

Keep the Law

by Paris Reidhead

The Christian secret of a happy life is to keep the law and love our neighbor as ourselves, and this is made possible by being available to Jesus Christ and seeking His leading through prayer and obedience.

Duration: 51:34

Scripture: Mark 12:30, John 10:9-10

Topics: "The Law"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a clear purpose and defined goals in order to live a happy, effective, and fruitful life for the glory of God. He mentions two books, 'How to Make a Habit of Succeeding' and 'How to Change Your Life in 12 Weeks,' which he believes are based on biblical principles. The speaker explains that by firmly fixing an idea in our minds through repeated affirmation, it becomes a plan or blueprint that God uses to direct our efforts towards achieving our goals. He also highlights the need to view the world as a neighborhood and have a moral obligation to want for others what we want for ourselves. The sermon concludes with a call to obey the laws of the mind, the Lord, and the heart, and to seek God's guidance in our lives.

Transcript

It's been a pleasure to be with you this week. I appreciate the opportunity of not having to preach twice a day, but just be able to talk with my friends. I decided when I came this week that I wasn't going to... I wasn't going to preach.

I was just going to share with you a group of friends that have come together so that we could talk about the things of Christ. And the theme for this week has been the Christian secret of a happy life. I've met so many unhappy Christians through the years, having to counsel with them, and I suppose I've had my share of unhappiness.

When you think you've found a secret, the best thing to do with it is to share it. Someone said it isn't yours until you've passed it on. That's why Dr. Laubach developed that system of teaching people to read.

He called it Each One Teach One. You couldn't get lesson number two until you'd taught someone the lesson you just learned, number one. And you brought the person in and proved that you'd taught them lesson number one, and they gave you lesson number two.

And that proved to be very, very effective. And so it is with the Christian secret of a happy life. It isn't really yours until you've given it away.

And if God has fitted something to your heart, and you're wearing it and using it, well, pass it on. Give it away. Share it.

And that way it'll become doubly yours. Now, we have seen in this wonderful portion in John chapter 10, the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ said he was the door, I am the door of the sheep. By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, he shall go in, and he shall go out, and he shall have fine pasture.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Now, one of the secrets of this happy life is to keep the law. Some years ago I was driving back from missionary conference through North Carolina, and I must admit that I wasn't paying any attention to the signs.

But that car, you know, so my little boy said, Daddy, here comes the Surrey with the cherry on top. Came up alongside of me, and that red light began to flash, and I discovered that, you know, it says in the Bible something about, or in some of the notes in some of the Bibles, that the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, is reverence for the law. It's a feeling of reverence.

Well, I want you to know when that red light shines in your eye, if that's what I felt with reverence, you know, I don't think so. What I felt was I was plumb scared. That's what I was.

I was just frightened. I didn't know what I'd done. If he'd have said, you were, I would have said, all right, I'm sorry, because there was something about that encounter with the law.

And, you know, he didn't let me go. I told him I was a preacher and a poor, like the man who said, you know, I can't afford that car, I'm just a poor preacher. He said, yes, I heard you last Sunday, I know you are, but that's the price of the car anyway.

And I told him I was a poor preacher. He said, well, that's all right, still \$25. And so breaking the law carries with it a price.

And if you want to have a happy Christian life, keep the law. That's driving, and that's paying your income tax, and that's getting enough sleep and seeing to it that you get the right food, that you eat right, and to keep fit, as Adele Davis has said, and that's a good book, you don't, that isn't on the table there, but it's helpful, and that you learn to obey the laws of health, and that you learn to obey the laws of God. We're going to talk about some of these laws.

You can't be a happy Christian unless you have a right and proper respect for the law. Now, the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but it's also the easiest way and the best way to live a happy, useful life, and a happy Christian life. And I'm talking about certain of the laws.

Now, particularly tonight, and I'm, if I wanted to stretch this and tie it into John 10, I'd say, let's call this, and shall find pasture, shall we? Well, I don't know really what that means, so I'm not going to strain at it very hard. But we're still talking about an abundant life, and an abundant life is a life where you keep the law, and you no attempt whatever to try to break it. You see, you can't break the law of God.

