

Undisciplined Lifestyles (Part 2)

by Mose Stoltzfus

The sermon highlights the necessity of discipline in Christian living to navigate the challenges of prosperity and avoid undisciplined lifestyles.

Duration: 1:11:58

Scripture: Proverbs 11:24-25, Proverbs 22:7, Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:15, 1 Corinthians 9:24, 1 Timothy 6:10, James 5:5

Topics: "Christian Discipline", "Self Control"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of discipline and self-control in the Christian life. He compares the Christian's journey to a race, where one must keep their body under control in order to win the prize. The preacher also highlights the dangers of living in a prosperous and peaceful society, as it can lead to complacency and a lack of appreciation for the sacrifices of others. He uses the example of John Wesley, who lived a simple and modest lifestyle despite his success, as a role model for Christians to follow. The sermon encourages believers to prioritize the needs of others and to resist the temptations of luxury and self-indulgence.

Transcript

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That doesn't get old to me, this week yet. That's a real blessing. I wanted to make an announcement here concerning the tape ministry.

Just an encouragement to all of you who pick up the tapes in the back there. We're very grateful for the tape ministry and the privilege we have to supply them. If you're at the bottom of the barrel and you can't pay for them or can't give an offering, we still want you to have it.

But those of you who can, we do ask that you remember the tape ministry. It's a very crucial part of the work here and enabling us that the gospel can go out. If you get the sets there, just remember we don't have a charge on them or an amount, but I will let you ask the Lord how much that it costs.

But I think you have a pretty good idea what it may cost to make the tapes. Shall we bow our heads for prayer? Our gracious Father in heaven, we again come to you in Jesus' name. We thank you, Father, for the privilege we have to be gathered together here again today.

Thank you for the singing. Thank you for the challenging words that keep coming. Thank you for these men.

God, what will you do with these men? If they apply their hearts to wisdom that they have received, what will you do? Oh, I pray again, make a little room in their hearts for another one this afternoon, God. And I know this takes a lot of stretching on our part, God, but I pray you give us the grace to pick up and keep the things that we need to look at to change our lives. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen. I'd just like to read again 1 Corinthians 9, verse 24 through the end in the Amplified. Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receiveth the prize? So run your race that you may lay hold of the prize and make it yours.

Now, every athlete who goes into training conducts himself temperately and restricts himself in all things. They do it to win a wreath that will soon wither, but we do it to receive a crown of eternal blessedness that cannot wither. Therefore, I do not run uncertainly without definite aim.

I do not box like one beating the air and striking without an adversary. But like a boxer, I buffet my body, handle it roughly, discipline it by hardships and subdue it for fear that after proclaiming to others the gospel and the things pertaining to it, I myself should become unfit nor stand the test, be unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit. I'd like to comment a little as we speak again on undisciplined lifestyles, what the heart of the Apostle Paul was on this subject.

He had a clear and holy desire to keep his body in order. It seemed like he recognized what a difficulty that is at times. Therefore, he viewed himself here as running a race in life.

And we all know that everyone running a race in life, at least in order to win, he has to keep his body under. He cannot be undisciplined, he cannot be overweight a lot, he cannot be under-exercised, he cannot just live a loose and frivolous lifestyle and eat anything he wants to. Athletes don't do that.

They discipline themselves because they have their focus on a prize and they want to win that prize and it seems easy to them to not yield themselves to the appetites and the desires of the flesh because they have such a big thing in mind concerning this prize. And that is exactly what the Apostle Paul is doing here. He views himself that way.

He is running a race and he is laying aside these things in order to win that prize. And he basically puts the illustration he gives on himself. Therefore, I do not run uncertainly.

I face life like a boxer. I put my body under. I buffet my body.

I handle it roughly. I discipline it. I bring it under and subdue it.

Because I have a fear that if I don't, that I will become the opposite of that, loose and lax and negligent and someday become a castaway myself. That seems to be what he is saying. So again, we want to lift up this whole matter of running this race and running it with a clear and distinct disciplined purpose in life.

Let me read a little bit more again from A.W. Tozer concerning too much liberty. Too much liberty weakens whatever it touches. A corn of wheat that can bring forth only as it waives its freedom and surrenders itself to the law of nature.

I often say it might not like the idea of going down there in that cool, damp, dark earth, you know. It would so much rather maybe be out in the light. But as long as it is, it will never bring forth fruit.

But when it yields itself to that cool, damp earth and that moisture penetrating its skin and actually beginning to rot the outside of the shell, only and then only will life come forth out of it. And that has a beautiful illustration for us here. The robin may fly about all summer enjoying her freedom, just flying where she wants.

But she also knows that if she is going to bring forth a nest of young, it is going to have to give up her freedom and sit on top of those eggs for a given amount of time in order to hatch them out. She has her choice. Be free and barren or curtail her freedom and bring forth young.

I think we do too. Everyone in a free society must decide whether he will exploit his liberty or curtail it for intelligent and moral ends. He may take upon him the responsibility of a business and a family and thus be useful to the race.

