

# The Nazarite

by Robert Arthur

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*The sermon emphasizes the call to live a life wholly dedicated to God, exemplified by the Nazarite vow and the importance of spiritual integrity.*

**Duration:** 37:36

**Scripture:** Genesis 49:10, Leviticus 3:1-2, Numbers 6:1-4, Judges 8:22-23, John 15:1, Acts 2:13-18, Ephesians 5:18

**Topics:** "Nazarite"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of leadership and kingship. He uses the story of the vine, the olive tree, and the bramble from the book of Judges to illustrate different attitudes towards leadership. The vine and the olive tree decline the offer to be king because they are too busy serving and producing fruit. However, the bramble, which is not productive, eagerly accepts the offer. The preacher then relates this story to the spiritual application of seeking a leader and emphasizes the importance of finding inspiration and guidance from Christ, who is referred to as the true vine. The sermon also touches on the idea of making vows and the commitment to abstain from certain things, such as grapes and raisins, as a sign of dedication to God.

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## Transcript

The gospel of my brother Tom was speaking of a man of God, something that came to my heart's attention just the other day. It's a delight often to try to minister on a man of God, and inclinations are very strongly along that line now, but there's something else still in mind. However, I heard of a dear brother in Chicago who died just recently.

Some of you may know him, I know my brother Ben does, and he spent some time most recently in visiting up in a hospital on the north side. He's a very gracious and godly man, and always a delight in the little child as well as the grown-up. And into one room he went one day, and there was a dear little fellow there.

I don't know the nature of his sickness, but he's finding time hanging heavy on his hands. And so this dear man showed him how to fold a piece of paper, and then by one cut on the paper he could open it up to make a cross. I suppose he taught him a little of the gospel from that simple little activity.

Well, he went his way, and the little lad's mother came by some time afterwards, and he was busy making crosses of big size and little size and in between size. And the mother said to him, who taught you to do that? Where did you learn to do that? All said the little fellow, it was the man from God that told me how to

do it. The man from God is in the glory today.

The Lord put a period in at the close of his little sentence, and now he's gone home to be with the Lord. I've always been thoughtful, too, that one day in trying to speak on the man of God, my brother Pell, Peter, afterwards said to me, you know, there was a dear man in the day past that lived and worked with Mr. Moody, and somebody one day wanted to get the hold of him, and so he sent a letter addressed to the man of God, Cadillac, Michigan. And Mr. Pell said, you know, he's not there.

Now he said, I wonder if he sent the letter addressed to the man, and then finally he said, oh, the man of God, Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he lives, a wonderful beach, it's fascinating. It's in the sixth chapter. But then the heart message as we sat there listening to our two brothers speak unto Moses, say, speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, to be separated wholly to God, to separate themselves unto the Lord, nor eat moist grain all the days of his separation, shall he eat nothing that the colonel's ear of his head grow, all the days that he separated himself upon his head, and he has departed the head, that he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day he shall he shave it, and on the eighth day he shall bring two turks to the congregation, and the priest shall offer the one to him on that same day, and he shall consecrate unto the Lord, but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation, when the days of his separation are full of congregation, he'll make an offering, I'm going to try and skip a little, 14, 15, verse 16, and the priest shall bring them a total, he shall offer the ram bread, the priest shall offer also his meat offering unto him, and the man of the house shall shave the head of his son, and shall take the hair of the head of his son, and the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one of them takes the shaven, and the priest shall wave him for a wave, with a wave wrapped on his shoulder, and indeed I've probably read more than in the time, through the suggestion of the story of the, you know the Israelite of old, in his family relationships, for instance a Levite, he would be either of the family of Kohab, and he never could overleap those, if he were of the family that should have carried, then that would be business, and no other line of things, but there was one thing open to every Israelite, and that he could desire with all his heart, and certainly it would not be a failure in purpose if he longed for it, and that was this, he could long to be, he could long to be one who was wholly yielded, and wholly given up in all his powers to God, he could be then a man of God, I can see the Israelite in his tent, looking down to the center of the great encampment of the nation, and seeing there the taberner, I wonder if there couldn't and wouldn't come thoughts in his heart, my God's been so good to me, God's been so gracious to his people in delivering us, do you know what I feel impelled to do? I feel impelled to say to God, I want to be all together for God, I want to bow the bow of the Nazarite, I want to make a special dedication of purposes, and powers, and faculties, and everything else to God.