You only break yourself on the law. Nobody ever broke God's law. It's just like it was when he gave it.

They may have broken themselves and shattered themselves. You don't break the law of health, you just break your health. That's all.

You don't break the law of God, you break yourself on it. And the portion that I'm thinking about in this connection tonight is in Matthew, the 22nd chapter, where the lawyers, the Sadducees, came to Christ, the Pharisees came to Christ, after he found he put the Sadducees to silence. And one of them asked him a question, saying, Master, which is the great commandment of the law? And Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Now, let's look at this for a moment. What's this word mean in the Bible? You know what it means in common parlance and in the popular songs of the day.

What does it mean in the Bible? The way we normally use the word has to do with emotions, feeling strongly and warmly about someone. It has to do with feelings. But as it's used in the Bible, it does not refer to sensation, emotion, or feeling.

It has its roots in another area, because God says, Thou shalt love. And that has to do then with that which you can perform by your will. You can decide to love.

Now let's, if it were an emotion, suppose I were to say to you tonight, now I'm going to count to three. And when I count to three, I want all of you to be angry. And so I'd go one, two, three.

Now everyone be angry. And you'd do as you're doing. You'd laugh at me.

Well, why? Your emotions are not under the control of your will. If I want you to feel angry, I don't command you to be angry. I just tell you the thing that as you think about it has the effect of making you feel angry.

Now God commands you to love him with all your heart and mind and strength. And obviously it's not an emotion. You see the word love in the Anglo-Saxon, it comes from a forgotten root, luf, and it means together with.

And as it's used in the Bible, it means for you to decide, to commit your will, to make a decision, to live together with God in terms of that which pleases him and honors him and satisfies him. Now to love oneself is the essence of sin. That means to live together with oneself, and the supreme choice of the life is to please oneself and gratify oneself and satisfy oneself without regard for the interests and plan of God or the rights of others.

And that's sin. In its essence, sin is self-love. I'll do what I want to do.

I'll please me. And every one of us, reaching the age of accountability, made that choice to govern our lives by this principle of selfishness or self-love. And that's why he said, except you repent, you'll perish.

If sin is the supreme choice of the life to please oneself, then repentance is the repudiation of that choice, the renunciation of that choice, a change of mind or will of direction from pleasing oneself to pleasing God. And so the person that has repented is the one that has said, I'm going to love God with all my heart, mind, soul, and spirit. Now what's that mean? That means I'm going to please God.

I'm going to do what God wants done. He's going to rule me and control me and govern me. And to receive Christ is to receive God in Jesus Christ, God who is God, as the one who has the right to rule and control and govern.

So the person that loves God with all of his heart, with all of his mind, with all of his strength, is the person that has repented of his sin, received Jesus Christ as his Lord and his Savior, and has made this now the supreme choice of his life to please God. Now that's not difficult, I don't think, and yet I was years and years trying to have this verse mean something to me. So the happy Christian, of course, is the Christian.

A Christian is one who has savingly received Jesus Christ, and in so doing has committed himself, made that supreme choice of his life to please God in everything. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. That means that you're going to seek to gratify him, and satisfy him, and please him, and do that which honors him, and fulfill his request and his pleasure as far as you're concerned.

That's who a believer is, somebody that is committed to please God. And the opposite of that is one who's committed to please himself, and he's a sinner. He's not repented, and he is living in this state of rebellion and anarchy that we saw last Sunday morning.

Now, the evidence, the evidence that you love God is going to be shown in the fact that you love your neighbor as yourself. Now just a moment ago I said the essence of sin is self-love. You heard me.

That a sinner is a person that has made the supreme choice of his life to love himself, and thus please himself, and gratify himself, and satisfy himself. Okay, now what am I telling you? I am telling you that the Bible teaches self-love, because it says thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. And if you hate yourself, you've got every reason to hate your neighbor.

So the Bible teaches a proper self-love. An improper and inordinate self-love is sin. Now as soon as you've repented and received Jesus Christ, then he says thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

What kind of talk is that? Is that a contradiction in the Bible? No. No. You see, the proper self-love is that you want for yourself whatever is necessary for you to bring the greatest happiness and blessedness and joy and satisfaction to the heart of God.