Or he may shun all obligations and end up on skid row. The tramp is freer than the president or a king. But his freedom is his undoing.

While he lives, he remains socially sterile. When he dies, he leaves behind him nothing that made the world glad that he lived. The Christian cannot escape the pearl of too much liberty.

He is indeed free, but his very freedom may prove his source of real temptation to him. He is free from the chains of sin, free from the moral consequences of evil acts now forgiven. He is free from the curse of the law and the displeasure of God.

Grace has opened the prison door for him. And like Barabbas of old, he walks at liberty because another died in his stead. All this the instructed Christian knows, and he refuses to let false teachers and misguided religionists rivet a yoke of bondage upon his neck.

But now, what shall he do with his freedom? Two possibilities offer themselves. He may accept his blood-worn freedom as a cloak to the flesh, as the New Testament declares that some have done. Or, he may kneel like a camel to receive his voluntary burden.

And what is this burden? The woes of his fellow men, which he must do what he can to assuage. The debt which he, along with Paul, owes to a lost world. The sound of hungry children crying in the night.

The church in Babylonian captivity. The swift onrush of evil doctrines and the success of false prophets. The slow decay of the moral foundation of the so-called Christian nations and whatever else demands self-sacrifice, cross-carrying, long prayer vigils, and courageous witness to alleviate and correct.

Christianity is the freedom. A religion of freedom and democracy is freedom in organized society. But if we continue to misunderstand this freedom, we may soon have neither Christianity nor democracy.

To protect political liberty, free men must deny a voluntary, or have a voluntary obligation upon themselves to preserve the religion of salvation by free grace. And great many Christians must waive their right to be free and take upon themselves a load greater than they have ever carried before. The ideal Christian is one who knows he is free to do as he will and wills to be a servant.

This is the path that Christ took. Blessed is the man that follows him. Freedom, too much freedom like the tramp.

I thought that was such a good illustration. I remember well those fellows, in bygone years when I was a boy walking through the county here, saw them maybe every few days or sometimes daily, I'm not sure, that knock on doors to get a little bit of a handout. Surely they had their freedom, didn't they? But their freedom was their undoing.

And they never harnessed themselves into a job, a family, a house, responsibility, in order to live the way we believe that God would have had them live. Undisciplined lifestyles. I'd like to talk a little bit about prosperity, first of all.

And if I could turn to the book of Daniel, I want to show you at least a possibility that, well, I guess I would say we are already, and may even greater, face unprecedented and unparalleled prosperity. In Daniel 8, verse 25, the scripture says, I believe, referring to the Antichrist, And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the prince of princes, and he shall be broken without hand.

And then over in chapter 11, verse 36, And the king shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished, for that that is determined shall be done. Like I said, we are in what is very clear to me, unparalleled prosperity. Though I believe that it is very possible that that could all come crashing down very suddenly someday, and that's very possible, but it is also possible that your souls will enter the greatest test and temptation of all time by this unparalleled prosperity, whereby it is much easier to make a living than there ever has been in the history of the United States.

Money is flowing freely. And because we're Christians, and we're not smoking and drinking and running with a second and a third wife, and believe in frugality, good work ethic, honest business, common sense, and so forth, we do have a possibility to stand on the threshold of this prosperity, not only on the threshold, but actually experience it because of our upbringing and because of our work ethic and so on, and therefore, we have to reckon with this possibility, not only in the future, but now, when we make two and three times what we need to live by, and those things happen among God's people, and that puts us into this situation where we stand in danger. The Bible teaches and gives much warning concerning this.

Also, I would like to say that success is more dangerous than failure. Did you ever know that? To the person, as a person, success can be much more dangerous than failure. If we succeed, it's so possible to be lifted up in pride, take things for granted, move ourselves from this level of society to a higher level of society, not wanting to have anything to do with a lower level of society anymore.

After all, we want to keep company with people who have what we have and do the things we do. All of those things, strange and unreasonable things, happen to people who succeed. They change not only their lifestyle, but they change their view and their character, and they're all at once very different people.

There are stories written about men who have succeeded and what has happened to them, and how they have changed their character so drastically just because of the money they have made and how that money has affected them. Another reason for this prosperity, and I see the possibility of it, is this world market we're in. It seems like we can find a market for whatever we want to produce because we're not in a local market that so easily gets flooded with overproduction as much anymore, although we still find that somewhat true in farming or in animal raising and fattening.

But nevertheless, we're in a world market, and seemingly, with nearly 6 billion people in the world, we have a market for what we want to produce. And we don't stop and think that if 100 sows make a living, that rather than flooding the market with 300 sows, we look at it that, well, look how much more I could make if I put 300 sows in, then I have 100, and so we just go for the three, see. Because all in the concept of what I could make, if I would automate things and so on.

The other thing that is ruining us, that is a tremendous temptation to us, is the easy credit. No money down. All at once, we have done that with, and have known to be able to do that for refrigerators and stoves and washing machines and every other appliance about, but now it's that with houses.

