct.

Do you know the whale swims 5,000 to 6,000 miles to produce its young? Way up from the north, way down to the south. 5,000 to 6,000 miles. From one place to another without making mistakes.

How does it do it? It's very simple. Instinct. I was on a Texan ranch not too long ago, and the rancher told me that he controls the protein intake in a very simple way.

You see, cattle know exactly how much salt they ought to have inside them. So he says, when I want to double the protein ration, I halve the salt content, and they'll eat twice as much to get the same amount of salt. When I want to halve the protein ration, I double the salt content.

They'll eat only half as much to get the same amount of salt. How do they know how much to eat? They don't have a measure inside, no, but there's just a little bit of something that says, you've had enough. Wouldn't it be nice if you had something like that inside you? Now, God did all this, you see.

God did this. I could go on for a long time about this, because just by virtue of the fact that it's my privilege to travel a lot, I have the opportunity of seeing these things. In the Congo, Central Africa, and the same in South America.

The white ant. Marvelous, magnificent economy. The white ant, controlled by a queen ant.

When I was speaking at a conference for African believers, 700 of these marvelous believers from the Congo, Katanga, where Shambi used to be, that lovely Christian man who was finally murdered. We had our pulpit in a big ant heap, cut this way and that way. Solid as rock.

Half the height of this church, some of them. There was enough room on that pulpit for 60 people. That was built by little white ants.

They have an amazing economy. There are various trades and skills, of course, within the economy of the ant heap. The ant colony.

There are two classifications of chew-spitters. One classification of chew-spitter takes in the clay soil and chews it, mixes it with saliva and spits it out. Makes a marvelous plaster.

That's how they make these ant heaps. And the plasterers who are skilled come along and they take up the plaster, the chew-spitters of spot, and then they make new accommodations for new families. Or there may be some clumsy animal like a man that comes and damages their accommodations and they have to be repaired.

The other chew-spitters are those that take care of the vegetation. They're leaf cutters. They'll strip a tree overnight.

And you can see them half a mile long, getting over all kinds of obstacles, carrying the vegetable, the leaves, 20 times their own mass very often. Swayed and blown around in the breeze. But they'll bring it and dump it and the chew-spitters take it, put it in their mouth, chew it, spit it out, having mixed it with their saliva and it forms a compost.

And they make little compost beds and they grow mushrooms. Then they come down and have breakfast. Marvelous.

There are ants that are trained only to dig holes and find where the water is. The well diggers. And others who are water drawers.

They go down to the wells that have been dug and draw the water. How do they do it all? They don't have strikes. Instinct.

Every individual ant knows exactly what to do. It's marvelous. And I'm sure some of you will have seen that magnificent film, *The City of the Bees*, produced by the Institute of Science in Los Angeles of the Moody folk.

And I've seen them at work in their institute there in Los Angeles. And if you haven't seen *The City of the Bees*, I trust that you will. It's a magnificent portrayal of this very principle.

Because the bee is absolutely marvelous. In a bee hive there will be anything between 40 and 80,000 bees. All controlled by, population-wise, one bee, the queen bee.

Only one bee lays eggs. You probably knew that. Queen bee.

And through the queen bee, of course, they control their population, depending upon the external economic situation. They produce the queen bee from the same egg that produces all the other bees, but they feed that egg on royal jelly. And they'll produce four or five to make quite sure that one survives.

And just as about the queen bees at a hatch, they sort of make rude noises at each other, have an awful fight, and only one survives. The strongest. That's the object of the exercise.

And then it's her responsibility to produce the population. But she'll only lay eggs in proportion to the amount of food they give her. So you see, when winter comes and it's cold and they don't need a labor force, and it's very expensive to feed people during the wintertime when they're not working, they reduce the population by stopping feeding the queen bee, except just a sort of iron ration.

She goes on strike. But when the spring comes and the sun begins to shine, it gets warm and there are blue skies, and the scouts come in and say there's food available. Then they begin to feed the old lady and she really lays eggs.

10,000, 20, 50, 60, 70, 80,000. Fascinating. But you know, the egg of the bee will die if the temperature changes by more than three degrees.