Therefore, you want food so that you can be nourished properly, that your brain can function, and you want clothing so that you can stand with dignity and unashamed, and you want an education to develop your mind, and you want the means whereby you can provide for yourself with a measure of security, comfort, and be of service to others. And that's wonderful. And you have a perfect right.

There's only one thing. Whatever you want for you, you're obligated to want for me. You see? And whatever I want for me, I am obligated to want for you.

Now, God wasn't taking a chance at all, was he? He said, go ahead. You want a nice home? Fine. You want nice clothing? Fine.

You want good food? Fine. You want a good education? Fine. But just one thing.

Whatever you want for you, you've got to want for your neighbor. And you never can get for yourself at the expense of your neighbor. And you've got to understand who your neighbor is.

That's anyone you've heard about or know about, or have any possibility of hearing about or knowing about. So, that's an awfully big neighborhood you live in. And ever since we saw the world from the backside of the moon on Christmas Eve, December 1968, we've had to think of the world as a spaceship, and we're all passengers together.

It was a little ball. You remember how small it appeared? And here we are, 600 million Chinese and 580 million--it was nearly 900, I guess. I don't know how many.

I don't think anybody else does, but let's say somewhere between 6 and 900 million Chinese, and almost 600 million Indians, and all the rest of the earth's family. And about 20,000, 18 to 20,000 of earth's family are dying every day of starvation. 17,000 people died inside the city of Lima, Peru, last year of starvation inside the city.

And so this world is so small, we're all passengers together, and we have to live on it. We have this closed system of oxygen and minerals and wood and food, and we're in a spaceship, and we're traveling at this fantastic speed in an orbit around the sun, and we're twisting around at an enormous speed on our axis, and we're moving in the galaxy somewhere, and we're on a spaceship together. And we've got to come to the place where we view the world as a neighborhood, and we've got to get our attitudes straight.

We've got to get our thinking straight. And that is that anything you want for you, you have a moral obligation to want for everybody else. The people in the inner city of your town, they have--you have an obligation to want for them what you want for you.

You see, Christ wasn't taking any chance at all. He said, Go ahead, want anything you want, but just remember that the proof that you love me is in the fact that whatever you want for you, you also want for your neighbor. Love your neighbor as yourself.

If you're seeking the highest good and best interest and greatest happiness and blessedness of yourself, you're obligated to seek the highest good and best interest and greatest happiness of your neighbor. Great! He's got a whole new system going, hasn't he? And that's perfectly safe, because if you name the name of Jesus Christ, and you claim to be a Christian, the evidence has found that whatever you want for you, you want for others. Now, if you're going to live a happy Christian life, then that's how you're going to have to live--with all your mind, with all your strength, with all your heart, to seek to please God in everything that you do, every relationship and attitude and activity.

And the only way that you can give proof and evidence that you love God that way is the fact that you love your neighbor that way. You can't take fifty cents out, so to speak, and flip it and say, Here, God, what would you like to do? You can't do that. It's impossible.

God doesn't need your money. But he said, When I was hungry, you fed me. When I was naked, you clothed me.

When I was thirsty, you gave me drink. When I was in prison, you visited me. When I was sick, you came to me.

We never saw you like that, Lord. We did it all right. But we didn't know it was you.

We just thought these were people that were naked and hungry and thirsty and sick and imprisoned. Oh, you see, inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of these whom I call my brethren, you did it unto me.

And the evidence that you love God is that you love your neighbor.

Now, that's a law, and that's a rule. Now, obviously, you can't possibly do the same for everybody that you're going to do for somebody. You understand that, don't you? It's just impossible.

And therefore, for instance, when I lived in New York City with all the eight million people there, I was burdened about them. In fact, I feel the same way on the streets of New York that I felt when I went into a tribe in Africa that had never seen a missionary who heard the name of Christ. Terrible burden.

But I couldn't even touch everybody on the shoulder in New York if I ran as fast as I could. Impossible. So what do you do? How can you make your life count? Well, it's to be totally available to Jesus Christ, abandon yourself to him, let him live in you, and be sensitive to the thing that he lays upon you to do.

