

Two Roads Two Destinies 08 Ireland st.chapel

by Worth Ellis

The sermon explores the reality of Satan as a deceiver and the necessity of relying on God's Word for spiritual strength and clarity.

Duration: 56:34

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 1:51, 2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 6:11, 1 Peter 5:6-10

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Worldly Distractions"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by sharing a personal experience of meeting an old teacher and having a reunion in a crowded restaurant. He then transitions to discussing the weakness of being occupied with worldly things and how it can hinder our ability to receive the word of God. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not prioritizing material possessions and desires over spiritual growth. He concludes by urging the audience to be aware of the seriousness of their actions and to be armed against the enemy's schemes, using 1 Thessalonians 5:6 as a reference.

Transcript

Today has been a day of constant, day of many tens of surprises. At lunch today, over in a rather crowded restaurant, there was a lady, quite a lady, sitting across from us, just looking at me. I didn't recognize her until I went out to see her films, and she was at the pick-up counter, the cash register, and she came toward me, and I recognized my sixth-grade teacher.

And she gave me a fair hug, almost squeezed the life out of me, and we had a reunion, so I had to explain to everybody in the restaurant what it was all about, because everybody was looking at us. My only regret is, I didn't give them a doctor's message while we had their attention. And then tonight I came in, and I saw three people sitting at the back, men, a woman, and a young girl.

One lady, and they kept looking at me, and I said, now that's somebody that's really not possible. They recognized me, and I don't recognize them. And you'll never guess that Franklin and Irene Brewer from Lakeland, Florida, with their girl, Janice, was up here at the door to see me about a job over at the University Hospital in Chapel Hill.

And what pleasant memories it brings back. About 22 months stay in Lakeland, and I believe I'm correct, Irene was saved while we were there as a result of a message on the news bus. Say what? Crazy stuff.

It's been a wonderful, small world, isn't it? And then to top it all off, we had Frank, and him, and the rest of the Spanish girls in the Bahamas. And it's been a wonderful day for me, but somebody ruined the whole thing for him when they told him that we looked packed enough like big brothers, and Frank said he was going to go home early. First Peter, Chapter 5. The rain.

Oh, yes. Beg your pardon, sir? Oh, yes. Well, as a matter of fact, I've just begun to think it wasn't able to rain, so I really forgot all about it.

I hope it comes six feet deep. First Peter, Chapter 5, verse 6. I'll give you that little bit of light. Let's pause for a moment and think about this.

Our loving Father, we ask Thee that Thou wouldst make us aware of the seriousness of that which we are about to consider. And may the Spirit of God be our teacher, and help us, Lord, to be armed against our adversaries, and not ignorant of His advices. And so, open up this truth to our hearts.

Help us to hear, to receive Thy word only, and to obey what Jesus says. Amen. Verse 6, verse 3 to 5. Humble yourselves, therefore, unto the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, welcomes about seeking whom he may devour. For resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your presence or in the world.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, hath to let you suffer the while, to make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. Now, tonight is our third and concluding message on the subject of Satan, set forth here under the figure of this clown, who, in the word of God, is referred to as the God of this world, and the prince of this town here, and also the ruler of this world. We have considered already the origin of Satan, and this morning, at the eleven o'clock hour, we took up the subject of the devil in relation to his design upon the lives of unsaved people.

We learned that the same authority that he wields over the governments, and over the scientists, and over all of the systems of this world that are not Christ-honoring, this same authority is versed upon unsaved people for one reason only, which is keeping them from entering in through this door. He does not care how religious a person becomes, how moral, or how righteous, because he himself, according to the word of God, is a moral and a religious being. I think it was a great tragedy to be called a Christian church.

What makes it possible for the devil to touch so many of us as God's people unaware is that he has created a concept of himself which is a very antithesis of what he is actually like. And, to prove that he is a master at the art of deception, the average American person, I don't know about abroad, but their concept of Satan has been gotten from the picture that's been drawn, a label on the can of red devil nipper. This is exactly the opposite of what the word of God teaches the devil to see.

And, I don't know of anything that speaks in a more strong of his ability to deceive than if he can deceive us into believing he is something which he is not. And so, he is a religious being, a moral being, that I will be like for most of us. We learned this morning that, in the exercise of the Departed in power over unfaithful people, in keeping the people from trusting Christ that he might take them down to a lost eternity, isn't he of the power to bind people? So, then, in Luke's Gospel, chapter 15, that this girl called Abraham, whom Satan had found lowly eighteen years, and she could not even straighten herself up, she was a hunchback.

