

Deliberate Holiness

by Tim Conway

Tim Conway emphasizes the importance of deliberate holiness and commitment to God's word as essential aspects of true Christianity.

Duration: 1:01:22

Scripture: Psalm 38:18, Psalm 119:57, Psalm 119:74, Philippians 1:21, 1 Peter 2:24

Topics: "Deliberate Holiness", "Following God"

Description

This sermon focuses on Psalms 119:57 where David declares, 'The Lord is my portion; I promise to keep your words.' The speaker emphasizes the importance of deliberate holiness, being impressed, rebuked, and encouraged by David's commitment to God. The sermon highlights the need for believers to boldly declare their intention to follow God's commandments, trust in His power to help them, and find encouragement in the forgiveness and grace offered by God despite human frailty.

Transcript

Would you please open your Bibles to Psalm 119. I would like you to look at Psalm 119, verse 57. If you were here last Lord's Day, you may remember that our brother Ephraim read the first verses in Psalm 119.

From verse 1 through where brother John picked up today. And he read this verse last week, verse 57. And if you remember, I drew your attention to it.

And I drew your attention to that verse because that verse had jumped out at me in the past when I read Psalm 119. That affected me before. That came to me with power in the past and it has over this last week.

I have thought about it. I was thinking about what to preach on. I kept coming back to that verse again and again and again.

Psalm 119, verse 57. The Lord is my portion. I promise to keep your words.

Aunt Vanjie has her audio Bible going here. She doesn't know how to turn it off. We'll take that.

Her ringer wasn't on. Actually, the computer voice was actually quoting Psalm 119. The Lord is my portion.

I promise to keep your words. In the New King James Version, in the Old King James, the first half of this verse is not just making a statement. It's addressing the Lord.

And in the original, the ESV captures that in the second half. Let me just tell you, this whole verse is David speaking to the Lord, not to us. Thou art my portion.

You are my portion, O Lord. I have said that I would keep your words. The Old Geneva Bible, 1560.

O Lord, that art my portion. I have determined to keep thy words. In the original, this is literally David looking up and saying, David, my portion, O Lord, I promise to keep your word.

This psalm is almost certainly written by David. Doesn't have his name at the beginning of it like so many of the psalms written by David does. But if you are familiar with the psalms, there is no mistaking the style of this author.

Those psalms that are specifically have the name of David at the beginning, there are statements in many of those psalms that are just virtually identical to statements he makes here. I think there's little debate over who wrote this, simply because the style just so closely resembles so many of the psalms that are distinctly written by him. You are my portion.

You are my portion. Lord, you are my portion. I promise to keep your words.

And there's just three simple things that I want to say about this text today. It impresses me. I'm impressed by this verse.

I'm rebuked by this verse and I'm encouraged by this verse. And so those are basically my three points. The title of my message, Deliberate Holiness.

Deliberate Holiness. First, I'm impressed by this verse. You know what? You know, I find it an impressive thing when people are deliberate about being a Christian.

Would you not agree? When people say, I'm going to follow Christ. I am going to be holy. Lord, I am going to keep your word.

I find something impressive about that. James dug up speaking, and I'll tell you this. As he's getting done with his portion of speaking there.

He said that it was right after that. He went down and he sat next to Jesus and he said it was like wave after wave of liquid love. Something happened to him right there that just changed his life.

And those last words he spoke as he stood in that podium before I don't know how many tens and tens of thousands of people. He said these words, I shall walk no other way. I shall follow no other man.

That's deliberate. Brethren, that is impressive. When people say, I have seen Christ.

I have looked at his claims. I have heard the gospel. And I am going to follow him.

I am going to follow him. Though I perish, I am going to follow him. Impressive.

And David is deliberate like that. He is purposeful. He pursues holiness with intentionality.

I am going to keep his word. Lord, you are my portion. I am going to keep your word.

He lives for the Lord on purpose. On purpose. He's careful to do right.

He's careful to walk. He's careful in this walk of the Christian life. He's careful where he puts his next footstep.

He's on purpose here. I promise to keep your words. And you know what, I tell you, a man like this stands out.