All at once here in the Lancaster County real estate market, there are loan organizations offering houses for no money down. And it used to be that you had to have at least 20 to 30 percent of the money in order to buy a house. But now they all at once kind of pity these poor people who just kind of live from hand to mouth, and after all, never get to own a house, and so why don't we make it possible that anybody can own a house? My, that is terrible thinking.

But the same way with tractors and equipment and lawn and garden and all that, no payments for a year. Get the thing now, and don't bother about paying for it for six months, till spring or till a year, and then you think, well, yeah, then by that time I ought to get ahead here a little bit and have a little better income, maybe and get some of these bills out of the way, and then I can afford those payments. And they are tricked and trapped many times until it affects much of their lifestyle later on by bringing much stress and anxiety upon their lives because they were lured into it.

The whole idea of waiting until you have the money all at once seems outdated, old-fashioned, and foolish. But I tell you it is not foolish. But I encourage it again very, very strongly, especially in something that does not appreciate.

Something like a home is a little bit different because there, at least if you go by the last 50 years, most of the time our farms and our homes do appreciate, although the 1980s had a downturn and a number of them had to go back again. But for most of the time they have appreciated and we can about always bill out for more money than we spent for it. But not so with vehicles.

Not so with appliances. Not so with furniture. Immediately when you take up the payments, the vehicle is worth less than what it was when you bought it for most of the time.

And many people are making payments on dead horses or wrecked cars or rusted out vehicles that are broke down and are gone, and they're still making payments on them while they try to buy another one.

And they are in a bad shape. I would much rather encourage people to buy a \$1,500 car and use it for three or four years rather than to try to buy a \$7,000 or \$8,000 or \$10,000 one and go on a payment plan with it.

Much, much rather. And then save the money for your next one a while and get a little interest on it until you need the next one. It's amazing, I find, for some of the people who have come in here.

We have bought a number of those cars. People who didn't have vehicles or single moms or single girls that came from a background where they had nothing and we bought them vehicles like that and they last and run and run for years. If you pray and seek the face of God and have some mechanical expertise in choosing them for them, some of us who are a little more mechanically inclined, it's very easy to pick up a vehicle that will last somebody like that for five years.

Can you imagine the advantage that they have instead of going on the payment program? Well, practical lifestyles. We are in undisciplined lifestyles. Foolish.

And yet it doesn't seem like any of the financial institutions that we should trust have much common sense in this. The local banker is not to be trusted. Some farmer told me a while back that his payments were coming down right nicely.

But he had a little ways to go yet. And the banker shows up at his doorstep. He said, Can you think of something else you'd like to do? We'd like to loan you more money.

You see, they don't want you out of debt. They want to keep that thing going. And when they see you getting the thing paid down, you know, they're out to try to get you to take another shot at it.

Buy the second farm. Put up a chicken house or an implement shed. We'll loan you some more.

Oh, then we... First time about that happened to me, you know, that I realized that I was finally a person that they didn't look at crooked when I came in and wondering whether I was worth enough to borrow what I wanted to borrow. I had a totally different feeling in myself. You mean they'd actually gladly loan me money? What's this? You know, and they'd kind of say, Wow, what could I do next? Oh, the whole thing just has that kind of an effect many times on us, especially if we're inexperienced.

But it's sad. We have to teach ourselves and our children that those men are not to be trusted. They are not out for our good.

They're out for their good. Where it used to be the banker, the local banker, was our financial counselor. And he was a good one.

And there are a few of them around. But for the most part, you're a number. And if you come up on the computer as eligible, hey, they'd love to put your net to the hilt.

The money they make of it, look at the credit card business. Over and over again, we find out that Walmart, Sears and Roebuck, and different others make more money on their credit cards than they do in their stores. Can you imagine? Because they're charging anywhere from 13 to 19 or 20 percent interest on a revolving account that you can never pay off about because you have so much racked up on it and the minimum payment is all you can make and the minimum payment never brings the principal down about all it does.

And even in some cases, the bottom line actually increases. That's how terribly those things are set up. That said, when a good company, and I just heard of another one, I think it was a furniture company a few weeks ago that decided to go manufacture furniture, I think, in the New England states and went into the credit program and made more money on that program than they did on their furniture.

First Corinthians, or excuse me, First Timothy, chapter 6, verse 9 and 10. I think Denny might have quoted this before, but, they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some covet it after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Thou, O man of God, flee these things. Another thing that I've found out to be a real problem is that the young want to live like the ones that are 45 and 50 years old. And that's also quite a trick.

Dad, he worked hard by the sweat of his brow and labored and saved and didn't give it all to finance companies and lived within his means, but now he's 45 and 50 years old and he can afford to buy something better. Son takes a look at it and says, I'll get me one too. But it's a whole different situation.

And in cases like that, it can be very binding and very dangerous. Look, that's another question that I have. You know, maybe for us, some of us who live through hard times and real scrapings and difficulties, we have gotten burnt a few times and have made some commitments to God never to get ourselves in a situation like that again, foolishly.