Now, the Lord knows you. He knows how he made you. He knows the talent he's given you.

He has a plan for your life. He has a plan for your life. You see, there's never been a time when God started to know you.

He's always known you. There never was a time when he had to get acquainted with you. He's always been acquainted with you.

Never was a time when he started to love you. He's loved you with an everlasting love. And from the moment that you came to him, he had a plan for your life.

All of his wisdom went into that plan. If you were as wise as God, you couldn't make a wiser plan. And all of his love went into that plan.

If you were as beneficent as God, you couldn't make a better plan. And all of his power is available for that plan for your life. And if you were as powerful as God, you couldn't make a more successful plan than he's willing to make for you.

And all he's asking is that you want his will for your life. But he isn't going to show it to you. Did you know that? Don't say, Oh God, show me your will for my life.

No, he isn't going to do that. Because he said, the just shall live by faith. And if he were to show you his plan for your life, then you'd be walking by sight.

And so, he's not going to show you his plan, but he will show you his nail-pierced hand and prove that he loved you. And he will show you the sun and the moon and the stars and prove his power to you. He'll prove his love and he'll prove his power.

And if that won't win your heart to the place where you're willing to say, Lord, I want your will sight unseen, then there's just no deal. It's just no go. It's not going to work out.

Because he's not going to show it to you. Now, he did say that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. And the way by which you will discover the leading of God in your life is two-fold.

One, by the requests that come to you. The opportunities that are presented to you. And many times people will come and say, You know, I've been praying about somebody to do so-and-so.

Would you consider it? Now, your first reaction is to say, I've retired. I'm not going to do that. I did enough of that when I was... Now, don't do that.

Because God may take you at your word and just say, Come on home, Buster. You've had it. You see, you're his.

You belong to him. And you've committed your life to him. And when you say, I'm finished, then God may say, Well, so am I. Let's call it off.

And if you love life and want to live, then I would be saying, Just stay available to Jesus Christ. Just stay completely available. And when somebody comes and says, Would you do this? Say, Well, I'll think.

Let me think about it. Let me pray about it. Let me talk to the Lord about it.

Because you can't do everything people ask you to do. Some years ago, 1955, I had a request from Stacey Wood that I would be willing to consider becoming the Foreign Missions Secretary for Foreign Missions Fellowship of InterVarsity. And I could visualize myself in that.

And Hal Street asked me if I'd be willing to be the Associate Director of Evangelical Literature overseas. And I could visualize that. A couple of other things came all in one month.

Oh, I was perplexed. I didn't know what to do. I had to go to California.

So I called Dr. R. R. Brown in Omaha and said, Dr. Brown, here's a pastor who needs a pastor. Can I see you? He said, Well, I'll be in the office. So I took a taxi in from the airport and sat down.

He said, Well, what did you come for? In a rough sort of way, lovingly rough. I said, I came to have you help me which to decide which of these three things I'm going to do. He said, I'm not going to do it.

Well, it cost me \$35 extra to stop in Omaha. So I said, Well, there's \$35 down the drain in a hurry. How about taking me to lunch? He said, I'm not going to do that.

I've already eaten. Well, I said, it's been nice knowing you. And he said, But I'm going to do something better than either of those.

I'm going to share with you a principle that's enriched my life and blessed yours. And he opened his Bible to Colossians 3.15, and he read, Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Let the peace of God.

And he said that word rule means to umpire, to referee. And he said, Maybe the Lord doesn't want you to do any of these things. He said, It isn't a question of which one you want to do.

You're to do his will, not man's will. You don't have to do one of these three. You have to do the will of God.

Now, he said, When you get to California, you take the first letter you've got, get it out, and read it, and hold it before the Lord, and say, Now, Lord, I've studied this. As far as I know, there's nothing wrong with it. It isn't against your word.

I could do it. If you want me to do it, I'm willing. If you don't, I don't.

And he said, Take out a coin and say, Now, Lord, when that coin drops from my fingers and hits the table, I'm going to decide. I gave myself a little more time. I said, Well, it hits the floor.