A woman like this stands out. It's impressive. I say this because perhaps you have noticed, as I have, there is a lot today that calls itself Christian that is not very impressive.

There is a lot of sloppy, unimpressive Christianity today. And all you have to do is look around to know it's true. And God forbid, but we know it's true, that even looking around within our own four walls here, we have to admit that some people's lives are not at all impressive.

Brethren, what does it say when you see people and you can tell, hey, when it comes to getting the new cell phone, they're intentional, they're deliberate, they're careful. What does it say when you see people who give more time to planning what they're going to eat, the movie they're going to watch, time spent with the guys or the girls socially, when people are more deliberate about that than they are about walking in the ways of righteousness. Brethren, we come to Scripture, and you know what we find? We find in Hebrews, the twelfth chapter, we find, yes we're to strive for peace, but you need to recognize that that striving, it modifies two parts of that verse.

You strive for peace, but it also says you are to strive for holiness. That holiness without which no one is going to see the Lord. There better be a striving.

Brethren, let me tell you something. David did not mess around. He was purposeful.

He let it be known where his heart was. I promise. Lord, I promise.

I promise. I'm going to keep Your Word. And if that's not enough, what was read today, I don't know if this jumped out at any of you, I hope it jumps out at you as just a massive statement.

Jump over to verse 106. David says, there's not enough to say, I promise to keep Your Word. Look at this.

I have sworn an oath, and confirmed it. The KJV says, performed it to keep Your righteous rules. You know what that word confirm is in the original? It is stand up.

You know what he's saying? This is a picture of somebody that's seated, and they swear an oath, and they stand up. Standing up. Again, it just solidifies intentionality.

I've sworn an oath. Think about this. What is it to swear an oath? When you swear, I mean, in the Old Testament, that was to give one's most sacred, most committed to, most unbreakable word, that you will perform the thing you're swearing to.

I mean, when it came to giving your word, there was nothing stronger than that. God swore to Abraham. I mean, you want to confirm something? Here's David.

I not only promise, I swear an oath. I'm going to keep Your righteous rules. I swear.

Brethren, let me ask you something. I mean, if you think about a scale of commitment, a scale that measures the level of your commitment to being righteous, to following Christ, to keeping His Word, where are you at there? I mean, where would you put a man like this? Wow! Like I say, it's impressive. Do you ever think about the scale of your own devotedness? Brethren, let's ask ourselves honestly, where is our level of commitment to being righteous? I mean, what are you committed about in your life? Commitment.

Where are you at? I mean, do you take your Christianity seriously? That's the question, brethren. That's the question. Have you ever even come close to this level of commitment? Ask yourselves, do you talk to the Lord this way? Is there this kind of resolve? I say it again.

This is impressive. I've sworn an oath and confirmed it. I will perform it.

I will stand up. I mean, that's a posture that shows you're ready for action. You're ready to do it, to keep your righteous rules.

But brethren, let me just say this. I keep saying this is impressive. I'm impressed by this.

But let me tell you something. True Christianity is impressive. It really is.

Brethren, God sees to it that true Christianity is impressive. Why? His name's at stake. I mean, have you ever read the terms of the New Covenant? He says, I will cause them.

I will cause them. They're going to walk in My statutes. I'm going to write that law on their heart.

They are going to not stray away from Me. I am going to put My fear within them. They are not going to depart from Me.

I am going to put My Spirit within them. I am going to give them a new heart. They will be changed people.

They will be new creations in Christ. I will see to it. My name is at stake.

You see, God makes true Christianity impressive. And so, I guess the thing that we need to think about here is, if you do have true Christianity, then you know what you have from God? God gives you a God-given surrendered disposition towards God's Word. Have you never noticed that? I mean, not only in the Old Testament, but when you come to the New Testament.

Have you ever recognized how often true Christianity is associated with whether or not you keep His commandments? Not everybody who says to me, Lord, Lord, what's it look like? Well, those who do the will of My Father in heaven. You see, that's it. He looks at those who were following Him, believing on Him, there in John 8, and He says, look, you guys are going to prove to Me My disciples for real if you abide in My Word.