There's a sense in which we can handle prosperity maybe, but can our sons? That's the other question when they have never gone through that. Alright, in 1 Timothy 6, look at 17 and 18 and 19 there. Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life. Now here he does not say that there can be no such thing in the church. But he said, charge them that are this way that they be not high-minded.

That they never allow themselves to go in that upper crust society or whatever you want to call it and look down on everybody else thinking they have graduated to a new level and only want to visit or interact with people that are on their level. Don't be like that. Nor trust in uncertain riches.

Don't trust in them. Riches make wings and can fly away suddenly. The proverb writer gives us.

But in the living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy. I think it's far better to look at things from the perspective of a steward. I like to think if God prospers me or blesses me, that you should look at it like a plantation owner that you're working for goes to Europe for a couple of years.

And he entrusts the plantation into your hands. And you care for that thing. It's not as if it's yours, but you know and he'll say, well, I'll give you a good reward if you take good care of it.

Now you plant what's best here and you take care of this thing and you keep the buildings in order and all that and if I ever get back from Europe, I'll take care of you. I'll reward you for it. And you handle that thing not as the owner of it, but you're the steward of it.

It is lent to you. It is given to you. And to make the best of it.

It's not right to be sloven and to be foolish about it and let the thing deteriorate. That is not good stewardship. But we are a steward there and we should view financial blessings the same way.

God has put us on earth. We are stewards of them. We are to take care of them until He comes.

If we do it faithfully, He's going to give us a reward. If not, then not. But they are not for us to foolishly squander, splurge, and live in luxury because it prospers.

My next point is that Christian giving and so much could be said about these verses here, but it's very clear to me that Christian prosperity or the prosperity because of our frugality and good work ethic and honesty and all that is regulated by Christian giving. If we regulate prosperity by Christian giving, then it's not near as bad to be prosperous. But if the prosperity is our own doing where we think that we have to up our level of living three times because our income tripled, then we're in trouble.

Then we're in trouble. And I think the only way to safely have riches or so to speak prosper and be able to be in business and make a higher amount of money than what the average would be in the United States if it is regulated by giving, Christian giving. Mission's the same way.

I like to think that as soon as a fellowship is on its feet and recognize sometimes, you know, they get a church house built or get one bought or whatever or loaned to them or whatever, real cheap, and the men are in business and starting to prosper and things are starting to go, it's at that time that that church should have a mission and it just helps to regulate things or else things begin to happen once again. You know, seventeen year old boys buy fourteen, fifteen, sixteen thousand dollar trucks and four wheel drive and special lettering on them and all this stuff, paint jobs that cost fifteen hundred dollars and those kind of things just naturally are the outflow of too much money in the hands of too immature and too young. It doesn't come out right.

So, I encourage that if your churches are prospering and you don't have a lot of needs on the local level, then you look for a mission that you can regulate your prosperity with. Let's look over at James chapter five. These are very simple scriptures, but we've heard them all before.

But, you know, we do have to hear them again, don't we? We tend to forget. That's a hard verse here. James 5, Five, You have lived in pleasure on the earth and have been wanton.

You have nourished your hearts as in the day of slaughter. And I don't know what the setting was here. It's a little hard for me to see what James was, who he was trying to address.

So, I just take it for face value again with this loose and easy lifestyle that we just live in pleasure on the earth and been wanton. That means always lusting or desiring for more. And have nourished our hearts as in the day of slaughter.

And there we have the sin of Sodom again. Fulness of bread, abundance of idleness, ease, pleasure, live it up. Why not enjoy it? God is good.

He's given us all these things. And though we condemn the prosperity preachers, nevertheless there are many who are not in those churches that still come uncomfortably close to the same philosophy. It says here also in verse 3 of James 5, That year ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

And it seems like that people constantly want to store up and lay up for the future like for the last days and hoard. I think someone made remarks about that. I read an article about a man who picked up an article or a newspaper and his wife had drawn a circle around a garage sale.

And this lady was advertising her garage sale and at the bottom to try to impress the people that she had a lot of stuff. She says we've hoarded for years. And that's an honest statement probably.

An honest statement. You know there were no garage sales virtually when I was a boy. All that has come out of the affluent lifestyle of the people.

We always wore hand-me-down clothes. We didn't buy all the children new and then when they outgrew them we didn't have a garage sale to get rid of them. You know that's just something that was not known back in those days.

But today we can go into a certain development and go through a 25 house garage sale in one day and everybody has tables groaning with things they don't need. How did that ever happen? Well I realize I don't believe it's wrong to have a garage sale. There are sometimes children grow up we don't need the things that we had to raise children.

And there comes a time to disperse. But it used to be that then that was given to the grandchildren and you know and those kind of things. It's just very different today.

But it's all due to this American society in which we live in. Well I only have chosen this day to speak on this undisciplined lifestyle. You know and I know that there's so much more could be said about this.

But I would like to switch now a little bit to the pleasure seeking concept in America. And this again I think the other brother mentioned something about that but it is a terrible cancer in our society. Coming into the Christian church one is just continually shocked that one hears some of the liberties that people take concerning pleasure seeking.