Now, may I suggest to our heart that such is the not only privilege, but responsibility of everyone who has been called into this fellowship which is in Christ Jesus. Remember this, we're impossible apart, we are not alone, we are tight, for my brother Ben was speaking, and he was talking of how there might be, oh, sexualizing, somebody says I'm for this, and I'm for that, or I'm for something else, I remember the word of God that says this, all things are, and I remember almost to the top of that, the phrase, ye are not yours. Now, you both begin to count everything of God as provided for you, until you begin to count that you are, I saw the title of a lovely little message on this, and the title was this, dispossessed possessors.

You need to be dispossessed of yourself, until you become possessed of the sense of what God has provided for those who are in fellowship with him. Now, here is the story of the man who is dispossessed of himself, the man or the woman who would say, I'm giving all up to God. By the way, I think that it can be either man or woman, but I've always been interested that almost immediately it suggests the possibility

for the dear sister doing it, it seems to drop her out of sight, and it takes up the whole rest of us.

Maybe not as much as to say it becomes more difficult for men to do than for women. I am very hesitant to draw the conclusion that it means that women aren't significant enough to be spoken about. I think the true fact to these that they're far more sensitive to the things of God, and far more ready to yield to God, and the man is not.

Here is the story of the Nazarite who could be a man. Now notice this, oh you've heard it often. It says that if this man purposes in his heart to give everything to God, remember, there's no compulsion about it, there's a compulsion that draws his heart out to God.

There's no whip behind, there's no legal club after him. He is old in a sense. He can say, I will give up to God, or he can withhold, but remember if he gives up to God, it's all to God.

And so when you get the Nazarite making his special vow, by the way that word special is just the same word as wonderful. You remember someone asked, why do you ask after my name, the angel of God? My name to you is secret or wonderful. And this vow that a Nazarite could make was a vow to the wonderful one.

It was a wonderful vow. It was a secret and special vow to God. Now may I say I'm not prone to try to inculcate in God's people the making of vows in a literal way.

Once in a while I hear about somebody who way back in boyhood vowed something that he would never do certain things. And then as he comes to trouble when he comes later on into spiritual life, he gets saved and he begins to think, oh what about that vow I made? I've heard of somebody who wouldn't come to the Lord's table because of a vow made in the past. Now I'm not reading in any art that kind of sanctimonious, but then I pass along, this is a purpose of dedication.

It's drawn out because of what he sees in the Lord. Whoever is saved but did not, in seeing something of the beauties of Christ that we have had before us already today, would not want to say, ah, in merit all that I can ever be. Now, immediately the vow is made, then there follows certain things in a logical following from that.

For one thing, it says the man who vows like that isn't going to touch anything from the vine. He's not going to touch the grape, or the vinegar that's made from the grape, or the wine that comes from the grape, or the raisin. He's not going to eat raisins.

I mean, marmalade. Spinaches. You know what raisins are in a spiritual sense to me? I think they're like this matter that you get from so many people sometimes.

They say, well, you know, if you don't want to be an androite, you can go ahead and eat it and you won't be a bit more worse off, but if you want to be an androite, they're not even damaged for you. In other words, it's one of the problems, I think. I suppose a raisin isn't quite the full-fledged fruit of the vine, and it's not quite the grape, not yet, but it's something in between.