I'm going to decide. And if I don't have peace to say yes, I'll have to say no. So I dropped my coin, and I wrote, Dear Stacy, I'm sorry, I can't take it.

And then I prayed about the other one. And I took a coin, and I dropped it. Dear Hal, I'm sorry, but I have no peace or liberty.

And then I took, and in a half an hour, I had three letters on the desk. Instead of being a big shot that had three national opportunities, I just had three letters, and the Lord made me say no to all of them. And a few months later, they gave me an invitation to consider being pastor in New York City.

I'm the smart fellow that said, Well, one thing I'll never do is go back to the pastorate. And then I got, Well, if I do go back to the pastorate, one place I'll never go is New York City. So you know where I went.

Ten years, and the Lord gave me peace about that. And dear friends, if you're going to live a happy Christian life, then you've got to first commit yourself to please him and everything, and realize that the only way you can evidence that you love God is by loving your neighbor, and that your ministry is to be available to him. And then secondly, you've got to learn to discover how to know the will of God.

You've got a guidance system by the Holy Ghost, and you've got to learn to be guided by peace. Dr. Brown told me that day about how they guide intercontinental ballistic missiles, the SAC air bases right out near Omaha, you know. He said they tried to have direct guidance, and it never worked, so they got what they call negative feedback.

And they put a missile in the air, and it's got a channel it can move in. If it gets out of the channel, then the vibration sets up, and it corrects until it's in the channel. And if it goes the other way, a vibration, negative feedback.

And so God leads and guides you by negative feedback. And you just go as long as you have peace. When he wants you to turn, you get a little vibration there, a little act of peace.

And he'll show you. But you've got to let the peace of God rule in your heart. Now, some years ago, God gave to me a great burden and concern for our church overseas.

As a missionary, I'd been schooled in indigenous mission principles. The church should be self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting. We should have an indigenous church.

Well, when I got to the mission field, I found that we had Bible institutes to teach the believers self-propagation, pastors and evangelists, and we were instructing them in administration responsibilities in the body of Christ. And everything except self-support. And I said, well, what about the self-support? They said, well, if ten people will tie, they can support the eleventh on the basis they're living.

That sounded all right. And yet, the more I thought about it, the people I was near, and some of them at least, didn't have any food. Now, when you take nothing and take one-tenth of it and share it with somebody, they'll get the same thing you've got, because one-tenth of nothing is still nothing, isn't it? And every institution we sent with the gospel had come from a sophisticated economic base.

So here's what we had. We had churches with pastors that were to depend on the believers for support. And the population was getting larger.

You know, when the missionaries went there, nine out of ten children died in the first year. But the governments and the missionaries, nine out of ten was dying in the first year. And then a few years later, the same thing.

So in just a matter of fifty years, the ratio of people to soil had totally changed. And so we had poverty. Now we had a situation where only one out of ten was dying in the first year, but three out of ten were dying between eighteen months, the time of weaning, and six years of age from protein deficiency in some areas.

So my heart became terribly burdened for that third leg. A tripod is a very strong figure if the legs are the same, but you get one leg that's a nubbin, you've got to prop it up. It won't stay there by itself.

And so we had self-government and self-propagation, and we were expecting them to support themselves and their churches with a way they had before we got there, with a little blade on a crooked stick sitting on their heels. We had well-trained pastors and well-trained teachers and no Christian layman to support it all. And I became concerned about it.

I said, God leads in requests. I'd had three requests that I told you about. I didn't have liberty to take them.

The second way God leads is by putting a pressure on your mind, an idea, a thought, a plan. And you should be very, very gentle with ideas, because everything was an idea. I went into the office of Maurice DuPont Lee in Wilmington, Delaware, when I was there for a missionary conference.

Mr. DuPont, Maurice DuPont Lee was of the DuPont family. His mother was a Lee, a DuPont, and had married one of the Lee family. And he was vice president for many years of New Products.

And I'd read about him in the Saturday Evening Post and the Reader's Digest. And so I called up, made an appointment, Pastor did, and I went to see him. And I said, Mr. Lee, you may resent my taking your time, I've come with an idea.