You hear of honeymoons to Hawaii now. Cancun, Mexico or perhaps an island in the Caribbean. You know one hears about six week western trips that people take.

I was in Montana some years ago. And here a big motor home drove in and then another and then another. I think there were two or either three or four.

And here it was a family. A minister of the gospel supposed to be with his married children taking a six week around the west western trip with those motor homes. Each young married family had their own and Pop and his family and the children that were home yet had the other one the big one.

And they spent six weeks driving through the west visiting all the amusement places. Only just amusing ourselves. You know the word muse means to think to study to ponder.

But you put an A in the front of it and add M-E-N-T to the end of it and we have amusement or entertaining. And so it is a perverted thing kind of from musing where we should take things and ponder them and study them and think about them. Now we just sit back kick up our heels and let ourselves be entertained.

And people do not muse enough. God did not bless us just to lavish it upon ourselves but to advance His kingdom. And one of the things I see when you get into a situation you know you get into a church and this

one goes here and that one goes there and it's kind of the norm for everyone just to enjoy the lifestyle that God has given us and blessed us with.

Somebody already likes to go to church in July you know because about one third to sometimes nearly half the people are away. They are in the mountains or down at the seashore or here and there. And even the preacher himself he is missing for a Sunday or two while he is doing the same thing.

You know you get into those situations and the burden for the souls of men is missing. It's not there. People do not care that the masses are going to hell.

People do not care that souls are lost. They don't even care their neighbor is lost many of them. And there is something about that whole lifestyle that just comes upon us and just grows upon us and we don't care.

We just want to enjoy life and look what's out there to see. My, I just about have to shake myself I feel the spirit of it talking about it. But people are not zeroed in on the advancement of the kingdom of God.

People are not zeroing in on the souls of men. People are not caring about the needs around them. Someone has said luxury dulls our mission focus.

If you look over at the Scripture there in Luke 8, verse 14 And that which fell among thorns are they which when they have heard go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection. I sometimes think do we believe that verse? Do we believe what Jesus is saying? The seed that fell among thorns is that which when they have heard the word of God they go forth and they are choked with the cares, riches and pleasures of this life and look at the rest and they bring no fruit. They bring no fruit unto perfection.

They do not care about the things around them. And for myself I hardly am able to see how to put those two together. How you can have the big vacation mentality and be burdened for the souls of men.

I don't know how they fit. I don't know how they fit. I know there are times we have to come apart and rest a while.

And there are times maybe we don't do enough of that and wear ourselves a bit to our frazzle you know and mentally and emotionally sometimes in evangelistic work and running here and there and preaching and teaching and counseling and all that. But I'd rather live on that edge. Than I would to continue to just run to after the pleasures of this world and dull my senses to the needs of humanity and the needs of missions and the cries that are out there for just encouragement just wanting someone to stop by and to bless them and to visit with them.

Luxury seduces us to become bystanders rather than soldiers. There's a big difference there. You know when we're a soldier and we're in a war and we're fighting or we're running a race we're an athlete and we're running a race whole different mentality.

When we're a soldier in a war we don't think about those things back home and this and that. We don't think about the luxuries of life. We're here to fight a war.

We're here to win. We're here to fight manfully. And we're here to overcome.

Remember Lot's wife. Apparently she couldn't adjust herself to life outside of Sodom. Apparently she couldn't.

And even though Sodom was being destroyed and she was told to flee to Zohar and just shortly before Zohar shortly before salvation for her shortly before the safety of that city she turned around and looked back and God turned her into a pillar of salt. Remember Lot's wife as told us in the New Testament. For some of us I think we need to remember the Bolshevik Revolution.

I think we need to remember the Great Depression. I think we need to remember some of these things in the Bolshevik Revolution. My, that's an awesome thing to me.

Awesome thing to me. The Russian Mennonite people thousands of them rich, wealthy high society people had their own police force their own judgment hall disciplined their own people in their elaborate colonies you know, there in the Ukraine. And the Russian boys, you know they were servant boys.

They were allowed to come in and drive the horses and we'd sit in the big surrey going to church but then they had to stay out with the horses because, you know we made an agreement with the Queen Catherine the Great that we can't evangelize the Russians see, so the Russians weren't allowed to be baptized and weren't allowed to come to church so the little stable boy he had to just stay with the horses out there. Those are the things that were commonplace among them. And nobody cared about witnessing to them nobody cared about giving the gospel.

They were treated like sub-humans. The story is given by a group in Manitoba whose ancestors went through it and they had a Russian servant for many years. When the Russian servant got old they didn't know what to do with him.

So they took him out behind the barn and shot him. And the cry of that inequality that unjust stuff came up before God and when that Bolshevik revolution broke out in 1914, 15, 16, 17 or maybe in 17 when it started they went in there and plundered that place cut out unborn babies raped the women burned the houses chopped the heads off of the people and did anything they wanted to do. And they were supposedly Bible believing gospel experiencing people but something was terribly wrong.