And many a time, you know, the in-between things are a problem to the child of God. He's not going to touch anything of the vine. Oh, the youngest person here today, if I were to ask him, would say, I know what that means.

You see, the vine is always somewhat laid over against a spiritual thing. You remember that, how often that's done in the Scripture? In the New Testament, for instance, in the book of Action, chapter 2, that he was pending costs, that grave effusion on the birthday of this company called the church. On that day, the onlookers saw and heard things, and they said, I know what it is.

This is drunkenness. They're filled with new wine. And Peter said, no, this isn't new wine.

This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, I'll pour out my Spirit. And so, there, perhaps, the first time, somebody said, it's drunkenness. Is there the influence of spirits upon them? Ah, but it's not.

It's the influence of the Spirit of God. And then, again, the 5th of Ephesians, this word said, be not drunk with wine, wherein it is sacked, but be filled with the Spirit. So, that's the Nazarite, if not touching the products of the vine, is as good as saying, I do not want to take any stimulant, anything that comes from human or natural sources, I'll take my stimulation from the Spirit of God.

I'll get all my promptings and my delights from the Spirit of God. You know how much is not that, like what my brother Tom has been so, is so well portrayed for us, why I thought he arranged the whole illustration of the things he was so. This man of the world, he takes his stimulus from the wine of earth.

He counts that his happiness comes from the things of the world. The Christian, the Nazarite, the man of God, ah, he says, my stimulus comes from the Spirit of God. You know what the Spirit of God does, friend? He makes much of one who said, I am the true vine, and in other words, there's where we'll get all our delights, from the vine, Christ himself.

I think that so much in our blessed book is linked way over to the ninth book, the chapter of the book of Genesis. You get one of the first parables of trees, and the trees wanted to have a king. I think it has a spiritual application still.

All the folks that want a leader, a humankind. So they said to the olive tree, would you be our king? No, I'm too busy producing olive fatness. They said to the fig tree, would you come and be our king? The fig tree said, no, no, I'm too busy serving and doing things worthwhile.

I can't have time to be king. They said to the vine, would you be our king? The vine said, should I leave my fatness, my fruit, were it to cheer the heart of God and man, and come and be a king? So when they couldn't get a king out of the serving trees, they said to the bramble. You know what a bramble is, a stunted little bit of a thing that's not doing any work anyhow.

Come on and be our king. He said, sure, I'm just waiting for the chance. And God wants to teach us that the best rule is service, and the man that's most ready to rule in the wrong sense is the fellow who isn't serving anyhow.

But they're real facts out of love. And so you get the idea that the vine was to cheer the heart of God and man. And Christ did that, you know.

To cheer the heart of God in all his earthly sojourns. He cheered the heart of God and never more fully. And when he went on to tell me that he died for our sins, he met and cheered and fully satisfied.

And you know, my friend, you ought to know that he can cheer the heart of man. None can cheer the heart like Jesus. There's none can satisfy hearts like he can.

And I'm not ranting, I'm not overstating a case. I thank God today with so many of my fellows here now, that Christ is that satisfying portion of the heart that really puts its trust in him. Well, then, the man that I was not to draw his joy from anything of the fine suggestive of human sources, he's to draw his joy from Christ.

By the way, last night, I was feeling the haste to pass along. Do you notice that every time you get somebody who should have known better violating that, you always get sadness in life. I remember Samson.

He was to be a Nazareth. He was not to have anything of the wine of earth. And one day, you know, and it's strange that the same thing should be coming up.

One day, he saw a pretty girl. And he said to his father and mother, get her. She pleases me well.

I want her. Now, that's a very strange thing to happen. A Nazarethite that should have been pleasing the Lord always wanted to please himself.

And so many of God's dear young folk want to please God on every single thing, ninety-nine percent of the time, except in one, and that's to get the girl that he wants. Well, then, you see, Samson, going down through the vineyards of Timnath. What's a Nazarethite doing going down through vineyards? You ever go through the vine country when the grapes are thick on the clusters and, oh, it's a heady, it's sort of over, it's in the air? I can see this madness, this Nazarethite.