You get this repeatedly in Scripture. Don't deceive yourselves. Don't be hearers of the Word only and not doers, deceiving your own selves.

There's people that build their house on the sand. What do they do? These are people that build this whole monument of religion, but they don't do His Word. And it is going to come crashing down in a day.

Brethren, this is so tied to true Christianity in Scripture. This is impressive, but this is the picture of that which is true Christianity. I mean, do we not get this repeatedly in 1 John? We get this reality that by this,

we know that we have come to know Him.

How can you know if you've come to know Him? Well, by this, you keep His commandments. How can God just so dogmatically say, you can know that you know Me. Just look at your life.

Has there been a radical change in the way you regard My Word? Are you surrendered to that Word? Does that Word preoccupy you? Are you bent on following My Word? Does what I say impact your life? That's what He's saying. You can know whether you're a true Christian, because if it does not, you can hear it. I'm not asking whether you hear it.

I'm not asking whether you read your Bible. I'm not asking that. David was committed to do it.

Not just to hear it. Not just to say, well, I'm going to go to the service. When the saints congregate there, I'm going to be there, and I'm going to hear the Word, and I'm going to hear the preaching.

Brethren, that's not the issue. The issue is, when you go out the door on Sundays, does it ever impact you? Are you changed by it? Are you conforming your life to what you hear preached? Brethren, if regularly, systematically, you hear the Word of God, you hear it preached, you go to it, you read it, and you walk out of here and it does not transform your life, you are not conforming your life, you are not committed to doing... Brethren, what is this? This is no exercise in just doctrinal deepening. This is not, well, you know, we hope we get excited for a little bit, and we hope that it kind of, you know, does something to my emotions and makes me feel good or pumps me up or whatever.

Brethren, we've got to hear the Word of God and do it. Why? Well, brethren, it's the path of righteousness. And the thing is, this is what we have been given a disposition towards.

Brethren, the thing that you have to know is, this is not just rules to keep so that you can somehow get to heaven. These are paths of righteousness. And what happens to the true convert is that they have a disposition to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Brethren, I know that from the time God saved me, I want to do good. Why? Because it's good! It is good. I see it to be good.

I see it to be desirable. I see it. Now, I feel that which hinders me.

I feel that which fights against it. I feel my own heaviness, my own dullness, my own flesh. I feel that.

I feel these temptations. But brethren, God has given me eyes to see it, to desire it, and to seek after it. Brethren, that's true if you're a true Christian.

That's just true. True Christianity is impressive. You do not want to think that a commitment to God's words is some kind of super Christianity.

It's only attained by a few people. It's not. It just simply isn't.

Brethren, God is very clear on this. He says, look, there's people in this world that I have my eyes on. They're mine.

I love them. And I'll tell you who I look to. My eyes are on those, and I look to those who tremble at my Word.

I mean, that's what He says in Scripture. Jesus Himself comes along and says, If you love Me, keep My commandments. You see, that's really a New Testament statement.

Identical to Psalm 119:57. He looks at God and He says, I love you. I'm going to keep Your Word. I love you.

And if I love you, I love what you have to say. I love your will. And I'm going to make it the bent of my life.

God's Word simply will not let us relegate people who cherish God's Word to some fanatical fringe of true Christianity. No, it is true Christianity. Look, I want you to know this.

If you're sitting here, you know, I don't know the Lord. I'm not a Christian. I know that.

If you would be saved, you see what Christ saves us from? He saves us from our own way. Because there's a way that seems right to man. And it's not a good way.

It's a broad way. The end is destruction. He saves us.

He saves us from our way. And puts us in the way, in the King's way. In the way of holiness.

And it's a good way. He saves you from you. Let the wicked forsake His way.

And the unrighteous man his thoughts. Brethren, this is true Christianity. Not a fanatical fringe.

You know what Jesus said? You are My friends, if you do what I command you. Are you His friend? I mean for real. Many assume they are.

But what I'm asking is, can you truly say, when I go to this book, and I see what it says, there's a commitment to that. I see it. That's good.