Something was terribly wrong. And I'll tell you we need to remember the Bolshevik revolution that was no little thing. Get some of those books and read them.

They'll do you a lot of good. The Great Depression likewise. People forget.

Some of us I guess nobody in this room can even touch it anymore. You know. There are a few people alive who went through it.

But many of us all we have ever known was to live in prosperity and peace. We don't even remember probably no one in this room remembers in the United States of a tank coming up the streets. And those living in Europe have had that so many times in their past lifetime as the borders have seesawed back and forth and first one group of tanks and then a group of another and we don't even know what it is for a tank to come down the street or soldiers standing around with machine guns.

And those things can ruin us if we're not careful in our attitude. John Wesley is an example or a role model to us. He wore inexpensive clothing, ate simple food and bought adequate furniture.

He earned it later latter part of his years when he had done some writing and some of his books were selling well. He earned 1,400 pounds a year. But he lived on 300 and gave the rest to missions.

Someone had a plaque or saw a plaque in the middle of a store that pretty well depicted the American lifestyle. If I can't take it with me, I'm not going. Can you imagine? Now may I switch to the other stitch in the road? I am concerned also about another lifestyle which I see also in America.

And it is the careless or Sloven chaotic lifestyle. If you can walk with me up to the house of one of those places and I'm not talking about Skid Row, I'm not talking about the Bowery in New York City or I'm not talking about the ghettos of the major city. I'm talking about Christian homes.

Chaotic lifestyles. Everything out of order. Walk with me into the house.

Garbage and bags of it all around strewed around on the porches. The screen door is torn, sagging on its hinges. The furniture has rips in it and tears in it and all that.

The children are undisciplined. Holes in the wall. Crayons and scribblings over the place.

And mealtime is anytime. People just, children just come and grab a cupcake or this or that and walk through the house and eat it. Jumping up and down on the furniture while you're trying to visit with mom and dad.

With both feet. And those kind of things. And I'll tell you, on the other ditch in the road, those things greatly grieve me likewise.

Sometimes you get in the middle of those situations and you just wish that somebody would have enough of self-respect just to clean up. Take a ride in the family van. Rust and dirt hasn't been swept out for months.

Everybody just gets in with their muddy boots and nobody bothers to ever wash it out or clean it. Hasn't been washed in the outside. No repairs.

There's a certain trick, you know, to open the door. You have to open another door that still opens and get inside and open the other ones. And when you walk up to it, somebody quick runs ahead of you and says, oh, there's a little trick, you know, to open that up.

The windshield is cracked. The headlight is out. Sometimes there's no heat.

And when you start the motor, you have to reach underneath and do a certain jiggling of wires to get the thing going. And then finally you have kind of a loud muffler and you go down the road. I don't believe in that.

I don't care if that vehicle has 200,000 miles on it and is 12 years old. Fix that! Instead of allowing yourself a Sloven lifestyle and just letting everything go as long as it cuts along a little bit. That isn't right either.

You know, I've said for years already it doesn't matter to me if you live in a log cabin or in a thatched roof house of some kind but sweep the floor. That's the way it used to be. People lived in log cabins but everything was in its place and a place for everything.

And they might have had a hayloft up top but it was neat and clean. And when you visited it was a blessing. There was order.

People knew. Children knew. There was a time for this and a time for that.

I was in a home the other day when an old man, a gray-haired man was sitting there with me and some children were running in between us you know and just darting in and doing all kinds of funny antics there between us trying to get our attention. I guess they would have wanted it. I suppose.

And finally the father just said you know how it was when I was young? He said, we tiptoed around the edge of the company when my dad had company and that's exactly right. That's exactly the way it was. There was order.

There was respect. There was quietness. No loud guffawing and screaming and yelling and chasing each other around the place.

That didn't exist in colonial America practically. I remember a man telling me that he used to go to town in the spring wagon with his dad and his dad said, okay boys, I don't want to catch you begging for nothing. We're going in there to get some supplies and I don't want you begging.

If I do, we're going to have a meeting when we get home. And he said, that's the way we'd go to town. We never thought of begging.

And now you have moms pulling their children screaming away from a candy or from this or that in a grocery store and it's total chaos. It's an undisciplined lifestyle. It's our fault that things have got to that place.

It doesn't matter if you don't have a nice house. Like I say, I don't care if you live in a long cabin. But put everything in its place and sweep the floor and have it neat and clean and orderly.

And let your children come and meet you. Meet the strangers with respect and honor. And identifying themselves, saying their names and sitting orderly around the table or around the living room when you visit with a stranger.

That's a burden on my heart. That thing is almost missing. Not talking about the ghettos where there are single moms having five and six children running wild like Indians.

Talking about in the name of Christianity. And I'm heading up to a certain area or a certain place with this thing. Look at the checkbook.

If you'd ask to see the family checkbook, what do you suppose you'd find there if the other is that way? Chaos. Where'd the money go? Well, I don't know. Didn't you write it down? No, I didn't write it down.