I was in Dessie in Ethiopia, 8,500 feet above the equator. And when I came down the morning, the water was frozen in the tap. By 10, it was 70 or 80 degrees in the shade, and by midday, 100.

Supposing you were a bee, and you had to keep the egg from varying in temperature by more than three degrees. Quite a problem, wouldn't you say? They do it, they've been doing for hundreds of years. They have two squads of bees, one on one side and one on the other side.

One faces out, the other faces in, they flap. So one squad, you see, sucks air out, and the other squad blows air in, air-conditioned. And we conceited, arrogant human beings imagine we thought of it.

Bees have been doing it for thousands of years. And so when it gets hot, they really get into a flap. But of course, when the evening comes and the temperature drops, they slow down until finally they're not flapping at all, and the temperature is still dropping.

What are they going to do now? Well, they turn on the central heating. How do they do that? A message goes round to all the bees and the beehive, eat a little honey, eat a little honey, eat a little honey. So they all eat a little honey, and the sugar content increases their blood temperature.

Central heating's on. And if you were to take a chart outside, 100 to 0. Inside, never varying by more than three degrees, and they don't even have a thermometer. How do they do it? It's very simple.

Instinct. God made them that way. A built-in program, computerized, an impersonal instinctive thrust, without which every bee long since would have perished from the face of the earth.

Nurse bees, they're the ones responsible for feeding the eggs. The scout bees go out and come back and dance in front of the worker bees. Most magnificent dance.

And by the shape of the dance, and by the direction in which the axis of their dance, assumes they tell the worker bees exactly how far to go, how much to lay off the wind, exactly how much food to take with them

to give them just enough energy to get there and back. And the quality of the food when they've got it. This is demonstrated in the city of the bees by taking four different scout bees, allowing them to dance in front of four different squads of worker bees, but each squad bearing a different mark on their backs, but matching a mark on the back of the scout bee, so that only that scout dances before workers that have got the same mark on its back as the scout bee itself.

Then they mix them all up together and let them go off in any direction. And only those worker bees that have the mark that corresponds to the scout that danced in front of them will get to this source of supply and these to that source of supply. Absolute 100% communication.

You probably know that the honeycomb is the most magnificent mathematical specification. Here it is, it's 3-4. Maximum cubic capacity, so that it will hold as much as possible.

But because it's got to hold a mass far greater than the mass of that which holds it, maximum tensile strength. So maximum cubic capacity, maximum tensile strength and minimum materials used, because the wax is very, very expensive for the bee to produce. Now that's the mathematical specification of a honeycomb.

It's used in engineering today as one of the strongest structures known to man. This specification was worked out by pure mathematics by a German mathematician and he came to exactly the shape of a honeycomb, except that the angle he used varied by an a small iota of a degree from that of the bee. And he thought that this demonstrated the superiority of the mathematical mind of a German over that of the bee.

Until an Englishman checked his mathematics and the bee was right and the German mathematician was wrong. And that just demonstrates the superiority of the English mathematical mind over that of the German. But in our sophisticated age, this specification has been fed into an electronic computer and the electronic computer has come out 100% on the side of the bee.

How does the bee do it? Does he go to school? Does he have a textbook? Does he have instruments to use? None whatever. It's only human beings have to go to school and college to learn things. Animals, insects, birds, fish, they don't.

They know exactly what to do and do it right. And bees today are producing the honeycomb to exactly the same mathematical specification as they were 3,000 years ago when David was feeding his sheep on the hillside. Because God has chosen to protect the animal kingdom in its behavior patterns by built-in impersonal instinctive thrust.

Now here's a question. God created man in his own likeness, in his own image. The purpose which God made man was that he in his physical visible body might give a valid expression of God's character.

By everything he does and says and is, by all his behavior patterns, if God can produce an animal kingdom, which with meticulous mathematical accuracy, as that of the spider spinning its web, the caterpillar producing its chrysalis just at the right moment in time and the right way up. If God can produce an animal kingdom that with mathematical precision will repeat behavior patterns again and again and again, generation after generation, century after century. Don't you think God could have produced a man governed by built-in computerized instinctive thrust who by everything he did and said and was and thought would have given a mathematically valid expression of God's character? Don't you think he could?

Well of course he could.

