

Spiritual Exercise - Breaking and Releasing

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung's sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual exercise through the breaking of the awkward man and the release of the spirit for true transformation in Christ.

Duration: 1:18:45

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:7

Topics: "Spiritual Exercise"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of dividing, killing, and healing in the context of the word of God. He emphasizes that righteousness is the strongest point in a person's life, but it can be broken by a revelation of the majesty of God. The preacher explains that God uses different methods, such as light or the discipline of the Holy Spirit, to break the outward man and release the spirit within. He also highlights that God arranges everything in a believer's life, even the smallest details like the falling of a hair, to show His love and care. The sermon concludes by emphasizing that God works with each person individually, taking into account the unique shape of their soul and temperament.

Transcript

We'll first turn to 1 Timothy chapter 4. We'll read from verse 8 to verse 10. Exercise thyself unto piety or godliness, for bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for everything, having promise of life of the present one and of that to come. The word is faithful and worthy of all acceptation.

For this we labor and suffer reproach, because we hope in a living God, who is preserver of all men, especially of those that believe. 2 Corinthians chapter 4 We'll begin with verse 7 and we'll read through verse 18 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the surpassingness of the power may be of God and not from us. Every way afflicted, but not straightened, seeing no apparent issue, but our way not entirely shut up.

Persecuted, but not abandoned, cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. For we who live are

always delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

So that death works in us, but life in you. And having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, I have believed, therefore have I spoken. We also believe, therefore also we speak.

Knowing that he who has raised the Lord Jesus shall raise us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the grace abounding through the many may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Wherefore we faint not, but if indeed our outward man is consumed, yet the inward is renewed day by day.

For our momentary and light affliction works for us in surpassing measure an eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are for a time, but those that are not seen, eternal. And will you please turn to the Gospel according to John.

John chapter 12. We'll read from verse 24 through to verse 26. He that loves his life, and the word life here is soul life, shall lose it, and he that hates his life in this world, shall keep it to life eternal, and the life here is zoe, God's divine life.

If anyone serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there also shall be my servant, and if anyone serve me, he shall the father honor. May we have a further word of prayer. Dear Lord, we do want to thank Thee for gathering us together again this day.

Every time when we gather in Thy name, we are assured that Thy presence is with us. Dear Lord, we treasure nothing more than Thy own presence. Will you please manifest Thyself to each and every one of us.

Open our hearts that we may see Thee. Open our eyes that we may see Thee. Open our ears that we may hear Thee.

Thou art all that we desire. Will you not fill us this day. And bring us into all that Thou has ordained for us.

That Thou may be glorified. We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

Thank God for gathering us together again this day. I hope that we all remember the theme that God has given to us for this time. We are talking about spiritual exercise.

Christ. He is our treasure. If I have a treasure, will I put it in an earthen vessel? No, I will put it in a golden box.

That is the wonder of God's work. God puts His most precious treasure into the lowest, humblest vessel. Who but God will do that? Did you ever thank God for that? Did you ever thank God for that? That He should put Christ into such a humble, mean, worthless person as I am.

Why did He do that? He wants a radiancy. Of the glory of God be manifested. But He is imprisoned within us.

You remember what our Lord said. In Luke chapter 12. He said, I have a baptism to be baptized.

I feel so strengthened. Our Lord Jesus. He has a human soul.

Just like we are. Our soul is contaminated. But His soul is pure.

His feeling is pure. His thinking is pure. His volition is pure.

And yet, He feels that He is being imprisoned. He wants to be released. And the release came.

There you'll find He was broken. And His life was released. So brothers and sisters, you'll find the Lord shows us that we are earthen vessels.

The earthen vessels have to crack. Has to be broken. So that the light of the treasure, the radiancy of the glory of God may come forth.

That's the reason why the Apostle Paul says, I bear in my body the dying of Jesus. The death there is not a noun. It is a verbal noun.

Dying. Dying. The death of Jesus has the power of putting everything to death.

So, Paul said, the dying of Jesus works in me. The dying of Jesus so works in me that my soul life is broken. So the life of Christ may be manifested in me.

Death in me, but life in you. That is the way of ministry. Brothers and sisters, so here you'll find my outward man is decayed.

But my inward man is renewed day by day. The sin seems to be passing by. But the unseen is eternal.