I need to do it. I need to seek to follow that. There's a determination.

Do the commands of Christ really matter? To His friends? They do. And one other thing that's impressive about this to me, is that David voices this reality. Now you understand there's a difference between doing His will and voicing your intent to do His will.

And you might say, talk is cheap. It's the doing that really matters. Yeah, but the thing you have to know about David, is he spoke and he did.

And you see, when speaking goes hand in hand with doing, there is something impressive. What I find so impressive about this is the manner in which David vocalizes this commitment. I know all true Christians, they're new creations.

I know that all true Christians are going to have a disposition of heart to submit to and be surrendered to Christ. What is so impressive about David, is how dogmatically he says it. I swear an oath! I stand up! That I will perform your righteous rules.

You know why that's so impressive to me? Because I don't find Christians doing that. Now I know. I'm not there in your prayer closet with you and I don't know your thoughts.

And so maybe you are. But I suspect that the majority of us don't talk this way. I don't find many Christians who speak like he does.

And notice this, he's not trying to impress anyone. As I pointed out, he's not speaking to us. Brethren, so easy for people to speak to other people about their own good.

But he's not doing that. He's speaking to the Lord. Literally, my portion, O Yahweh, it's You.

And I promise to keep Your Word in the original, very clear, David speaking directly to the Lord. He's not merely telling somebody God is my portion. He's saying, Lord, You are my portion.

Lord, I will keep Your Word. Brethren, you think about that. You go into your closet where no one else can see.

It's you and it's God. Face to face. Heart to heart.

With the Lord God Himself. We're talking about the Lord who knows your every thought. And who knows your every motive.

And you go into your prayer closet and you can look at Him and say, Lord, I promise, I swear an oath to You, Father, that I will strive to keep Your way. I will do Your way. I am committed to Your righteous rules.

I, Lord, promise You that I am going to do Your commandments speaking directly. To speak so boldly, He's engaged with God Himself. It very much argues for David's sincerity.

Never miss the first part of this verse. You are my portion, O Lord. You never want to miss that part of the verse.

But David's commitment to obey is coming from a man who recognizes. He's blown away by the sheer glory of the fact the Lord is mine. Brethren, does it ever hit you? Do you? I have Christ.

I have been given eyes. I have been given faith to embrace the prize of all prizes, the treasure of all treasures. Christ is mine.

Do you know how few people on the face of this earth can say that in truth? And He's mine. He's my portion. And he's blown away by that.

He says if this is true, I promise I'll pour out my life to live for you. He's not ashamed that God is his portion. God's not ashamed to have him say so.

David does well to explode with this kind of passion. There's absolutely no possession like this possession. There's none.

And I would just say this, motive, motive, motive matters. If you're going to say, Lord, I promise to keep Your ways, motive is everything. God looks on the heart.

Why you would say such thing? You know what? We've got people who become committed kind of like New Year's resolutions. They see some good thing about making themselves do certain things or not do certain things for a certain season of time. People come along like that.

People in the guise of Christianity come along and say, I'm afraid of hell. And so you know what? I'm going to try to clean up my life. I'm going to conform my life.

I'm going to come to the church. I'm going to try on the surface level anyways. I'm going to try to get things right and do these different things.

Oh, but motive is everything. Because you know what? If your only motive is I'm going to try to keep God's commandments because I don't want to go to hell, that motive will run out of gas. Because the problem is your heart loves sin.

And God is not your portion. And eventually, you will run out of gas. This thing will come to nothing.

No one promises to keep God's words and actually carry through with it unless their motivation to do so is that the Lord is their portion. That's the desire that fuels this. David's commitment is only impressive when his motive becomes clear.

And that motive is God is my portion. You think about that. The Lord is my portion.

You are my portion, O Lord. Think about what portion means. You know something about David? Remember when he and his men were camped out there in the Philistine territory under the Philistine king? And they didn't let the king know that they were going out on all these raids? David would say, well, we went to such and such place when they were going over here and they were actually knocking off other people.

The king of the Philistines thought that David was making himself a stench in the nostrils of the Israelites. But David wasn't actually going and attacking Israelite settlements and villages. He was attacking others.

