

# (Trees in the Christian Experience) 4. the Man Under the Tree

by Roy Hession

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*The sermon explores the transformative power of honesty and faith as exemplified in Nathanael's encounter with Jesus under the fig tree.*

**Duration:** 47:14

**Scripture:** Genesis 28:12, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 27:32, John 1

**Topics:** "Christian Experience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having faith and trust in God. He uses the metaphor of a ladder leading to heaven to illustrate the idea that even when life feels difficult, there is always a way to connect with God. The preacher also discusses the concept of the victorious Christian life and suggests that sometimes our theology can be inconsistent. He encourages listeners to turn to Jesus and the power of his blood to find strength and overcome challenges.

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## Transcript

Amen. Well, now let's turn to John's Gospel, Chapter 1. John's Gospel, Chapter 1. I find John's first chapter, one of the most beautiful chapters. In fact, if I had to, I could well give a series, two series, three series, on this just beautiful first chapter.

Stanley, have a go down there at Walton. Revel. I'm sure you've probably already done it many times.

In all the wonderful things, there's so many varied things in this first chapter of John. Indeed, it's got 51 verses and not one verse too many. But now, we're going to read the last few this evening, this morning.

We're going to read from verse 45. And Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? The meaning of that is simply that he was a thoughtful man, a reader of the scriptures, and as he read the Old Testament, he saw that Messiah, of whom Moses spake, was going to come out of Bethlehem.

And there was no reference, it seemed to him, to Nazareth. And here is Philip saying, Come, see the one of whom Moses spake, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, Well, can any good thing come out of Nazareth? I haven't heard of Messiah coming from him.

He had intellectual difficulties. And Philip, wisely, didn't discuss the point with him. He simply said, Come and see.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith unto him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence comest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before the Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.

That was a quick one. From scepticism to faith in one split second. It happens that way sometimes.

It did with Nathanael, and we shall see the reasons in a moment. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. He saith unto him, Verily I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

Well, we've looked at the man behind the tree, we've looked at the man up the tree, and then we've looked at that blessed one on the tree, and this morning we want to look at the man under the tree. Before the Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. The man under the tree.

And to summarize the whole incident, it's a story of the complete foreknowledge of Jesus with regard to Nathanael, even before, in an earthly sense, he had met Nathanael. And as he came, he revealed his foreknowledge of this man, and gave an estimate of his true character, which surprised Nathanael. How in the world do you know that about me? We've never met.

And then the Lord Jesus went on to reveal certain other things he knew about Nathanael. And this foreknowledge of himself by Jesus was so extraordinary to Nathanael that it utterly convinced him. That the one who could say that of him was none else than the Son of God, the King of Israel.

And all his intellectual problems went out of the window. And then having made that instantaneous and glorious confession of faith, Jesus says, Believest thou? Because I said unto thee, When thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee, thou shalt see greater things. And then he began, proceeded to give a marvellous picture of himself, culled from the old story of the ladder that Jacob saw with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it.

It's a marvellous little passage. It doesn't waste any words. It's all compressed.

You've got to imply, you've got to look into it, and you can see what's implied, and what a sweet message is implied. And so it was that in spite of his intellectual problems, he was prepared to do what Philip suggested he did, come and see. And that's always to be our way of approaching those that have honest doubts.

Now, most doubts aren't honest. They're not really interested as to who was Cain's wife. They want something, an excuse for evading the issue.

But there are some honest doubters, honest hearts that just frankly cannot see and understand. And instead of trying to explain it all, we would be well to say, come and see. But how do they come and see? Well, come and meet some of the people who are seeing.

And as you see these people are seeing, you'll begin to see what they see. And then you won't worry about doubts again. You'll know.

And you'll fall as Nathaniel did, and make the confession of faith in Jesus that he made. And as Nathaniel was coming, Jesus said of him, and he did it in Nathaniel's hearing, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. He didn't say, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no sin.

I think Nathaniel, if I read his character rightly, would, had he been challenged, so that's far from the truth. No sin? I'm full of it. I'm a muddled, mixed up man.

But what Jesus said, not that an Israelite indeed, in whom is no sin, but in whom is no hiding of sin. That's being without guile. A man who's honest with himself, and honest with God.

And we're needed to be honest with anybody else. An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile, no hiding of sin. And in answer to that assessment of himself, you see, it wasn't altogether unfavourable.