And the checks start bouncing and this and that and everything is in chaos there. But the real problem is if that's the way it is in your life, that's the way it is in your soul. That's the way it is in your soul, you see.

And then it's that way concerning your relationships and settling your debts there and your accounts there. And that is chaotic and you haven't cleaned up your past and there are unconfessed sins and there's witchcraft back there and there's this back there and you have a garbage can full of it and you have never cleaned house and never put it into order and the outside is just a mirror of the inside. An undisciplined lifestyle is a picture of an undisciplined soul and a chaotic soul many times.

And I don't want to be too hard on you. If you've never been taught these things, God bless you. Get a hold of them today.

Get a grip on them. Go home and make a change. Set your house in order.

But it is often not by the amount of things we have. It is how we handle and use what little we do have. And many times we are very, very poor stewards with it and because of the chaotic way in which we handle it.

I'd like to look a little bit at the late problem in this whole lifestyle. It's usually a part of it too. If you would have just come to grips with the frustration that comes out of constantly being late.

I cannot imagine. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this matter. Again, let's take a look at the scene.

You know the problem is I'm not sure where the problem starts. I can hardly go back far enough to know where it starts. A lot of times the problem starts already on Saturday.

The problem starts on Saturday. The problem is already existing and we don't get to bed in time and all the children have had their baths and everything on Saturday night. And everything is in order for Sunday morning.

But then we get up late on Sunday morning. And then there's a rushing around and a where's my clothes and this and that and I can't find it and whining and going on and a rushing this and that and quick trying to grab a little bit of breakfast and spilling the milk and we don't wash the dishes just stuck them in the sink, you know and a and a and finally we drag ourselves in the church 10, 15 minutes late. And then we say how about having some company for dinner? Could you take some company along? Oh, no, I can't.

That would devastate me to take company at home. My house is in a mess. I'm not prepared.

Did you know there are people that are basically prepared every Sunday when they go to church? Not with a meal in the oven. Not with a casserole in the crock pot. They have an air and a state of preparation in their whole house in the refrigerator in the canning room and everywhere.

And they can whip up a meal in about 25 minutes. No, you don't have to have all the whole spread. Put a nice bowl of soup on with some various things in it and serve it and have sweet fellowship around it and you'll bless everybody.

You don't have to have a cake baked and pies and puddings made and the whole nine yards. I don't care about it a bit. We were talking about a problem yesterday.

I'd be much more obliged if people would help me out a little bit with it when I go to their place for dinner sometimes instead of tempting with all the rest. But this late problem is not right. All you'd have to do is get up a half an hour earlier and just follow with me through the scene.

Get up a half an hour earlier or a three quarters an hour earlier and the children are neatly dressed and their hair is combed and the house is read up and Mama gets the baby ready while the older children even seven, eight and ten and eleven and twelve clean up the kitchen and wash the dishes and put everything in its place. And we even have time to kneel together in the living room and have prayer before we go to church or pull out a song book and look through the song book and even consider what songs we might want to sing on Sunday morning instead of just paging through and saying I'm going to choose that one. But we meditate about it and then we finally go off to church and there's an air of peace in the house and

in the car.

The car was washed the day before. It's clean. It's fit for decent clothes and the children to sit on the seats and not that the chickens were in it or that we hauled the little piglets to market the day before and all that but it's been washed and clean.

And then we go to church and there's an air of peace and singing. And we sit in there and we go in there first of all and we're able to meet some people who are there fifteen, twenty minutes early and all sit in our places ready to go when nine or nine-thirty comes whenever you meet on Sunday morning. And I'll tell you that has a deep spiritual effect on your soul rather than the frustration of this other lifestyle that you continually go around and around and around on and are in a rut of ruts.

I actually heard some time ago where the church has to wait until the song reader gets there because he's late habitually at times. That isn't right. That is the way and that is a reflection of the soul and that's why I lift this up for what it is.

Those things go together. You get that whole thing into order and it seems to me and I realize that I have for my entire married life it didn't matter whether I lived a quarter of a mile from church which I did for eleven years or whether I lived sixteen miles from church. It makes no difference.

I just started earlier. Doesn't make a bit of difference. But the importance of that is such a mirror into the soul into what's going on in your life.

And I say then I see the frustration and I catch the tears and I see the struggle that Mama has to keep her spiritual life on top. And I'll tell you I pity her many times and I realize she may also be at fault here sometimes but a lot of times she is not given enough space and not enough time to do what needs to be done and be ready when it's time to go and get in the church in a restful attitude ready to worship instead of pulling her hair out. What we have it's it's so it's right at your fingertips I guarantee you just at your fingertips there it lies but we don't do it.

We don't do it. And that's very sad. There's some time ago I sat in the back like Brother Klaus and interpreted the message in high German and I usually am in the front here not because I'm a minister I've over the years sat more toward the front because there's less distraction and all that but I couldn't believe it.

Trying to interpret back there and chairs being set up 15 and 20 minutes after the beginning of the service for these stragglers that are habitually late. If you had a flat tire if the electric was off everybody understands but that don't happen very often with the tires we have these days and that excuse soon wears out. There is another problem.