Of course he could. And it would have been far less trouble. So that instinctively you and I govern from within and without any option would always have done and said and been exactly what God wanted us to be.

Why didn't he? Very, very good reason. You see, when the little bee produces its honeycomb, it's not saying anything to God. That bee isn't, as it were, looking up into God's face and saying, God you're my creator, you made me a bee, and because I love you as my creator, I want to be the kind of bee that you want me to be.

See? Is that what the bee said? No. The bee isn't God conscious. The bee has no moral relationship to its creator.

The bee does exactly what God as its creator wants it to do. In other words, the bee, I am absolutely certain, as God looks at it, is functionally satisfying to God. For when God made all forms of created life, he said good, good, good, good.

So that the bee is functionally satisfying to God, but the bee is never morally satisfying to God, because for anything to be morally satisfying, it's got to adopt an attitude. And a bee can't adopt an attitude toward God because it's given no free choice of action. It's computerized.

In the same way that you go back home maybe tonight and turn on your television to get the news. What do you do when you've seen the news? Do you go up to that television set and say, I'd like to thank you for your cooperation? I think that was one of the clearest pictures you've ever produced. That was most kind.

Is that what you'd say? If you began to talk to your television like that, your wife would get worried. It's a machine. You expect to be able to treat it despotically.

You expect to turn the knob and get your dollars worth. That's all. It's transistorized.

Supposing somebody suddenly came up with a television with a built-in free will, would you buy it? So that when you wanted to see the football match, you had to tiptoe across the room and hope that it had got out the bed the right side that morning. Because you didn't know whether it was going to give you the picture or not. It depended whether it liked you.

Would you buy that television? You'd say, no thanks. I have enough trouble with my children. An animal has not been invested by God with the free choice that makes man a moral being.

That's why whether you like it or whether you don't like it, everything you've done today, everything you thought today, every conversation in which you've engaged, everything you've whispered to your friend, every attitude that you've adopted, everything you've done on being today, has been telling God something, whether you like it or whether you don't. You've either been saying, God I love you, or God I hate you, or God I just couldn't care less. Whether you like it or not, you've been saying something to God today.

And he's been taking very careful note of what you've been saying. By all that you've done and said and thought and are, the ambitions you've cherished, you have been adopting an attitude toward God. That's why God didn't make man like the animals.

That's why God gave to man a component which he didn't give to any other form of created life. It's called the human spirit. The human spirit which is a unique capacity that God has built into man that enables him to be inhabited, actually inhabited by God himself.

God doesn't indwell a dog any more than God has fellowship with a dog. But God created man in such a way that he can be indwelt. This is what the Lord Jesus meant when in the performance of his function as man, John 14, 10, Believest thou not that I am in my Father, and my Father is in me? The words that I speak unto you, that my mouth makes articulate, the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself.

The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the words. Now that wasn't just a sort of sentiment. That was a matter of fact.

The Father that dwells in me, he does the words. In other words, what I make articulate with my lips, what I make visible with my body, has its origin in my Father who through his Holy Spirit inhabits my human spirit. And from within my human spirit, I give him unchallenged access to every area of my soul.

Hebrews 9, 14, Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God. How did Jesus Christ offer himself as a man without spot to God? Through the eternal spirit. So the human spirit is that residence that God built into man capable of being inhabited by God through the Holy Spirit.

So the office, work, and person of God the Holy Spirit is very simple. The Holy Spirit is that person of the triune Godhead through whom a man offers his humanity to God and through whom God offers his deity to a man. That's the person, work, and office of the Holy Spirit in a nutshell.

He is the one through whom you and I can give our body, soul, and spirit, mind, emotion, and will in totality to God for the purpose which he as God created us and the Holy Spirit is the one through whom God in his deity occupies our humanity and resident within us becomes the origin of his own image. Cause of his own effect, source of his own activity, dynamic of his own demand. So you see the role played by instinct in the animal kingdom to control its behavior patterns on a rigid basis is played by the Holy Spirit in human experience.

If that man is functional, if that man is being sanctified, if that man is being put by God to the useful intelligent purpose for which God as God created man as man. The role played by instinct in the animal kingdom is to be played by God himself through the Holy Spirit within the human soul. You see between the built-in instinctive trust and the animal soul there is a rigid interlock, it's the law of compulsion.