Don't get the idea that God's assessment of you is always negative. He may say things about you that you didn't realise. And it may be a very generous assessment of you.

But the fact that he knows you so well, is extraordinary. And you might well want to say, with Nathaniel, whence knowest thou me? And then Jesus said this, before Philip called thee. When thou wast under the fig tree, I saw you.

I saw you through and through. And it would seem that apparently something happened alone under that fig tree, which enabled Jesus to say of him, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Well, what do you think did happen under that fig tree? I believe there was a literal fig tree, perhaps, in his garden.

I believe it was a favourite place to which Nathaniel loved to resort. He was a bit of a, well, shall we say, a little bit of a depressive. He wasn't an extrovert so much as an introvert.

And when he wanted to think, when he wanted to sort out his problems, and when he wanted perhaps to try and pray, he didn't get very far with his because he didn't as yet know the Lord. It was to that fig tree that he went, I imagine. And you know the other day he'd been there.

It really was for Nathaniel rather a special day. What do you think happened under that fig tree, which enabled Jesus to say of him, an Israelite in whom is no guile? I believe under that fig tree it was a moment of truth. For Nathaniel, a moment of stark honesty with the God whom he hardly knew about himself.

He said, oh God, I'm all mixed up. I go to the synagogue, I even read the scriptures sometimes up there. And I don't know what it is about.

One thing I do know, I'm all the time falling short. I'm not the father that I should be. I'm certainly not the husband I ought to be.

And I'm not as impeccable as the other people see. Indeed, Lord, you know the whole list of them. And I can only believe that under that fig tree, he spent the time going into the witness box against himself.

Most of us go into the witness box on our own behalf, in our own defence. It's a new thing, and it was for Nathaniel to go into the witness box against himself. And Jesus saw it.

Though he wasn't actually corporeally present, he knew it. Nothing attracts the attention of divinity so much as seeing a man under the fig tree doing that sort of thing, and saying those sort of things. And because of that, judging of himself, their honesty, their confession of his confusion, of his misery, and his sighs, maybe.

Jesus could say of him whatever else you can say about him. You can tell me his faults, but I'll tell you one thing, he knows them. He's told God more things about himself than his critic could ever say.

There is an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile. Now, this is the one thing, the basic thing, that God requires of us. That we should be man without guile.

Not that we should be sinless. Perhaps not always victorious, but we're honest about it all. We don't hide it.

We know ourselves. And when we pray, we pray along that line. And when we share a little bit of what we know of the Lord, that's always part of our sharing.

And the thing that impresses the Lord, and impresses others, is this lack of guile, this lack of hiding, this simple honesty before God, and where appropriate, before our brothers. It's a beautiful characteristic. And it's linked with the forgiveness of sins.

David, in that great Psalm 32, in which he celebrates his emancipation from the bondage and accusation of hidden sin, says, blessed is the man whose sin is covered, whose sin is forgiven. Now, I'd better get this straight, because it's quoted in Romans 4, and the order of the words are a little different. Let's have it from Psalm 32.

You know, Paul makes much of this verse, and uses it to enforce his teaching. Psalm 32, blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, whom the Lord doesn't blame.

Not only forgiven and covered, but you're not even blamed by God. And in whose spirit there is no guile. Now, the one thing that marked David, with regard to that sin of his, was guile.

It wasn't only the committing of adultery that was so wrong. It was a horrid deed. But it was the hiding of it that was worse.

And in order to hide it, he sacrificed another man's life, so that he could quickly marry Bethsheba, not because he loved her so much. But in order that when the baby came, it might be seen that it had been conceived in wedlock, and his reputation saved. It's about the dirtiest deed on the page of history.

The callousness of it. The depths to which even a believer can go. Not only in committing the sin, but in covering it.

And we add sin to sin in that way. And if there was one thing that marked David, it was guile. And he goes on to say how the guile was perpetuated when I kept silence.

He didn't have to tell a lie, he just had to say nothing. And everybody assumed that the child had been conceived in wedlock. He arranged in such a way the death of her husband that it seemed quite natural, as a consequence of battle, that it was very carefully planned.

Well, there came the time when God sent that prophet to him. And you know, I believe the coming of Nathan to David was welcomed. He'd had a hard time keeping silence.

