

Leadership and Ministry Training #1

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes the importance of emptying oneself and consecrating oneself to God, as demonstrated by Jesus' life, in order to fulfill God's purpose and bring glory to him.

Duration: 1:01:35

Scripture: Genesis 1:2, Genesis 2:16-17, Isaiah 14:12, Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, John 3:16, Philippians 2:5-11, 1 Peter 1:19

Topics: "Gods Nature", "Christian Humility"

Description

This sermon delves into the origins of creation, focusing on the triune nature of God and the fall of the archangel Lucifer due to pride. It emphasizes the importance of not looking into oneself but fixing one's gaze on Jesus, who emptied himself for humanity's redemption. The sermon highlights the need for individuals to surrender their will to God, acknowledging His lordship and allowing His perfect work to be done in their lives.

Transcript

Chapter 1, we read from verse 19 through to 21, 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 19, but by precious blood of a lamb, without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ, foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but who has been manifested at the end of times for your sakes, who by him who believe on God, who has raised him from among the dead, and giving him glory, that your faith and hope should be in God. Let's have a word of prayer. Dear Lord, we want to thank thee for gathering us together this time.

We know that I has a purpose in doing this, and we just come to offer ourselves to thee for that purpose. May thy will be done in each and every one of us, that we live not for ourselves, but for thee and for thy will. Lord, we commit this time into your hand.

Will you by thy spirit illumine thy word to our hearts, that we may be drawn closer to thee, and allow thy spirit to work out thy full purpose in each and every one of us to the praise of your glory. We ask in thy precious name. Amen.

Brothers and sisters, we want to thank God for bringing us together this time. Our prayer is that even though it is a very short period, yet the spirit of God can do great work in our hearts. We want the Lord to have full charge over us.

We want to see that his purpose for each one of us will be fully fulfilled to the glory of God. So, brothers and sisters, we offer ourselves to the Lord, and may his word fall into our hearts and enable us to serve his purpose as long as he seems fit. So, this is the reason why we are here this time.

I would like to begin from the very beginning. In the beginning, God. Before God, there was nothing.

Our God is the beginning, and our God is a triune God. That is, he is God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To use human expression, we may say that before there was anything but God, there was a consultation among the Godhead.

The Father had a longing, a desire to glorify his Son. He wanted to do everything for his Son. But being God, he knows the end from the beginning.

So, while he was contemplating this, he foresaw the problem. He foresaw that an archangel will rebel against him. So, while God was wondering what he should do for his Son, his Son stepped forward, as it were, and said, Father, if this is your will, go ahead.

I'm willing to offer myself as a lamb, slain from the very beginning, in order to accomplish your purpose. And it was on this basis that our God created the universe. When God created this universe, in the first creation, he didn't create man as we are.

The highest of his creation was angel. And among the angels, he created an archangel, Lucifer, the bright and morning star. He was created almost perfect, not quite.

We find that God has given him talents, beauty, tenfold perfectness. Not twelve, the complete number, but ten, almost complete. And this archangel was created to be God's anointed archangel, guarding the throne of God, as we find in Ezekiel chapter 28.

When God was speaking about the king of Tyre, suddenly the Spirit of God rose something which no man on earth could fulfill. In other words, God was revealing to us the archangel that he created during the first world. He was almost perfect, because twelve in the Scripture is a perfect number.

But he had twelve, he had ten of the twelve wonderful things that God has given to him. He was to be the angel, anointed angel, that would guard the throne of God. He was to lead the angels in worshipping God.

He was put in the highest place among the angels. But as we all know, in the beginning everything was fine. He led his angels in worshipping God.

But gradually, because of his talents, because of his many traffic, he began to look into himself. Brothers and sisters, it is always a trouble if we look into ourselves. What can you see in yourself? If you see in yourself beauty, that will be a trouble.

Unless you see that there is something lacking in you, only God can fulfill. Then this is the safe part. In the beginning this angel, archangel, led the angels in singing praises to God.

He was faithful in his work. But unfortunately, because of his many traffic, because of his many endowment, he began to look into himself. Brothers and sisters, it is always a problem if we look into ourselves.

Why? Because if you look into yourselves, if you see yourself so perfect, so good, that will result in pride. If you see that there is imperfection in you, you are easily despondent. And the more you look into yourself, the more you will be down feeling.

So brothers and sisters, it is always good to look off into Jesus, the author and finisher of faith. Do not look into yourself because it will result either in exalting yourself or in being despondent and despair. Unfortunately, this archangel, in the beginning he did a good work.