It can't behave any other way. The huntsman knows that, the fisherman knows that, he knows exactly where to find his prey. But God is love, and as I indicated to some of you in the lunch hour session today, love cannot be compelled.

But the only thing that satisfies love is to be loved. The only thing that satisfies friendship is to be befriended. And God created man unique in his whole creation as that one creature who would be capable of reciprocating God's love to him by loving God back.

But he cannot, he will not compel it. So if there is a rigid interlock between the instinctive trust and the animal soul, it is a moral interlock between the Holy Spirit and the human soul. And that moral interlock as we have already defined it in the other sessions, love for God in reciprocation of God's for me.

Out of my love for him, I want to be what he as God made me to be. So out of my love for him, I place all that I am at his disposal in utter dependence, knowing that only he by his Holy Spirit can so teach my mind, govern my emotions and direct my will that what I do represents his character. But it would be farcical of course on my part to say that I was dependent upon God if I wasn't willing to be obedient to God.

So the threefold moral relationship that links the life of God to the soul of man is love for, dependence on and obedience to. And it cannot be compelled. It is not the law of compulsion.

It is the law of love. And the exercise of faith on your part or mine is the only valid expression of our love for God. If you're frightened of God because you think he's going to spoil your ambitions or rob you of your sins, means you can't be dirty anymore because God is clean.

Then you'll stick your fingers in your ear and you won't listen to a thing that God has to say to you. It would be inconvenient and you're a moral coward and so you run away. You try to preoccupy your mind with somebody else or something else, anything but let God be God in your life.

But when out of my love for God, I want God to be the God God is in me, then I yield to him out of my dependence on him, my unquestioning obedience to him. I allow the Holy Spirit indwelling my human spirit to reinvade my soul, capture my mind, my emotions and my will so that I allow him to behave clothed with my humanity. And when God behaves in a man, that's righteousness.

When God is allowed to behave in a man, that's sanctification, because that's what he made us for. That's why in Proverbs chapter 20 in verse 27, the spirit of man is God's lamp. God's lamp.

That lamp doesn't produce light. It was never created to produce light. That lamp was simply created to receive what working in it and possessing it, monopolizing it, can produce electricity.

No lamp has yet been produced that produces light. An oil lamp needs oil if it's to shine. An electric lamp needs electricity if it's to shine.

And the spirit of man is God's lamp. That's why all the way through the scripture, the Holy Spirit is pictured as oil, the only one who can sustain the light. That's why John chapter 1 verse 4 tells us, in him, the Lord Jesus was light.

This light was the light of men. Take the light out, turn the light off. That of course is what happened when man fell into sin.

Because by sin, as we saw some of us in our lunch, our session today, man repudiated this moral relationship. He stepped out of dependence into arrogant, pig-headed, conceited independence. And the moment he was prepared to be independent on the basis of the devil's lie that he could be a man without God, he had the courage to be disobedient.

And it's only the boy, girl, man, or woman who's prepared to be self-sufficient and therefore independent who's prepared to be arrogantly disobedient in the face of God. And that's the nature of sin. And when the dirt came in, sin, the light went out.

God withdrew the Holy Spirit from the human spirit and the light went off and left us today on the threshold of nuclear disaster. There was no age in all of human history when man was so clever and so dangerous.

That's why there's no future.

Some of you youngsters here, you don't have any future. Everybody knows that. U Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations, over a year ago said this.

And he's in touch with every country in the world. On his desk, he's got all the latest information that he could ever desire. He says, if man has not solved his problems within 10 years, and this was over a year ago, if man has not solved his problems within 10 years, it is too late.

There is no solution. You know that. Everybody knows that.

A man who was visiting 50 countries to interview the politicians in and out of office in all the capitals of the world crossed the threshold of Winston Churchill's room just before he died. And knowing the nature of his mission, before ever he could get into the room, Winston Churchill said, there is no hope, no hope, no hope for this world. Of course not.