It is just a bad bad lifestyle. A bad habitual sloven chaotic lifestyle that we have adapted. Now I didn't say it you know but the same way with furniture you don't have to go and buy new furniture you don't have to go but you know did you know there's a needle and thread that will sew up the rip in it? Did you know that you can shampoo the covers with a scrub brush and some soap and things like that? It's just you know I'm not being hard on you I trust for what you cannot do but it's what you have take care of it it'll last longer don't let the children jump up and down with both feet in the middle of a couch it'll soon be gone.

On and on we could go. Now please take to heart what I'm saying here. It would transform our services.

I believe it would transform many a service. If everybody would basically aim to be there from a half hour to 15 minutes before. Half hour to 15 minutes before starting time.

And be there with your life and your soul your spirit in proper order. That I believe with all my heart is nothing more than expected godliness. Just plain godliness is all that it is.

I'd like to say a little bit more yet about living a bitter and angry lifestyle. Looking at Hebrews chapter 12 verse 15 concerning bitterness there I just want to touch on it because this is also in some cases just simply a lifestyle. Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled.

I mentioned what I did yesterday concerning our eating and drinking lifestyles and the food and so on. Today I talked about some other more practical areas concerning how we live. But I do not want to overlook at the close of this message the importance yet of how I believe it affects us in our bodies in our spirits both.

If we live with a strife and envy and clamor evil speaking bitterness anger and those kind of things that are pretty constant going on in our home. Sharp words and all that. How many of you and I'm not going to ask for a raise of hands but how many of you can still remember how you felt when mom and dad argued? How many of you can remember how you felt? I remember how I felt.

I wanted to hide behind the couch or go out to the barn or into another room. We did not want to hear that and everywhere I go I find people that say the same thing. I hated it when they did that.

And when you live in an environment of sharp words and hard cutting words and an angry spirit with an angry father or an angry mother or that they live in bitterness and they're always talking about people who didn't treat them right and who why are they this way and that way and there's just this tension and the nerves of the little children start coming up in the individual and tighten up the body and I believe that whole lifestyle affects how the fluids and the nervous system and everything in the body works and I believe some of our physical problems can come from living in strife. I actually am suspicious that it may be one of the hidden causes of cancer and other problems in our day. Living where the body is tense and bound up and not at peace and at rest and you cannot relax right because of the fact that the home is in an environment of anger and bitterness and we're arguing and fussing.

Children grow up with scowls on their faces once again. Some people it's just the norm. Oh, that's something that just moves me greatly when I see dad and mom and a whole row of children and the children have scowls on their faces and they're half contorted because of the bitterness and the anger that they live in.

Instead, again, if you just look at the opposite of being at peace with God and with your wife and with your children and with your neighbor and even with your enemy as much as lies within you smiles and songs permeate the air. Little children's chatter that is gracious and kind is like music to the ear and how that affects the physical body. How that affects the environment of the soul compared to all this other stuff.

The Bible teaches us to live in peace. We are to live in peace and how that the fruit of peace and the effect it has in our life I know I'm only I just cannot get into this like I would like to with the scriptures and with the examples and stories of this great subject. But it is so important.

Resolve your conflict. Resolve. Deal with your anger.

The other day one of the brethren here in the prayer room just dealt with that thing. He finally he just said this is the way it is. It's this way in my life.

I'm angry. I'm frustrated. And I want to get rid of it.

And that's how don't ever say it's just the way I am and just kind of brought up this way and I don't know what to do. There's an answer for this thing. And the answer is in Christ Jesus and in true brokenness and repentance.

And we can have that spirit cast out. We can put it off and put on love and peace and gentleness and meekness and faith temperance and those kind of virtues can flood into our soul but they cannot be put in as long as we are full of envy and strife and clamor and evil speaking and bitterness and all that. May God help us again as we seek the face of God this afternoon in our prayer time.

Let us be honest. I encourage you that if you are in confusion and chaos in your life in your lifestyle in your home in marriage in your children you cannot turn everything around overnight but just do one thing again. Get upon your knees before God this afternoon and say so help me God! So help me God! I'm going to go home and turn this thing around by the grace that you give me.

I'm going to clean up. I'm going to get my vehicle into order. I'm going to clean it up and fix it.

I'm going to get my house in order. And you will write me a letter some day perhaps or tell me about it when you see me again what a change it made in your life. But I don't care if you never tell me.

Just do it for your wife's sake and for your sake and for your children's sake and for God's sake! Shall we bow in prayer? Let's bow our heads. Father in heaven, dear God help us. We are needy men.

Many of us, we have not been brought up right. We know that. These things are hard because we had a very chaotic lifestyle in our past.

God, I pray, teach us the word of God. Teach us these godly principles and virtues that our children don't have to go through the same thing, Lord. Oh, God, I pray for that.

And I just ask that you would bless all of us as we pray and seek the face of God today that we make the commitments we need to be made. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Alright, you are dismissed for 15 minutes. I'll be just a minute here.

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