You know, David was a man of war. David fought a lot. David subdued a lot of enemies.

You know what happens when you go in and you make a raid? You know what happens when you go in and you conquer an enemy? There's spoil. Sometimes it's humans, servants, women. There's silver.

There's gold. There's animals. David was a man who knew.

He knew what it was to divide the spoil among the victors. You know what a portion is? A portion. That's the part you get.

That's like when somebody comes out with a platter full of sizzling steaks and you reach your fork over and you grab that steak and you put down that big old filet mignon on your plate. That's my portion. It's when the conquerors had all the cattle, the sheep, the silver, the gold, the jewels, all that is valuable.

And they began to divide it up. And David says, you know what, out of everything, this is my portion over here. This is the part I get.

This is the treasure I want. I want the Lord. The Lord is my portion.

I'll tell you, brethren, that man, that woman, who is not satisfied to have the Lord as their portion is a fool. The one who looks at the Lord and says, nope! That's not sufficient. That's not enough.

That doesn't satisfy. That's not what I want for my portion. I want the treasures of Egypt.

That man is a fool. David's no fool. He sizes everything up.

Brethren, I know. I know. Unless God makes you His own, unless God chooses you for His own, unless God gives you eyes to see the way these things need to really be seen, nobody chooses the Lord for His portion until God chooses you for His portion.

I recognize that. Brethren, we're talking about a man who is deliberate. A man who knew what he loved and he was committed to and who he was going to follow and what he was going to give his life to.

This is deliberate holiness. That's what we find here. Sold out.

Given to this. Deliberate. Brethren, I'll tell you, there's nothing like assurance to make a man deliberate about holiness.

You know what it seems to me? I came from circles. Circles of hyper-Calvinism in the north. Maybe there's some down here too.

Where two things seem to really be emphasized. One, they made it a virtue to doubt your salvation. Two, they love to view Christians as wretched men who could never do what they wanted to do.

And you know what? It's not surprising those two things go hand in hand. You want to show me a lion-hearted man determined to do God's will? Show me the man who is absolutely convinced God is my portion. He's mine! And I am His.

You want something to fuel holiness? Assurance will do it. If you doubt whether you're saved, if you doubt whether you're in or whether you're out, it's not surprising that your life is not one that is sold out to His ways. You won't be determined.

You won't be intentional. Because you're always wondering, am I in? Am I out? There's very little fire there to fuel this whole thing. Assurance.

Assurance, brethren. Powerful incentive to holiness. I'll tell you what.

Powerful incentive to have your lips say, Lord, I promise I'm going to keep Your ways. When you are convinced He's mine, I've got the treasure of all treasures, I'm heaven bound, I'm going to be in His presence forever. I get to have Him.

I get to hold Him. He's going to talk with me and walk with me and I'm going to be transformed into His image. I'm His.

I've been rescued out of this darkness. I've been rescued out of this place, out of my sin. I've been freed.

He's mine. Salvation is of the Lord and I have been saved by Him. I have His salvation.

I'm a free man. I breathe the air of freedom. I'm a true Christian.

I've been rescued. I know it! I know it! I know He has given me a love for Him. He has given me a heart's desire to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

I know it! I know I am not the old man anymore. I know I'm a new creation. I know the old has passed away.

I know all things have become new. I know that Christ is my hope. I know it! When you've got that kind of confidence, you can say, given all that, Lord, I swear an oath to You.

I'm going to keep Your ways. I'm going to do that. It's impressive.

The next thing I would say is it's also a rebuke that He says this. I feel rebuked by this verse. Why? Because I don't speak that boldly to the Lord most of the time.

And you know what? I don't want to speak for you, but my hunch is neither do you. If you do, you can ignore what I say right now. But my hunch is that most of us, maybe all of us, we don't speak so boldly.

We're not so deliberate and intentional, at least in voice, in expression, as David is. Brethren, I'm ashamed that I'm not more vocal to Him. I'm not talking about telling one another.

I'm talking about our intentionality before the Lord. Brethren, I feel like I've fallen short of making such declarations to Him. I promise to keep Your words.