Because man, pig-headedly, arrogantly proud, is defying all the basic principles that make man a working proposition. Could you imagine, in a beehive of 80,000 bees, suddenly something happening, so that in a split second, the rigid interlock between the instinctive thrust and the soul of every bee was suddenly shattered. So from that calamitous moment, every bee became ego-bee-centric, detached from any built-in thrust that God had produced to govern its behavior, so that every bee immediately became ego-centric, self-centered, doing as it pleased, insisting upon being its own master, carving its own destiny.

Can you imagine what would happen in a beehive of 40 or 80,000 bees? So that those responsible for maintaining the temperature of the eggs suddenly stopped flapping, so they didn't flap for themselves. I've been standing flapping here day after day, week after week, they didn't flap for themselves. Can you imagine what would happen? And the nurse bees, they come along and say, little suckers, they can go and feed themselves, they can go and get their own food.

Serve and wait on them, hand and foot, day and night. Can you imagine what would happen? And all the worker bees march up and down with red flags and say, mastered by none, we are our own masters. They're not going to be exploited.

Food for the workers. We're going to work only for our own stomachs. I said, could you guess what would happen to a beehive where every single individual bee said, I'll do as I please? Yes, I can tell you what would happen, you know what would happen.

There would happen to that bee community exactly what happened to human society. You would have the 20th century in human experience. That bee community would perish in anarchy.

And so will me. There would be only one possible hope for that bee community. And that is that the rigid interlock should somehow be re-established between the instinctive thrust and the bee swarm.

Then there would be hope. There's only one possible hope for man. And that's why the Lord Jesus said, except a man be born again.

What do you mean by that? The restoration of the Holy Spirit into humans, so that by man's consent, God once more can play the role of Christ. Now the Bible makes it abundantly clear that will never happen to

this world in its presence on mass. But in his infinite mercy, God does tell us that out of every nation, kindred, tribe, and tongue, there will be a few boys and girls and men and women who will be intelligent enough to recognize the symptoms of their case and will get back to the God who made them in repentance and faith.

And they will let Jesus Christ through the blood he shed upon the cross move redemptively into their experience and give them peace with God their maker as forgiven sinners. And through faith, they will let Jesus Christ by his Holy Spirit come to re-inhabit their human spirits and will give him access through the Holy Spirit to control once more their minds, their emotions, and their wills so that he can clean them up. Blameless, harmless, the sons of God.

Where? In a monastery? Wrapped up in evangelical cotton wool and protected from the icy blasts of a wicked world? No, no, no. Read it for yourself. Philippians 2. Harmless, blameless, the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

In other words, redeemed in the blood of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, God is able in the midst of a nation of crooks and in the midst of a nation of perverts to keep you clean. Kept clean in a dirty world, but only through faith, that lets Christ redeem through his death and regenerate by the restoration of his resurrection once more, allowed your own free volition to monopolize your body. And that's what the gospel is all about.

It isn't a question of getting people out of hell and into heaven. It's simply a question of restoring sanity to a mad world and bringing the individual back into that relationship to God that lets God be God in their daily experience on earth on the way to heaven. Well, that's where we'll have to conclude for tonight.

But how is it with you? Have you ever been intelligent enough? Or are you still blinded by your pig-headed conceit as to the real issues that God calls you to face? Are you still a moral coward? Are you still running away from the facts of life? Or in genuine repentance toward God your maker, and in profound humble gratitude to Christ your Redeemer, have you through faith let him reconcile you to God and re-inhabit your humanity and lift you out of sub-humanity into normality? That's exciting. If that's the case, then the sky is the limit. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

We're amazed, dear Lord, at the magnitude and marvelousness of your creation. And in all the beauty of it and the splendor of it, only one thing is really dirty. Man, who loves the gutter.

Dear Lord, if there's some fellow or girl or man or woman in this building here tonight still alienated from the life of God, to whom the preaching of the cross in their abysmal blindness can only be foolishness, then in your infinite love and mercy awaken the souls, give them that illumination that only the Holy Spirit can give, and then the courage of the right decision to welcome you as Redeemer, and then to place themselves unquestioningly at your disposal, to walk day by day in the triumph of your indwelling, spiritually regenerate, lifted out from among the colorless mass of the dead, restored to God, and to become a source of unspeakable blessing and benediction to their fellow man, to bring light into a dark place and hope where there is despair. We ask it for your namesake. Amen.

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