Now that is the breaking of the outward man. For the release of the inward man. Now there is another illustration.

And that is in John chapter 12. You remember the story. That happened during the last visit of our Lord Jesus to Jerusalem.

You remember he has a triumphant entry into Jerusalem. As if the whole world is now for him. Even the Gentiles, the Greeks, wanted to see Jesus.

Humanly speaking, this is the most glorious time of our Lord Jesus' life. And strangely, when Philip and Andrew came to the Lord and said, some Gentiles, Greeks, want to see you. Our Lord Jesus said, the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

But when he said the Son of Man shall be glorified, his meaning is the opposite of the world's sense. In the world's sense, now all the world is after him. That is glory.

But in the heart of our Lord Jesus, he speaks of the cross. That is the time of his being glorified. Therefore he said, verily, verily, I say unto you, except the grain of wheat falling into the ground and die, it abides alone.

But if it die, it bears much fruit. Our Lord Jesus is the grain of wheat. Before he fall into the ground, there was no wheat on earth.

The whole field is filled with donalds. We are all donalds. Our Lord is the wheat.

He falls into the ground. That speaks of his incarnation. If he falls into the ground and remains, and then among the transfiguration he exits, there will be no grain of earth.

But the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die. He came to die. Why? If it die, it bears much fruit.

And here we are. So the Lord began to explain it. He said, he that loves his life shall lose it.

This applies not only to himself, but to all of us. If anyone loves his soul life, in other words, that grain of wheat will not die. You put that grain of wheat on the table.

A thousand years, it is still that grain of wheat. There is life within. But outwardly there was a shell to protect it, to preserve it.

But as long as the shell is not decayed, the life within will not be released. If the outward man is not broken, the inward man cannot be released. If we keep our shell, we love our soul life, the Lord said, you will lose it.

But you hate your soul life. Who hates his soul life? No one. We love it.

We preserve it. We protect it. We defend it.

But unless we hate this soul life, we will not be able to preserve it, that is, to save it. And more than that, to life eternal. In other words, not only your soul will be saved, but the divine life in you will be released.

And the Lord said, if anyone serves me, let him follow me. And where I am, there also shall be my servant. This is where the Lord is.

So this is where you should be. And if anyone serves him, the Father will honor him. So dear brothers and sisters, you find in these two parables, we can see the necessity of the breaking of the awkward man and the release of the soul.

Now we call it a spiritual exercise. Now can you break your awkward man? Nobody can. This is a work by the Holy Spirit.

Again you find that consecration is the foundation. If you are consecrated, you are willing to go this way, then the Holy Spirit will work in you. The work of the Holy Spirit for the breaking of the awkward man and the release of the spirit is twofold.

Number one, the enlightenment or the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Number two, the discipline of the Holy Spirit. The enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is within.

Number three, the discipline of the Holy Spirit is without. So the Lord used these two ways to bring us into the breaking of the awkward man. We have already said, it is the Holy Spirit who uses the word of God to divide the soul and the spirit.

But he is not only to divide it, he is to break it. What's the use of dividing if it's not broken? Thank God he has shed some light upon us. So we begin to see what is the soul, what is of the spirit.

But we need further light. In other words, throughout our Christian life, we need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. We have no new revelation.

That is, any revelation outside of the revealed word of God. Because all the revelation has been completed in this book. But that doesn't mean that we have no revelation.

On the contrary, we need to live constantly under revelation. That is to say, the Holy Spirit has to enlighten his word and make it living and operative in our lives. Maybe I will use an illustration.

Maybe I will use Watchman Lee's experience. I can quote a number of people. But for time's sake, I will just use one.

Now, our dear brother Watchman Lee, after he was saved, he really loved the Lord. He spent lots of time reading the word of God. And he began to serve God.

For several years, he was disturbed before God. Because he had heard the so-called Kazakh teaching. Higher life teaching.

As Paul said, an old man was crucified with Christ. Therefore, I am delivered from the power of sin. And brother Lee, he said he tried to reckon himself as dead in Christ and alive in Christ.

But the more he reckoned himself dead in Christ, the more alive he became. So he sought the Lord. He prayed.

He read the word. Nothing happened. He was not delivered from the power of sin.

But one day, while he was in his room studying the word, suddenly, light came to him. When Christ died, I died. How? Christ died 2,000 years ago.