I've sworn an oath and confirmed it to keep Your righteous rules. And again, you all understand what we're talking about. There is keeping God's Word and then there is declaring that I will keep His Word.

Now, certainly it is better to do God's will than just talk about doing it. But brethren, I am convinced of this. I believe that there's something... I believe there is something about declaring your intention because you love Him that actually comes into play in you actually carrying it out.

I believe that. I believe that us declaring it... Brethren, I'll tell you this. Do I think about the covenant that I made with my wife when I got married? I do think about it.

Do I ever think about the fact she has my ring on her finger? I do think about that. There is incentive in that. Brethren, I'll tell you this.

If in your prayer closet, your prayer field, your prayer bedroom, your prayer wherever it is that you pray, if that place you go there and you lift up your heart, you say, Lord, I swear an oath to You and I stand up. I'm going to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. I am going to keep His commandments.

Brethren, I believe you'll remember that. I believe that will be incentive. I believe that the Spirit of God will use such holy boldness to bring to your remembrance and stir fire in your heart.

I believe it works that way. Listen, you have to remember something. God put this in His Word.

And it's for our learning and for our edification. And I don't think He put it here for us to just look at it and say that has nothing to do with my life. I believe He put it here because it's to be imitated.

I believe that David was a man after God's own heart and we should seek to be just such kind of men and women. Brethren, you don't want to blow this off. I recognize there's a difference between keeping it and declaring I'm going to keep it.

But the thing is, He declared it and I believe it went hand-in-hand with the fact that the vast majority of His life demonstrated the fact that He did keep it. It's a powerful motivator to do so. And I've asked myself the question, why are we not so bold to make such deliberate declarations about our own commitment to be surrendered and to follow Him? And there's some reasons.

There's some reasons we're not. And I believe one reason is we've got people in our midst that they're not deliberate and intent in speaking about this because God's not their portion. I mean, we've got people here that they don't hunger and thirst after righteousness and so making a promise to keep it, they're just not interested.

They're not going to do it because they have no heart to do it. That's why some... But, brethren, there are other reasons. I think one is we fear failure.

What do I mean by that? We can say with David, God is my portion. He is. You can take everything else away.

But if I have Him, I have everything. You could say that. And I know some of you, I know many of your hearts, they resonate with that.

They resonate. You can say that. He is my treasure.

And you can say, I want to obey Him. Well, why don't you promise like this? Why don't you swear an oath like this? You say because I don't want to make a promise I can't keep. I'm afraid that if I make that promise to keep God's Word, I'm going to very quickly not keep His Word and break my promise.

Now, I won't swear an oath when that's so severe, so strong, and then to not carry through. But brethren, brethren, I know that. I understand that.

I feel that. But before you run down that road, I want you to think. David, don't turn here, but just listen to these words.

You can look at this later. You go study Psalm 38 at another time if you're really interested in this. But just listen.

The same David could say this. There is no health. This is Psalm 38 v. 3-5.

He could say, there is no health in my bones because of my sin. He's acknowledging his sin. My iniquities have gone over my head like a heavy burden.

They're too heavy for me. My wounds stink and fester because of my foolishness. See, that's what we're afraid of.

We swear an oath like that. We've felt this way enough times. My own iniquities, they're like these festering, stinking wounds.

They go over my head. I feel that. Well, so did he.

So did he. Psalm 38, he felt that way. But let me tell you this.

Before he leaves that very Psalm in which he himself admits his iniquities, his wounds, his foolishness, listen to what he says. Psalm 38 v. 18 I confess my iniquity. I confess it.

Brethren, that's one of the ways of walking according to His Word. You confess your sins. God does not assume you're going to live perfectly.

I write to you that you sin not, but if you do, you have an advocate. Jesus Christ the righteous. David himself could say foolishness, festering, iniquities, but he says I confess my iniquity.

I'm sorry for my sin, v. 18. And in v. 20 he says, those who render me evil for good accuse me because I follow after good. Now, it's amazing.

You have to hear what just happened there. My wounds fester in stink, foolishness, iniquity. I confess my sins.