He said, Mr. Reedhead, we have a lot of respect for ideas here. Said, just a few decades ago, DuPont Industries was just an idea in the mind of one of my ancestors. He said, when I was vice, and he told me the story, he said, when I was vice president in charge of New Products, two chemical engineers came to me and said, Mr. Lee, we've got an idea.

Well, I'd learned to be sensitive to them, and they sat down, told me about it, and I liked it. Well, I said, you draw up a plan, and I'll take it to the committee, to the board. I got some money appropriated for a research project.

And then I had to go back and get more money, and had to go back and get more money. And finally, I went back for the third or fourth time, and the board says, Maurice, you spent all the money you're going to spend on this pipe dream. We're not going to spend any more.

Well, I knew it wasn't a pipe dream. So I didn't say anything. But when I got ready to adjourn, he said, I just walked over and stood with my back to the only exit from the boardroom.

Now, I said, gentlemen, you said you're not going to give me the money, and you have the power to do that. But I'm saying this, that if you leave this room without giving the money, you're going to have to go for my prone body to do it, because you're going to have to knock me down to get out. I'm going to stand here until I get the money.

Well, the chairman said, Maurice, we didn't know you felt that strongly about it. Well, that's how strongly I feel. He said, they gave me the money.

I don't think they'll ever regret it either. The product we were working on was nylon. Nylon was just an idea, just an idea.

And every great thing God's ever done is just an idea. And if God puts an idea in your mind, in a thought, you treasure it, you watch over it, you nourish it, you think about it, hold it before him. Well, God began to burden my heart way back in the early fifties when I came back from the mission field, because I could see several things were happening.

Population explosion, world's population doubling every thirty years, missionary giving leveling out, how are we going to evangelize when we haven't the money? And so I started to study. And as I studied, I was amazed at what I found out. I found out, for instance, that the U.S. government had spent five billion dollars on preinvestment surveys in the mission field countries.

Five billion dollars in surveys. And the U.N. had spent two billion dollars on preinvestment surveys for the third world. Well, that's a lot of information.

Nobody was using it to speak of, or some of it very well, but a lot of it wasn't used. And then I found that there were hundreds of millions of dollars available for businessmen to start businesses in the developing countries. Hundreds.

Why? In India alone, there's one fund still there. Six hundred million dollars. It's part, just twenty percent of the money that's been paid by India to the United States for the grain we've sold India.

And it's in a fund called the local currency, the Cooley Fund. And by law, it can only be loaned to American businesses to start businesses in India. American businessmen.

And the problem was, there weren't any businessmen that wanted to use it or knew about it, or the ones who did weren't interested. And so I began to put two and two together. Here are the missionaries that know the language and the culture and the people.

Here are the missionaries that are laboring with the Christians and have aspirations and hopes, and no help. And over here is all this information and all this money that's not available to the missionaries, not available to us, but to businessmen. And so we began to work.

And in a little while, by 1966, the plan had become clear. I knew what I had to do. I left the New York tabernacle and gave myself to this ministry.

Oh, some of the people thought I'd lost my mind. But that's just part of the price you pay, you know. You can't ask everybody to agree with you.

You just believe that this is what the Lord wants, and then you go ahead and do it. Well, that's what we did. We've gone ahead and done it.

And now we praise the Lord that we've been able to receive in just a couple of years over 250 requests from mission societies and church leaders. Please help us get a business started here. Get a farm here.

Get a factory here. And we've found that businessmen are willing to study these projects, to evaluate them. And then we found businessmen are willing to go.

We're working with 64 projects now, all of them requested by missionaries or by the governments that have been told about it by missionaries. And we have 24 projects that are in the process of being started. Well, just yesterday at lunch, I had with me Ted Curtis from Tampa, who's in the process of setting up a million and a quarter dollar cutstock lumber mill in Honduras to make parts for louvered or flush doors and door jams that'll be sent back to their factories here in Florida, and give employment from the day it opens to over a hundred believers in an area in Honduras where the Central American mission has been working, and where there are many churches, and where there's great poverty and unemployment.

And that's just one of 24 projects that's at almost the same stage. And 64 that we're working on, and 250 requests. And we have found enormous opportunities.