This should have been getting all his joys from God. He's going down, and he's getting perilously close to danger, mark you, for he's sniffing up the vine. And, of course, you realize what happens.

That leads on to such sorrows that seize the whole lot of the strength of the man, Samson. Now, suppose I just go quickly over the other two or three things that are to mark the Nazarethite here. Here we come to one little point, and then we're closed for the day.

The second thing about this man was this, that he was not to cut his hair. He was not to have his locks short. He was to be long-haired.

Now, you know what a long-haired man would suggest to you, although perhaps you may not know what it suggests. I remember once speaking to children down in Greenville, South Carolina. The children had been portrayed as long-haired.

And they made the mistake of asking the God-surest of them for a long-haired man, a woman. And his hair didn't look weaker still. And the loveliness of it is this, friends, that in the Bible thing, weakness in the name of Christ is strength indeed.

And a Christian is never weaker than when he looks like a man again. The long-haired man. Well, I think that in 1 Corinthians, again, you've got the matters of woman's hair, given her should be cut.

And one day on the street, in the courts, for some proposing some hair was long. I say to you, well, it suggests the reproach, the community reproaches for Christ's sake. And here's the thing in an andorite, that he was to bear these reproaches and go along as an individual, separate from the community at large, concerned only that he was far enough of Christ and that this reproach was being borne for his Now, let me hasten to say this, that sometimes I feel that we get ourselves into the reproaches that we

bear in the name of Christ's sake.

But when a Christian, for the matter of his purpose of heart, when he, like Daniel, purposes to serve the Lord, then this matter of whatever come is to be viewed as in the line of reproaches for Christ's sake. Now, not the third thing. I'm going to go back to him in a brief span, in a moment.

But the third thing he was not to do was this. He was not to touch a dead body. That seems strange, doesn't it? Here's our Nazarite.

He's in the tent. Perhaps a father died, a mother died, a loved one died. You say it's almost an impossibility that he shouldn't rub shoulders with death in such close quarters as that? Well, my dear friend, it still is the specific reasoning of the Word of God that if he touches that, he's defiled in Nazarite.

Now, let me ask only what the moral implication of that is. What's the spiritual thought behind that? I think I've never read better than what I believe what the CA Court says about that. He says just this.

It says, so far as I'm concerned, what is wrong with touching a dead body and just this? There's no life in it. There's no life for God. He's touched something that hasn't life for God, and so he's defiled his purpose to be altogether for God.

Now, I wonder if you see I wonder if you see reasonings that could shine out of this for every one of them. There are so many things we touch that don't have life for God in them. Oh, I think it could go on every score.

You know, the Scripture speaks of the matter of our compromises, of our linking up, of our bonding ourselves with things. Contrary to this word called fellowship, called into the fellowship of a son, that means we're called into such close partnership with him that his life is our life. If you get into partnership with somebody who has no life for God, then you know what you've done? You've linked life with death.

Have you done something to a figure of speech that is used of God only? I don't care whether it's in business. I may be ranging the gamut of many a thing today, but here it's saying that if you link in business a Christian with a non-Christian, I'm speaking of pastorships of the intimate kind. I'm not speaking of perhaps having to hire out somebody who's not.

And speaking of partnership, I certainly imply that it has to do with partnership in marriage, life with death. That's impossible in the thinking of God. You know, my dear friend, it may well and easily be in regard to a goodly number of God's dear people have life with God, and today they're found linked up with Christ is not honored and where he's not wanted.

And I suggest to you that it's in order to have separateness from these things. Well, look at them all taken at once. A man's life seems to be a difficult life.

I was thinking of those two dear daughters of my brother Tom. Don't spend a tear for them, though, for a minute longer. A man's life was a fellow who must be thought of as a fairly lonely character.