I follow after good. What do you mean you follow after good? Look what happened. Festering, foolishness, stinking.

What's all that? Brethren, that's the Christian life. The Christian life is you commit, Father, I promise I am going to walk in Your Word. You follow, that promise comes back to you and you stand up.

That's what he did. He stood up. I swear an oath and I stand up.

You get back on your feet and you say I am determined to do good. Father, I confess my sins. You see, a lot of people have this idea, you fall into sin, just sit there in the slough of despond and be some wretched man that I am and slither around in that for a while after a certain amount of time, and then you can come back with your tail between your legs.

But brethren, that's not the issue. Yes, there's a place for sorrow, for sin. But you know what? If you've sworn an oath, you stand back up and you say, okay, I fell.

Father, I admit it. I did this. I humble myself.

I cry out, Lord, for forgiveness. I know what I did is grieving to You and I confess it. But I am determined nonetheless to do right and it starts with my confession to You and now, Lord, You helping me, I am back on my way and I'm going down this path.

Brethren, I know we can be afraid of failure, but the thing is, if you fall into this wretched man syndrome where you just slough around in that muck, that's not the way of a man who says, I promise you I am going to walk in your ways. No, you rebound in the confidence of him that you are going to be upheld and you are going to go on and you're going to go down that path. Brethren, it's a lie of the devil that you just flounder around in the midst of that situation.

It's a lie of the devil that you can't be committed like David was. He did not take the possibility of failure as a reason to not make a commitment before God like this. And God, you can tell, did not hold it against him when he fell and he rebounded and he confessed his sin and he was just as determined as ever.

And brethren, I'll tell you this, there's something in all of it that ought to compel you all the more if you can look at him and say, God is my portion. Think about what it is when you do some foolish, festering thing, you fall flat on your face as David did. And then you rise up and you find, oh, he's forgiven me.

He's forgiven me. It's all the more I want to embrace him as my portion. All the more if I've got a God like that, I want to please him.

You don't have to slither off into some corner. You're a child of the King and He beckons you to come to His throne of grace. And you will find grace and mercy there.

Brethren, another reason is the fear of presumption. You see, people feel like it's presumption for me to say that I promise to keep Your words. That's foolishness.

You know what? It would be presumption if David said, God, I don't really need Your help in this. I got this. I'm going to keep Your way.

Watch me do this. Watch me perform here. That would be foolish.

You trust in your own strength. You trust in your own ability. Brethren, you know what I find here? Look at v. 57.

The Lord is my portion. I promise to keep Your words. You just go right before this.

Go back to v. 32. Notice this. I will run in the way of Your commandments when You enlarge my heart.

V. 33 Teach me, O Lord, the ways of Your statutes, and I will keep it to the end. Notice again these reaffirmations. I will run in the way of Your commandments, but Lord, I need You to enlarge my heart.

I will keep Your statutes to the end, but Lord, teach me the way of Your statutes. V. 34 I'm going to observe these things with my whole heart, but give me understanding that I may keep Your law and observe it. Lead me in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.

Incline my heart to Your testimonies and not to selfish gain. Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things. Brethren, let me tell you something.

Making a statement like this in the way David made it is not an expression of foolishness and presumption. It's an expression of faith. Let me tell you something.

If God has promised in the New Covenant I am going to save them and I am going to cause them to walk in My statutes. You see, brethren, I can say, Father, if You promise that, if You promise I will walk in them, then I promise you I will walk in them. You see, that's an expression of faith.

To not be able to say it is not trusting the Lord who says that He will do that. Brethren, don't be afraid of presumption in saying this. Be afraid of unbelief in not saying it.

Be careful that the reason you are not so bold with the Lord is that you've underestimated His power to keep you doing it. And brethren, I believe this. I believe God is well pleased when you... You see, this is right at the point why I think this is actually so critical to you actually doing His will.

Because what it is, you come to Him expressing your faith. Faith has to be behind this promise. I promise.