But I'll tell you there's a secret to it. And the secret is that you've got to care. And I find businessmen care.

I go to a businessman and say, look, here's an opportunity to start a business. Has anybody ever done it? Yes. The U.S. government has provided insurance for over 900 businesses in the last 20 years.

Less than one percent have failed, and the average has repaid all the capital in under six years. So we know what we're talking about. We're not just playing around.

And we don't make any business decisions. All I am is a catalyst. I tell the missionaries, and they find the people, then they send the request, and then we find the businessman to study it, and find the businessman who's willing to go at his own expense.

And when he goes, then we help him. And they're getting started. And we've got groups in nine countries in Europe.

Now, I'm saying that to illustrate a principle, and illustrate a truth. What do I find in these businessmen? Sure, they want a job. They want an opportunity to serve.

They love God, because he's a Christian businessman. And they want a good living. But they also have evidence that they love their neighbor.

Ted said, the only reason I'm paying this price, and working this hard to go into Honduras, is because I love Jesus Christ. Isn't it? And a missionary came to him one day and said, Ted, how would you like to stand and talk to somebody that's hungry, and starving, and sick, and say, friend, God loves you? That's pretty hard to do, you know. And so, he and the others we're working with are going for the very same reason.

Now, what's it mean? Well, there's some rules. Anything God shows you, any burden he puts on your heart, any ministry gives you the same rules. First, the purpose has to be clear.

The purpose is to please God. You have to have an eye single to his glory. If your purpose in living is just your own comfort, your own convenience, then heaven help you, you're dead while you're still alive.

Honestly, you are. Because anybody who lives for himself has already died. Maybe they haven't buried him yet, it's just a matter of, just a matter of inconvenient time.

You're only alive while you're living for Jesus Christ. Available to him, and committed to him, responsive to him as a Christian. First thing is your purpose to please God in everything.

Then the goal. There's a difference between a purpose and a goal. I set out with a purpose to help the church overseas, provide an economic opportunity, an employment opportunity for hungry believers.

That was the purpose. Well, we had goals. First was the goal to prove we could use the material that was there, prove that we could get Christian businessmen to study the request, that we could get the missionaries to send us requests, that we could get businessmen that were willing to go, that we could get the money, we could do--these were all goals.

And we've met those goals, now we have a new goal. And God has been meeting it goal by goal. So here are the rules.

One, first your purpose has to be clear. Secondly, you have to set a goal. Then the third thing is, having set this goal, you have to hold it before you.

You have to keep it in your mind. There's a rule, you know, it says this, any idea firmly fixed in the mind by repeated affirmation automatically becomes a plan or a blueprint which God uses to direct your efforts to attain the objectives that have been named in the goal. And if you want your life to count for Christ, the balance of it, then you have to be sensitive, either from the request that comes or the burden that he puts on your mind, the purpose to please God, the goal, and then this is written out, it becomes a clear idea, you set a time, and you determine that it's going to happen, and every day you hold that before the Lord in prayer, and you continue to see it.

It's done, it's accomplished, and it's amazing. These are rules God has made. And here, you want to live a happy Christian life? Then you've got to understand not only the law of God, not only the law of love for one's neighbor, for, as he's expressed, the proof of our love for him, but then you've got to understand also the laws by which he moves.

Have you taught your grandchildren the principles of success? Listen, did you ever have a course in school to tell you how to succeed as a husband, a father, a mother, a businessman, a Christian? Well, that's what this is all about. This abundant life we read about is a successful life, not just in terms of dollars and cents. I'm not talking about that.

I'm talking about happiness and effectiveness and fruitfulness and usefulness to the glory of God. You've got to understand the rules. One is a clear purpose.

Second is a defined goal with a time limit, and then determination that the goal be realized. And then to get people that have knowledge and experience to join you in bringing that goal to reality. All of these are principles.

That's why I mentioned that splendid little book that Zondervan Publishing has put out, How to Make a Habit of Succeeding. And I mentioned another one that wasn't available, How to Change Your Life in Twelve Weeks. These are Bible principles.