He did what God has created him for. He led the angels in singing praises to God. He was the anointed archangel over the throne of God.

What a glory that must be! We do not know how long this continued. But unfortunately, soon this archangel, Lucifer, the bright and morning star, began to look into himself. We are told in the scripture, look off into Jesus, the author and finisher of faith.

This is what we ought to do. We shouldn't look into ourselves. Because if we look into ourselves and see more of ourselves than we should, we will get proud of ourselves.

And thus sing. Or if we look on ourselves and see less than what God has created us, we will be in so despair that we will fail to do God's will. So it is always bad to look into ourselves.

The Bible tells us what we need to do is to look off into Jesus because the more we look into Jesus, the more we will be lifted by the grace of God. The more we look into ourselves, we will either get proud or get despondent. It is no good to us.

So we find in Ezekiel chapter 28, the prophet was talking of the king of Tyre. But suddenly you find he began to talk about something that no person can fulfill. In other words, the Holy Spirit uses the king of Tyre as a type for the archangel that God has created in the beginning.

We do not know how long this archangel was faithful to God. How long he was humble before God. How long he led the other angels in worshipping God, in doing the will of God.

The Bible was silent. But the Bible tells us one day, this archangel Lucifer, the bright and morning star, as he began to look into himself, look into what God has entrusted him with. Pride began to rise up in his heart.

So dear brothers and sisters, our advice is never look into yourself. The Bible tells us we need to look off into Jesus. That's the way we should live.

Because the more we look off into Jesus, the more we will be humble, the more we will give ourselves totally over to the Lord. On the contrary, if we look into ourselves, there is no good in that. Don't look into yourself.

The more you look into yourself, you either get proud or you get dejected. Either you feel you are more than what you are, or you will begin to be so despondent that you look down on yourself and forgetting all the great work that God has done in your life. So dear brothers and sisters, the first lesson we need to learn is never look into yourself.

Look off into Jesus. That's the safe way. Now, when the archangels began to look into themselves, what was the result? He began to be proud of himself.

He was not satisfied for what God has put him in, realizing how beautiful, how talented he was. He wanted something more than God had apportioned to him. And that is always the case.

If we look into ourselves, we will either be despondent, despair, or we will be elated and begin to think of ourselves more than God has given to us. That's the reason why the Bible always tells us, look off yourself and look into Jesus. Because the more you look into Jesus, the more you will be attracted by him.

You will be filled by him. You will give yourself totally over to him. And that is the will of God.

But on the contrary, if we look into ourselves, we either get down or we get up to where we are not. So I think the first lesson we learn from the Bible is, look off into Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Now, this archangel, I believe in the beginning, he did not look into himself.

He looked off into Jesus. He thanked God for creating him in such a way that he may be useful in the hand of God. I believe this thought was the way he thought before.

But unfortunately, when he began to look into himself, pride began to raise up within him. He was not satisfied to be the leading angel among the angels. He wanted something that God had not given to him.

He wanted to be equal with God. So I believe, brothers and sisters, you have all read Isaiah chapter 14. There you will find when the prophet spoke of the king of Babylon, suddenly from verse 12, he began to say something that no man qualified.

He was speaking prophetically of the archangel Lucifer. Five times this archangel said, I will, I will, I will. I will be equal with God.

Now, brothers and sisters, when he had that idea, we all know who is equal with God. God's only begotten son and the Holy Spirit. They are equal with God because they are part of God.

But when this archangel, a created being, wanted to be equal with God, he sinned terribly. Now, brothers and sisters, have you thought, when the archangel wanted to be equal with God, whose position he was thinking of? I think it is very natural. To be equal with God is his son.

His son is equal with God. They are one. So, with Lucifer, when he wants to be equal with God, he was desiring the position of the only begotten son of God.

And because of this sin, and it is a grievous sin, he was dismissed from God. And because of this, we believe that the earth most likely was under his domain. So, when judgment came upon him, this earth that we knew went into disaster.

That explains the ice age of this earth. Because when God created, he always did it perfect. He would not leave a created world under the water, under judgment, no.

When God created, it was perfect. But it was sin that brought this world into disaster. So that the world that we learned in history was, once it was surrounded with water, that is, it was under judgment.

We do not know how long this continued on. But in history, we learned that this earth was once under water. It was the ice age, most likely because this earth was under the domain of that arch, fallen archangel.

But thank God, he is loved. He would not allow this earth to be forever under judgment. God always has a way.

So the Bible tells us, in Genesis chapter 1, the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the deep. That is to say, the love of God began to brood upon this earth that was under judgment. So brothers and sisters, the six days creation that we find in Genesis chapter 1 is not the original creation.