And all the time, the reason your promise is coming forth from your lips is because your heart is set on and embraces and trusts the fact that God has said, I'm going to save a people and I'm going to make them into the image of My Son. They are predestinated to be conformed to the image of My Son. Well, God, if you say that, and you are My portion, and I long for that, then I promise, I swear an oath, I'm going to do that.

I am going to follow Christ. I am not going to follow any other man. I'm going to be deliberate.

I'm going to be determined. Why? Because my God is deliberate and He is determined and He is intentional about what He's making me. And so I am going to have the same intentionality about this and I

am going to walk this.

Brethren, God's name is at stake. He has said, and will He not perform? Brethren, He will. We can say these kind of things not in our own pride and presumption, not in a trust in ourselves, not a trust in our own ability.

Brethren, one last thing. I found this to be an encouragement. And I find it to be a great encouragement.

Why? Because David was a frail man like us. Because David was a man of the same nature as ours. Brethren, I believe that we should be thankful to see a man who fell into the kind of murder and adultery he did to be able to go on, having a God who forgave his sins, still determined to live for God.

You know, when God sizes up His life, His ways were good in the sight of the Lord with that one exception. This is a man in glory. This is a man committed to do right even after a massive fall that made it into the pages of Scripture and has been preserved for us to see down to this day.

He's made of the same kind of stuff. That's an encouragement that we ourselves can look up into the face of God. Lord, You know my frailty.

Lord, if I'm left to my own strength, I hear those words, and You've convinced me of it time and time again. Without me, You can do nothing. Lord, I know we need to be taught it repeatedly because we're dull and hard of hearing when it comes to that.

But to a certain level, to a certain degree, God has made His children aware of that reality. Lord, You have made me aware of it. Lord, You helping me.

You sustaining me. I am determined I am going to walk in Your ways. I am determined I am going to follow Christ all the way to the end.

I am determined I am going to keep Your commandments. You are my portion. I am going to follow You.

I swear an oath to it. When I come to the New Testament, I find this. I find that Scripture says very loudly He Himself bore our sins in His own body on that tree.

And I'll tell you why He did. That you might die to sin and live to righteousness. You hear what Peter is saying? Your Lord went to that tree and He poured out His blood and He suffered like He did on that tree.

That you might die to sin and live to righteousness. You see, that kind of promise. What? Did my Lord go to the tree and die for me and drink the wrath of God for me so as to unleash such a power of God into my life that I might live righteously? Father, if that's true, then I'm determined to live righteously.

Why? I've got the power of God behind me. I've got the cross of God behind me. I've got the promise of the New Covenant behind me.

I've got the testimony of David behind me. Why would I not? Do you see that, brethren? You have every reason. You have no right to be silent about your intentionality.

Brethren, you come to the Scriptures and you find this. You might find it expressed in different ways, but you've got the Apostle Paul. He says, for me to live is Christ.

That's the exact same statement. What does he mean by that? My life is His. I'm living for Him.

I've been bought with a price. My all is on the altar. I'm going to live righteously.

Brethren, this encourages us to be as determined as David to live unto God. As John was reading this morning, verse 74 jumped out at me. Those who fear you, and I was thinking about those in this room who are going to hear this message today and who are listening to this psalm being read.

Those who fear you shall see Me and rejoice because I have hoped in Your Word. And I thought about this, and I thought, you know what? Those who see David in this example of saying, I swear an oath and I stand up, I am going to keep Your righteous ways. I'm going to walk in them.

I thought, you know what? There are some people here that can look at that today and rejoice. Brethren, this speaks to us far more of God than it does of David. And of what He is determined to do in the salvation of us.

Brethren, if the Lord is your portion, say so. Declare it. And if you love Him, would you not love His Word? And if you love His Word, brethren, would you not strive to make it the very pattern of your life? The glory of God ought to compel us to be able to speak this way.

Say it, brethren. Say it. I mean, you say before God, yes, Christ is my King.

He is my Lord. I want no other. I will follow Him.

I am not going to follow another. I promise my allegiance to Him. Lord, I give my allegiance to Christ and to no other man.

And I'm going to follow Him to the end. God help us, brethren. Father, we pray that we would have the grace to live that way, committed, deliberate, intentional.

In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

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