When he kept, when I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my groaning all the day long. His whole health was impaired while he kept silence. And when he had that story told to him and Nathan said, Thou art the man, I believe David said, Thank God, he's giving me an opportunity, a God-sent opportunity.

And sometimes you've got to wait for that to make certain confession. A God-sent opportunity to at last lose his burden. And he didn't argue, he didn't excuse himself, he didn't find any hiding.

He said, I have sinned before the Lord. And there was his first step out of duplicity into that place of being a man without guile and to complete the process. When he was released and set free and restored to God, he was so happy that he wrote out his testimony in Psalm 51, in beautiful poetry, and he called for the choir march.

He said, Set that to music and sing it in the church on the next Sabbath, that the whole nation shall know the mercy of God to a sinner like me. He was a man without guile, he says so. Blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven, whose transgression is covered, to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Now I'm not quite sure whether this being without guile is a condition of forgiveness or its consequence. Perhaps it's both. Quite obviously God can't forgive what isn't confessed.

And yet on the other hand there's nothing that makes a man more ready to give his testimony to know he is forgiven. That's the great incentive. It isn't that you want to grind out some awful confession, you want to give praise to God for what he's done for a sinner like you.

Someone has said the man who's justified by faith doesn't mind what people think of him. The only one that matters has declared him to be right, who has confessed himself to be wrong. If you know that's the case, who is he that condemns? Indeed it's very difficult to condemn a man who rarely takes a sinner's place and gives a sinner's testimony.

You know God's covered it, and you cannot but accept him on the same ground. As Israelite indeed in whom is no guile. And I want to say this is something very basic, this isn't an incidental thing, there's something very basic.

It's built into the very nature of God. God is light and in him there's no darkness at all, and he cannot be one with any degree of duplicity in us. And really this is, rightly understood, the way that makes us, as I've said, candidates for grace.

I'm thinking of those verses in John 3. Everyone that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light. Let's turn to it. John 3, verse 20.

Everyone that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deed should be beproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they're wrought in God. That is, he that doeth evil hates the light, understandably so.

Now you would have thought the contrast would have been, but he that doeth good comes to the light. It doesn't say that. The opposite to doing evil is not firstly doing good, it's doing truth.

Everyone that doeth truth. You can be fussing away trying to make up by being very good and nice where you've been wrong. That's no, that will never get us right.

What God wants is doing truth. Before you ever start doing good, do truth. Get under that fig tree and judge it.

Be truthful with God, with yourself. He that doeth truth. Don't make promises about doing good, do truth that the good will follow out of an emancipated heart.

Doing truth. And when a man starts doing truth, now there's a man in whom is no guile. It's so restful.

How much good have you got to do to get your relationship restored? And will you manage to do it? And if you do it one day, will you be able to keep it up the next day? Oh no, it's a hopeless treadmill. But doing truth. And this is one of the great words in John's writings, truth.

And it doesn't mean doctrinal truth, it means plain response to God's light saying, yes Lord, you're right and I'm wrong. Doing truth. And when a man comes from such an interview, from his fig tree, Jesus says, there's a Christian in whom is no guile.

There's a lot about guile. In old and new testament, not speaking guile. You know, we can say one thing and mean another.

We could profess to be standing up for a good cause, but there's another motive. Because the other course would have meant that you aren't going to figure in it. The one you're espousing means you are.

And I believe, as those that seek to walk with the Lord, they've got to be open to any degree of guile, of double meanings. And in our confessing, in our repenting and putting things right with us, we might have said, brother, I want to tell you there's another motive for what I said. It wasn't quite as I said.

And this is part of our redemption. Now as I say, I'm not quite sure whether that's the condition of being forgiven, or the consequence, perhaps more likely the consequence. I don't know, all mixed up.

And there are many things in scripture which, like this, are they cause or consequence? I don't always know. They're part of our spiritual life, probably a bit of both. But nothing is going to make a man so sweet, so honest, so loving, and lovable, as knowing that God has forgiven his sin, covered it all, and imputes no longer any blame to him.

And he can afford to be without guile. And the very grace of God. I remember my dear friend Victor Monagorum, who was here the other year.

He's the leader of Youth for Christ in Asia. And he told me of a fellow who came for counselling. He said, now Victor, I want to tell you something.