It was the restoration in six days of a destroyed earth due to the sin of that archangel, Lucifer. God, in his love, began to restore the earth to be habitable. Why? Because God has a plan.

I often say, for a grown-up person to beat a little child for no reason, there was no glory in it. For God to destroy his enemy was an easy thing. God breathed his breath, and the enemy will be destroyed.

But doing so, God got no glory. For the sake of the glory of God, he did not destroy Satan by himself. He decided to make man a little lower than the angel.

And with that little lower than the angel, to defeat God's enemy, the archangel. That is glory. So dear brothers and sisters, we are created for the glory of God.

Man is not created for himself. Man is created to fulfill God's purpose. God wants to use man, a little lower than the angels, to destroy Satan, higher than the angels.

We know that the angels are ranked higher than man. They are spirits. They can be anywhere.

But man, with his body, you cannot be anywhere. You are here, in the conference. You are not in your hometown.

That's for sure. So brothers and sisters, man is created a little lower than the angels. The angels are spirits.

They can be anywhere. Man with a body is limited to one location. But the reason why God created man lower than the angels, and yet the purpose of man is higher than the angels.

God wants to use man to defeat the angel, his enemy. That is for the glory of God. So dear brothers and sisters, we must remember that we are created not for ourselves.

We are created for God's purpose. If we begin to live for ourselves, our life is a waste. That is not God's purpose.

But if we learn to live for God and to be used by God to defeat the enemy, then God's purpose will be fulfilled and God will be glorified. So dear brothers and sisters, who are we? Thank God we are not here as man for ourselves. Then we'll completely miss God's purpose.

We are here as man for God's reason. Because God wants to use us a little lower than the angels to defeat the angel that God may be glorified. And that's the reason why we are here.

Unfortunately, the man whom God has created has fallen. God created man according to his own image, according to his likeness. And God is free will.

Therefore, when he created man, he gave man a free will. Free will is the highest glory of man's creation. God can entrust man with a free will.

And what is free will? If there's no choice. And that's the reason why. We find in the Garden of Eden, the two trees.

You have the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And they stand side by side. God put man in that garden.

God gave man a command. Kill it. Kill the ground.

Improve upon it. And also, guard it. For the garden has no wall.

And God wants man to be that wall. Because God knows the enemy, the archangel, was waiting outside that garden. Wanted to get in to entice man.

So God created man, is not only to kill the ground, to improve the ground. But he has the responsibility of being the wall of the garden. To keep the enemy away from entering in.

That's the purpose of God. But we all know what happened. The man whom God has created, he was perfect.

He was put in the Garden of Eden. Or to put it more forcefully, he was placed before the two trees. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now dear brothers and sisters, do not think that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a bad tree. In the Garden of Eden, every tree was good. And among the good, the best are the tree of life.

And next to it, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What can be better than the knowledge of good and evil? It is not the best, but it is the next best. So as it were, God put man before the two trees.

To allow him to choose. Now what is free will? If there is no freedom to choose. God created man according to his image and his likeness.

So he gave man free will. Free will is the highest grant that God has given to man. But how troublesome free will can be.

If you have a will that can only obey God, you will think how good that will be. But you have no personality. So God gave man a free will.

And what is free will? If there is no freedom to choose. So that's why you find in the Garden of Eden, you have two trees in the midst of it. The best and the better.

Not the best and the worst. Now what is better than everything? Intellect. It is next to life.

So God put these two, the best and the better, before man. And enabled man to make his choice. And brothers and sisters, we all know the story.

But thank God. God will not allow this scene to go on. So in due time, God's own son, as he has offered before the creation, himself came into this world.

And there we find in Philippians chapter 2, verse 5 to 11, a description of the incarnation of God's beloved son into the world. He was equal with God. And that is not something to be grasped on.

Now in this world you find a heat. That once upon a time, there was a person who tried to grasp to be equal with God, which is Satan. But here you find God's only begotten son, whom he loved, whom he wanted to give everything.

He was equal with God. And that is not something to be grasped on. But that was his by right.

And that is a hint to us. To show us there was once an archangel who has no right to be equal with God. And yet he wanted to be equal with God.

On the contrary, you find this son of God who was equal with God and not something to be grasped on because it was his by right. And yet he emptied himself. Brothers and sisters, when the son of God came into this world to be a man, he had to empty himself.

And what an emptying it must be. We sometimes talk about emptying. But how much can you empty? In other words, how much do you have within that can be emptied? We have almost nothing but sin.