We need to get them, because you're God's answer. You're part of God's plan. And if you're going to live a happy Christian life, then you've got to be free to use it.

Use what he's given, all that he's provided, all that he's put into your hand, all that's available for him. You know, I close with this tonight. I was in Ghana last year, and I met a young chap.

I wish he was here. He was in the States, and what a blessing he was. His name is Kwabena Darko.

Kwabena was one to Christ when he was just in his twelve, thirteen perhaps. Went to what would be secondary school, and he surrendered his life to Christ at the time he was saved, and he kept praying as to what the Lord wanted. And the Lord made it clear that he wanted him to be a businessman for Christ.

All the others were going into government service or pastoral training, and he said, no, somebody's got to be a businessman. And he began to study what he'd be. One day he saw it in the paper that the government was accepting applications for people to go to, of all places, Israel to learn the chicken business, broiler business, or egg business.

So he applied, and he got the appointment. And he spent 18 months in a kibbutz in Israel, and say, to be with Kwabena in prayer, and listen to Kwabena as he cries out to the Lord with tears for God to save his Israeli friends on the kibbutz. It's thrilling.

Well, he came back after 18 months of training, and he went to his stepfather, and he said, look, you've got some money and I've got the knowledge, let's go into the chicken and egg business. And he started in. And in seven years he had 55,000 laying hens that he was responsible for.

And then he said, look, you're not giving this to the Lord's work, and that's what we agreed on. Now you give me half of the business so that I can put it where I believe the Lord wants it. And his stepfather, oh no, Kwabena, everything I have belongs to my nephew.

You know the Shanti law. Well, he said, in that case, get your nephew to run the business. He'd save \$996.

And he started alone. His wife had been trained as a nurse. They went to the village chiefs, and they got nine acres of land on the road with water and light, and they started in.

His wife went back to the hospital, made eating money for them, and he began. In three years he's built it up till now he has 26,000 laying hens. He has 12 large houses, the shortest of which is about 150 feet long.

He's built them all. He buys all of his own grain. He does the grinding.

He mixes the additives. He's had a phenomenally low mortality loss. When I was there, he was collecting over 1,400 dozen eggs a day, and he was selling them for 52 cents a dozen, and he was producing them for 32 cents a dozen.

Now that's pretty good business. And he's supporting three national evangelists. He's supporting the work of the local church.

He's preaching somewhere every week. He's the outstanding young leader in that area. He's a businessman for Jesus Christ.

And it all began back there when a boy said, Lord, what wilt thou want me to do? And the Lord said, I want you to be a businessman for Christ. Now that's what we're talking about. Kwabena has discovered the secret of a happy Christian life, a great concern, a great burden.

He has none of the accoutrements that you'd expect from a young fellow that's doing so well. He's pouring it all back into the business, and all into the Lord's work. Now here are you.

I don't know what you have in your hand. I don't know what you have in your heart. But he knows, and you know.

Oh, how important it is for you to hear the word. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Why don't you just look into his face and say, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And as you obey the law, the laws of the mind, the laws of the Lord, the laws of the heart, God will begin to bless you in ways you'd never dream. Father, how wonderful it is to be laborers together with thee, co-laborers with Christ. And there's so much potential in this room tonight, in the lives of the people that are here, the resources, the experience, the knowledge, the people that are known by the people that are here, all the possibilities for the glory of Christ in this community and home communities.

Father, we ask thee that some way, somehow, we'll understand that the happy Christian life is not one where we're just turned in upon ourselves, I, me, mine, mine, but we've come to the place where we are available to thee. We love thee with all of our hearts, minds, and strength, and we truly manifest that by our concern for others. And so we would pray that tonight thou will look down upon us and see us and stir us up so that we'll begin to obey the law, the law that you've written upon our hearts, and you've written in your word, and the laws of success and achievement, and anything that thou hast held before us.

Make our lives count for the glory of Christ. Bring all the potential that's represented in this group out into the full, into the flow, to serve thee and to accomplish thy purpose, to glorify thee. And so to that end, seal the word, seal the truth, and inspire thy people to be their very best for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now may the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be the glory now and forever. Amen.

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