First of all, his life's made up of refusal. No, no, I can't take the vine. I can't.

No, no. It's all no. And then the second thing, it's made up of reproaches.

He's seen with his long hair, and they laugh at him. He's a reproach. And then the third thing, it's made up of restraint.

He's not to touch. He's not to touch. So here's a nicer outline.

Reproaches, refusals, restraints. Oh yes, how sad. But isn't it rather remarkable, and it's illustrated so beautifully in Daniel's case, that at the very moment of saying, no, for Christ's sake, you are working out something that's far better than anything that you could gain by doing that.

I often say this to soften an illustration of other points. Long ago, there were folks who were called alchemists. I suppose they were the origination of our research canon.

And they spent themselves in trying to make precious metals out of base things. And they were called alchemists. And we've got the word in our language today, alchemist.

It means any method that produces something precious out of something that's very commonplace and very base. God is a wonderful alchemist. The world sees an angelite, sees a man of God, a Christian, says, look at him.

His whole life is a series of no, I can't, don't know why he's down. Poor fellow. He's good for nothing.

He doesn't go here. He doesn't go there. He doesn't do this.

What is he good for? Ah, but wait, wait. Daniel said, no. And he went instead on a diet of pulse and water.

And when you examine his countenance after a prescribed period, you know what it says about him? He was fairer and fatter in flesh than any of the others who had been sipping the Babylonian wine and eating the Babylonian daily. I don't care what you, oh well, I do care what you think, but I'm just going to say, if you think that you're going to be a better and more rounded and a fuller Christian life by sipping the sins of a Babylon world, I suggest to our hearts today that the Nazarite is the man in whom God will produce such likenesses to Christ in the long run. Ah, but just one thing more, and then I'm finished.

You know, I count that the little part is so lovely. I'm glad I read it after trying many and many a time to speak on the Nazarite. I finally came to the conclusion that I'd been finishing my little somewhat bad finished tenure through Rupert Pierce, but it was ended.

Here's how it was all worked out. He was brought to the, the priest, put into the man's, and there, right there at the place, uh, and within sight of the, he got his hair cut. He got his long hair cut.

And here you, here you see the man, one minute, he's got his long hair, and the next minute he's told, now, put the strange thing to put on the fire. Yes, put them on the fire where the offering, the peace offering is, and that's the peace offering you need, and by God. So what I think about this story is just this, that upon last, when the time is over, this man will get an interpretation of all his reproaches.

Let's see that they really were bringing his weakness of Christ to his fellowship. All those men called the Nazarite, when he walks through things for God, he's an honor to God. He's bringing out glory from Christ to go up to God, and he's bringing out things in Christ that can satisfy and help.

Every assembly that has men and women given up to God is a happy. The companions around them get a sweeter sniff, shall I use that word enough with their reverence, they get a sweeter sniff of Christ, when

there's a Nazarite in the midst of them, because he's suffering things. He's going through things for Christ, going through for God, and in the long run, God is honored.

And not only that, you know, I have a notion that this suggests that all the reproaches and the moans and the restraints, they'll all be interpreted by and by, by and by. We're waiting, you know, for that lovely day when we'll see him, and then we'll understand it better by and by, we think of it. But I'll tell you another thing that we're waiting for by and by.

Here's the divine Nazarite. He's gone into the glory. He said one day, I will not drink of the vine until I drink it new in the kingdom.

Just holding off his joy, until he's able to explain all our sorrows to us, until he's able to get it with himself. And then he and we will be drinking as it were the new wine, the joy of being together. We'll delight in one another in that glorious day.

May the Lord bless his word to our hearts. May he make us in truth men and women of God, purposing to be his. Because we purpose that purity, then we'll become men and women.

As we've been hearing, men and women with, we'll be men and women of prayer. I suggest we'll be men and women of perception. We'll understand the things of God, and we'll be able to live for.

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