And yet we do not want to empty ourselves. We would rather keep sin within us. But look at the son of God.

He was equal with God and nothing to be grasped on. It was his right. And yet he was willing to empty himself.

He cannot empty himself of his Godhead, of his being God, because that's what he is. But he is willing to empty himself of all the glory and honor and place connected with God. And what an emptying it must be.

Dear brothers and sisters, sometimes we talk about emptying. How much do you have to be emptied? Probably what you need to be emptied is your sin. We have no right.

We have no merits. We have no position of any kind but sin. But thank God.

He wants us to be emptied even of our sin through the redemption of our Lord Jesus. So here you find our Lord. He emptied himself.

He cannot empty himself of his Godhead. He is still God. While our Lord was on earth, he is still God.

He could do whatever he wanted to do. And Satan tempted him for that, but he wouldn't. He had emptied himself.

That is, he put aside his Godhead. He came upon this earth as a man, weak, limited, and yet he lived his life as man, obeying God in everything. You find in the Gospels how he said, I can do nothing by myself.

I do it because I saw my father did it. I can go nowhere by myself. I do because I saw my father did.

Your time is always ready. His brothers who do not believe in him say, why don't you go to Jerusalem at the feast so that your disciples could see you and follow you. But the Lord said, my time is not in my hand.

You are always convenient, but my time is in God's hand. He never did anything out of himself. He did it because he saw his father did it and wanted him to do it.

That's the life of our Lord Jesus. He completely given himself over to God. I think we are all familiar with the four Gospels.

And the first Gospels give us enough evidence how our Lord Jesus refused to do anything of his own. Whatever he said, whatever he go, whatever he did is always according to the Father. That is his life.

A life totally emptied, totally consecrated to God. And that is the life that he has given to us. That we too, by God's grace, may empty ourselves and allow God to be everything to us.

So in Philippians chapter 2, it says, he emptied himself to the extent that he went to the crop where he gave himself totally over to God. And that's redemption. So we do thank the Lord as we read his life upon the earth.

What an emptiness he did. He could. The enemy tempted him.

You are God. You could do that. But he refused because he stood on his ground as a man, not as God.

So brothers and sisters, because what he had done for us on the crop, the Father had highly exalted him, giving him a name above everything. In his name everything shall bow, everything confess that Jesus is Lord. How good it is, brothers and sisters, that we may confess him as Lord today.

If you do not today, one day you have to confess him as Lord. But that day will be a sad day because you are in hell forever. But thank God, this is a wonderful day for each one of us.

We can confess Jesus our Lord. We can exalt his name. And because of this, we are obligated to listen to him, to give ourselves totally over to him and allow his will to be done in our life as it is in heaven.

So dear brothers and sisters, thank God we can be here this morning to hear these words. We are not our own, we are bought with a price. It is our responsibility and duty and even joy to listen to the Lord Jesus, to listen to the still small voice that is speaking to us and allow us to give up ourselves, to deal with ourselves and to learn to obey him and to follow him.

And this is the wonderful life of a Christian. Dear brothers and sisters, here we are. We are not our own.

We are bought with a price, even the life of our Lord Jesus and what a price he had paid for us. And should we neglect him and decide to live our own lives, knowing that if we live our own lives, we will lose it. But if we are willing to lose our life for his sake, we will gain it for eternity.

So dear brothers and sisters, this is why we are here this morning, to give ourselves totally over to him. Lord, you have bought us with your own life. We are not our own.

We are yours. And enable us to follow thee, not only in great things, but also in small things. In our daily life, we learn to obey the Lord and let him live in us, through us, that God may be glorified.

And this is Christian life. So dear brothers and sisters, thank God. By his grace, he has saved us.

And he will save us to the uttermost. We do not want to be half-saved. Saved temporarily.

We want to be saved forever and forever, that we may be with him throughout eternity. And I believe that is the desire of our heart. So thank God we may give ourselves to him and allow him to do that perfect work in each and every one of us.

So may the Lord bless you. Shall we pray? Dear Lord, we want to thank you because once we were dead in sins and transgressions, and yet thou loved us so much. Thou are willing to come into this wretched

world and give yourself so totally over to God to redeem us from our sins, to fill us with our own life, to enable us to follow thee.

Lord, for this we are thankful. And as we are here today, Lord, once again we give ourselves totally over to you. May thy perfect will be done in each and every one of us.

We are waiting for thy imminent return. Lord, come. Come quickly.

We ask in thy name. Amen. We'd like to take the next 15 minutes or so in prayer.

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