How can I die when he died 2,000 years ago? Suddenly, the Lord showed him. Because you are in Christ. Because you are in him.

So when he died, you died. Now, suddenly, light breaks out. And he was immediately released.

He ran downstairs. And in the kitchen, he met a brother. He said, brother, do you know that I died? And the brother said, what happened? Are you troubled with Romans 6? Have you been trying to reckon yourself as dead? And the more you reckon, the more alive you become.

You need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. You know, thank God for the Bible. But the letter kills.

The Spirit quickens. So, we need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit to shed his light upon us.

In our spirit, suddenly, it enlightens. And when the light comes, it not only divides, it heals. It heals.

Usually, the work of the Holy Spirit in breaking your awkward man will touch your prominent part. You know, when you are walking, and you hit the wall, which part of your body hits first? Nose. That projects out.

You know, our soul is like that. And when you are walking, in every soul, there is special projection. This is your strong point.

Your strength. Unless the Holy Spirit touches that, it is not broken. But when that is touched, you are broken.

Some people are very clever. And unless your cleverness is touched by the Holy Spirit, your soul is not broken. So that's the reason why we need to seek the Lord that he will shine upon us.

Search. As a searchlight, search every part of our soul. Divide it, kills it, and heals it.

So, the strongest point of his life is righteousness. Self-righteous. Until that is broken.

And it is broken by a vision, a revelation of the majesty of God. Not by reason. But by who? When he saw the Lord, he repented in dust and ashes.

He was a broken man. But he was a new man. So dear brothers and sisters, the Lord sometimes used light to break the outward man.

And other times, he used what we call the discipline of the Holy Spirit. He will arrange our circumstances. You know, I often say, to those who are redeemed, God loves us so much.

He will arrange everything for us. To a believer, there is nothing called by chance. Everything is arranged by our God.

Even our hair has been numbered. This morning, when you comb your hair, and hair number 10,001 falls down. God knows it.

That's the love of God. He knows exactly what is best for you. So he will arrange your environment.

Nothing happens by chance. The people you are with today, the circumstances you encounter, everything in your life is arranged by the Holy Spirit. He used that arrangement to break your outward man.

The best example is Jacob. You know Jacob the Twister. How he can maneuver and play, and he always comes on top.

But God saw a rage. He had to flee for his life. And he was away from home for 20 years.

And he met his match. God saw a rage that Lebanon was as tricky as he. And they maneuver against each other.

He seemed to always come to the top. But he got into an impossible situation. He had to flee again.

And you remember in Genesis 32, how he was all alone wrestling with the angels. Even the angel cannot overcome him. Do you know how strong you are? Do I know how strong my soul is? Like Jacob.

The angel cannot overcome him. And then the angel touched his thigh. You know in wrestling, the most important point is the thigh.

So the angel touched his thigh. And he was crippled. You know what happened? He hang upon the angel.

Bless me. Otherwise I cannot live anymore. And the angel said, what was your name? Jacob.

Now you shall be called Israel. Prince of God. Brothers and sisters, God used environment to break Jacob.

From now on, Jacob walked freely. He was not perfect yet. But he was crippled.

And finally, in his old age, he blessed Pharaoh, the greatest king in the world. And he leaned upon his rod to worship God. Brothers and sisters, this is the breaking of the outward man.

And the release of the spirit. So God uses these two ways. And these two work together.

God according to his wisdom, to everyone he works livingly. Do not try to be like other people. Because everyone is special to him.

And he deals with us everyone specially. He knows the shape of our soul. You know our soul has a shape.

Just like a body has a shape. No two bodies are exactly alike. Even twins.

No two souls are exactly alike. This is how special we are. The shape of our soul is our temperament.

That's the shape of our soul. Some people are naturally slow. Some people are naturally quick.

Some people are born introvert. And some people are born extrovert. Some people are very active.

Outgoing. Some people are very reserved and hidden. Nothing wrong with that.

That's your shape. And God will deal with you according to that. So our experience is all different.

Some people's experience are very drastic. Some people experience slowly, slowly, slowly and then you got it. But thank God the result is the same.

The breaking of the outward man and the release of the spirit. So may the Lord lead us in this spiritual exercise. Dear Lord, we do commit these scattered words into your hands.

We trust thy Holy Spirit to make it living and operating. And lead us in this way of life. We thank thee and praise thee in thy precious name.

Amen.

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