He had to go through a room where others were, into the inner sanctum where Victor's study was. He said, will you promise you won't tell anybody? He said, I'll promise. And so he shared some deep problem.

And he came to Jesus with it. And he was so released, and set free, and forgiven, and emancipated, that he himself went out and told all the others of the new thing God had given him to do. And he was not only clad in the righteousness of Christ, but he had this sweet characteristic that goes with it.

A man in whom is no guile. Well, we all have this tendency to run for hiding. But isn't the small thing so lovely? A fellowship of people in whom is no guile.

And you know their yea is yea, and their nay is nay. And if they're tripped up in any way, and who cannot but be, would quickly put it right and tell you so. And Israelite indeed in whom is no guile.

So you see that with regard to Nathaniel, it wasn't a tree behind which he was hiding, nor a tree up which he was climbing, but a tree under which he was judging himself. And Jesus knew that fact. And the thing that absolutely astonished Nathaniel was the Lord's foreknowledge of him.

It was before Philip called him, when he was under the fig tree, that Jesus saw him. And there's nothing quite so convincing as an awareness of the Lord's foreknowledge of you, and the estimate he makes of you. And I want to tell you, it isn't always negative.

It can be very generous, more than you've ever dared to believe. And when that comes home to you, it sort of does something for you. And when Jesus said that to Nathaniel, you saw me before Philip called me when I was under the fig tree.

You apparently knew and know what happened under that fig tree. Yes. But listen, there was nobody else there.

There were only two people who knew what took place under the fig tree. It was me and God. And you knew.

That's how the woman at the well reasoned. What she had to say to her compatriots was, come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did is not this the Christ. No other evidence.

She had all sorts of theological ideas she brought forward. They were brushed away. It was that fact.

And I want to tell you, that is the word of God which reveals your heart to yourself. You may have all sorts of ideas, another sort of emphasis, but has God's word revealed you to yourself? Has there stood here one man who's told you all things that ever you did? That's the Christ. That's the Christ.

That's how that woman at the well reasoned. That's how Nathaniel reasoned. And that's how it was in one split second.

He went from skepticism to faith because he met one who knew him and loved him, apparently, ere he knew him. It's the great thing by which God testifies to the authenticity of any word he gives. And how often it happens.

The hearts of all men are revealed. Yours is. This is the real thing.

Please turn the cassette over now. Do not fast wind it in either direction. And dear one, he loved and knew you the more you ever knew him.

And he makes an estimate of you on the basis of that. And as I say, it isn't always negative. It wasn't in Nathaniel's case.

Man under that fig tree, he's seen your struggles and mine. He's heard your sighs over your condition. You have sighed over your condition as a Christian, and over your problems, and your inability to meet them.

And he's heard your admissions of failure. And he reveals that fact before you ever got that brochure to come to Southwark, before anybody said anything to you, simply because you were under that sort of fig tree and there was some element of sighs and sadness over yourself. He saw you.

He knew you beforehand. Indeed, his foreknowledge of you goes back even further, long before time began. You, knowing what you were going to be, what I was going to be, were part of his plan.

You were known, you were loved. It was so with Jeremiah, before I formed thee in the berry. I knew you, and added more, I appointed you a prophet to the nation.

This is a beautiful thing. I've been known, I've been loved, I've been planned for, I've been died. But when I was so far away, when I knew not him, he knew me.

And that's enough to bring us to his feet. What do we want to run away when such a God is revealed in Jesus Christ? As I say, it's nothing so convincing. That hymn we were singing yesterday of Wesley, it is mercy all, immense and free, for, oh my God, it found out me.

And when it found it out, it was still mercy for me. And he knew what it was, he knows it all. And he's got a plan for you better than you could ever think.

He's made an estimate of you, and he's seen just the element of that honesty. And though you don't think you're without God, you could be, he says, that's it, that's it. And that was enough, as I say, to convince Nathaniel of Jesus.

And Jesus said, that's very slight evidence for you to believe, I don't need any more, I know who you are. He said, do you believe nearly because I said I saw you under the fig tree? You're going to see greater things of me. And then he said, you're going to see, Nathaniel, you old doubter, you one with intellectual difficulties, they're all gone, and you're going to do more than have a simple, bare faith in me, you're going to see, Nathaniel, heaven opened, not closed against sinners, but open for them.

And the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. And here Jesus was quite obviously referring to the dream that Jacob had when he was fleeing from his brother Esau, and when he had to spend that first night in the open air, and when he had to use a stone for a pillow. Very unhappy young man, homesick, with a guilty conscience.

If he's in this situation, he's really got nobody to blame but himself. He's mortally offended, Esau, by his duplicity. And he said, as he laid down, he said, if any place is a God-forsaken place, this is it.

He found it wasn't forsaken by God at all. He found his sin had done nothing to turn God away, and he had the most beautiful dream which expressed the grace of God to him that he ever could have conceived. He saw in his dream a ladder.

I think the word is more literally a staircase, set up on the earth, right in the place where he was lying and sleeping. And this ladder went up, up, up, and the top of it reached to heaven. And above the head of that staircase was Jehovah, speaking words of incredible good to him.

It was a wonderful thing for Jacob to see heaven open. That's marvellous. But how do I get there? Oh, thank God, there's a ladder! Hallelujah! Then I can not only see heaven open, but I can get there.

There's a ladder up which I can climb to glory. But Esau didn't have to climb. He saw the angels of God ascending and descending on that ladder.

And Jesus, when he picks up this story and tells us that he is the ladder, he's the spiritual counterpart of Jacob's ladder, he emphasizes not only the ladder, but especially the traffic on the ladder. You're going to see the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. He's the ladder.

He's the link between the sinner and God all the time. And there's no God-forsaken place in which you may find yourself, no unhappy situation, but there's a ladder. We were in Switzerland some time ago, and the daughter of the house where we were staying, she had to leave early for work on the day we were leaving, and we were getting up at a little more leisurely hour.

And she wanted to give us a little note to say goodbye and thank you. She slipped it under our door, and she said, after expressing her appreciation of one another, because she'd been helped, she said, and if ever your pillow seems to be like stone, there is a ladder leading up to heaven. And the angels of God ascending and descending on that ladder.

A ladder is very helpful, presumably, which has got to be climbed. And friend, you could be in a state of mind, you haven't got the strength to climb. They tell us about the steps you've got to take, three steps to victory, five, six, or seven, according to the writer.

You know, I think when it comes to the teaching about the victorious Christian life, we all have a tendency, we preachers, to make up our theology as we go along. It's extraordinary. Well, some make it three steps, some make it seven steps.

They don't seem to understand we're too weak to take the first step. Lord knows, though. They say, there's no need, Jacob, don't start climbing.

The angels on this ladder, taking up your sorrows, your needs, to God. And the other angel, bringing down his grace, his mercy to you. And all you've got to do, Jacob, is not to try and climb it, but stay at the foot of the ladder, stay at the foot of the cross.

And in that, Jesus, our needs have been already brought up to God, and all grace for sinners has already, in him, been brought right down to us at street level. I don't think that old dream was meant to teach us much about angels. I believe in the ministry of angels.

I don't know how much good I've received from them, perhaps quite a lot on the motorways. Thank God for them. Billy Graham's written a book on angels.

No, but I don't think this particular passage has much to tell us about angels. It's all speaking of Jesus, and every bit of that old story is needed to give us an adequate portrait of Jesus. In Jesus, all my needs have already gone up to heaven, and his grace for sinners and weak Christians has already come down to me.

In him, I see the Godhead shine. It's all down there. And he needs the whole of that picture, to see Jesus, and this wonderful traffic on the ladder.

And Jesus said to Nathaniel, you're going to see that. And you know, it's wonderful to know there is a ladder. As we quoted the other day, as to the holy patriarch, the wondrous dream was given, so seems my savior's cross to me, a ladder up to heaven.

And you may think you've got to climb that ladder. And deep down you know, you're defeated before you ever begin. I doubt if you're going to make it.

There's one step, then the other. The children's chorus says, we are climbing Jacob's ladder. Well, it familiarizes them with the story, but it's not the real truth in the gospel.

We can't climb, but we can get to the foot of that ladder. And you get to the foot of that ladder by taking the same course that Nathaniel did. Judging yourself, being open.

And you know, I find that much of my prayer time, I'm not tremendously good on intercession. Oh, Pam and I, we do pray for our friend. But a lot of our time is spent on getting to the foot of the cross.

A lot of my own personal time. When I have time to prepare a message, an awful lot of it is, Lord, I'm coming, I'm not thinking very spiritual today. Lord, I don't think I've got much peace in my heart today.

I think it could be inalienable to stand before the people. That's right, just come along, anything else. All you've got to do, my dear, he says, is to get to the foot of that ladder, to the foot of that cross.

For there, Jesus Christ is made to me, all I need. And this is a blessed reward for those that have the experience of failure, under some victory, that go into the witness box against themselves, but as plain honest, that's their current position. Not trying to climb and improve it, admitting it.

And then the Holy Spirit begins to give you a new vision of Jesus, a new vision of the cross, a new vision of this grace. I've had it again and again, and I haven't been telling God where I am for very long, before a strange peace comes over my heart. There's a place at Calvary where I sit, and where all I need is available to me.

And this was the blessed thing that was promised to the man under the tree. Well, you haven't always literally got to have a special place to which you go for such deep interviews with the Lord, but there ought to be the under-the-fig-tree experience. If there's somebody struggling and striving, man, stop it, get under that fig tree.

Don't turn over new leaves, turn back the path. Just come as you are, and then it won't be very long before the wondrous vision is given to you, and you're through, through into victory, through into joy again. In him, at Calvary, dwells all the fullness of the Godhead body.

A last illustration, and it's this. Some years ago, Pam and I were in South Africa, and we moved up into Tanzania, and Festo and some of the Africans, a great team of them, about 14 of them, were having a great campaign in the city of Dar es Salaam. That comes with being 73, occasionally.

Dar es Salaam. And this was a simultaneous campaign. All the churches were cooperating, and in every church at the same time we had two meetings each evening, one at five and one at eight.

I say all the churches were cooperating, yes, even the Roman Catholics. The only one stranger that didn't cooperate was the Anglican Cathedral. I think those in charge knew a little bit about the challenge of the message of the Bible.

I don't know why in the world they didn't, but the Catholics did. And in all the other churches, the meetings were conducted in Swahili. I, of course, and in New English.

The only church that had their services in English was the Roman Catholic Cathedral. So I found myself night after night preaching in the Roman Catholic Cathedral, and giving this message of grace to those eager, hungry-looking nuns who'd struggled so long under the law. And it was a responsive time.

At the end of one meeting, an African came to me dressed in lounge suit, and he said, do you mean to say all I've got to do to be saved is admit I'm wrong, and then I'll be accounted right? I said, you're dead right. All I've got to do? Just tell God what you're not. Just open up.

You haven't even got to ask to be saved, just tell him you're not. I said, why don't we do it now? And you know, we knelt down at the back of that cathedral, and he, so to speak, was under the victory. And he just told God what he wasn't, what he hadn't got.

He didn't know whether he was a Christian or not. He didn't make big petitions for anything else, he just told him what he hadn't. That qualified him for Jesus, and he accepted Jesus.

Jesus came in, reached him, and he rose. I said, tell me, who are you? What's your name? He said, I'm the Dean of the Anglican Cathedral. And a few days later, a Sunday intervened, he said to Fester Cavenger, he told him what had happened, he said, last Sunday, in the Anglican Cathedral, I gave a sermon they've never heard before.

He passed so quickly, as quickly as Nathaniel did, from doubts into liberty. And it was just because he took the same stance that Nathaniel did, the man under the tree, and he saw the cross on which the Prince of Glory died, and the finished work, and was through into life, peace, and liberty. Well, if that's the way for him, it's the way for you.

Get under that fig tree, stop pretending, just as you are, and admit how you are, without a plea. You come, and he comes. And though you've been a struggling dear child of God, I want to tell you, there'll be a new day.

And then, when something goes wrong, the next time, you know what to do. You know where to go. You know there's power in the blood, and you needn't stay in darkness for any longer than it takes you to get to the foot of that cross, to the foot of that ladder, and you're through again.

And the devil said, how in the world do you know that? I expected that failure to knock him out for about a week. It hasn't knocked him out for any longer than it took him to get to Jesus again. Amen.

Let us pray. And we'll never forget at what price this beautiful liberty has been made open to us. And so we'll sing again our favorite chorus, just the one verse.

He, he, he laid aside. As you may be. Let us say the grace together.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18751.mp3>

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