The Lord cut her an immediate leg. She was straight, and she glorified God. We suggest that this is symbolic of that which is true of every poor, crooked sinner.

Now, don't make crooked in the moral sense of the word, but who are bowed down. Men cannot look up. For all of man has been so far-reaching in his effect upon the human race that man, by nature, Whenever the Lord touches the heart of an unsaved person, that person is born again.

They are straightened up, and they live in order to glorify God. Secondly, we saw that the power of this one called the God of this world. In 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verses 3 and 4, we read that, "...that the God of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, through his image of God, should shine unto them.

And it is found there that the devil has the power not only to bind people with sin, but he has the power to blind, and the author, I think, says the minds of people, but it's the thoughts of people that he blinds. He puts a veil over the door." The word blinded, in 2 Corinthians 4 and verse 4, is the root word from which comes the English word smoke. So, he sends up a smoke screen around the gospel.

He confuses the issue, adds all sorts of things to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and makes it so hopelessly confusing that whenever a person hears a pure, unadulterated gospel of Christ, it is something that is absolutely new. Now, this is what makes the issue so confusing. In either case, whether it be those that are bound or those that are blinded, only the word of God can release you, because in Psalm 118, verse 130, "...the interest of thy work giveth might, and it giveth understanding." In Hebrews 4, 12, the word of God is, "...living and powerful, sharper than any clergy sword, piercing even into the body of the son of the soul and spirit, and of the joints of the marrow.

It is the discernment of thoughts, and the intent of the heart." So, in Romans 10, 17, 18, verse 5, "...hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So, the Lord Jesus, through the word of God, is the only one who can straighten up those who are bound over, and who can take the scales of darkness away from the eyes of those who are blinded. Thank God for the word of God. I'd like to emphasize that again this evening, that the word of God is that instrument, the spirit of God, employed in every stage of Christian experience.

Whether it be the conviction of sin, divine elimination, making me aware of my condition as a lost sinner in the presence of a holy God, it's the word of God that does it. And, if I receive Jesus Christ as Savior, Peter tells me that I have been born again. I've been corrupted, but he's by the word of God that lives and abides forever.

And, as a Christian, the only possible chance for way of growing is through the reading of the word. Thank you, God, who through thy word thy word is true. And so, the word of God is our only hope in this dark world.

And, Peter refers to it in his epistle as a light or a lamp that shines in the dark place. Now, tonight, we come to the work of the devil regarding his design upon people of God. What is the objective of Satan when we take the Church of God, the Father, His Christ, as a whole or a local agenda, believers or an individual Christian? Well, one of the three purposes of the devil is that, immediately after being saved by the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the power of God in the foundation, during Jesus' time, the door by which imminently he shall be saved.

Immediately, when he steps in through the door and gets both feet on this narrow road that leads to heaven, all of the power of the devil, all of his cunning strategy, all of his power of deception, then is concentrated upon you as a believer to make your life useless and worthless at home. He never tried to unsave a Christian because he knows a lot more about his theology than some preachers I've met who say that should he save the lost, he saves the lost. The devil is not, never tried to unsave anybody.

He knows that he knows very well that the moment you're born again, having forgotten the peace and word of God that is your life forever, you have the same quality of life that God himself has. It is eternal life. It never ends.

The consequence when you become a Christian, he never tries to unsave you when he simply changes his tactics. Now that you have escaped his binary authority and power, your eyes open, he changes his tactics, and then he concentrates all of his power formally on you and on him. He says, remember your life and testimony in its tactics for God.

For this reason, the Christian in the word of God is a special target of all of Satan's attacks. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 18 through 20, we have that very good passage that so instructive, the word I'm willing, that instructive passage that explains to us that we have been reconciled with God by the death of his Son. We have been brought from a place of death to a place of life, a place of sickness to a place of nearness.

We have been reconciled with God by the death of his Son, and then we read that when the Lord Jesus went back to glory, he committed to us, poor, frail, chastened, the ministry of reconciliation. And just as the Lord Jesus Christ becometh men and women to be reconciled with God, the ministry of reconciliation, or the word of service, is given to you and to me. And, we are told about in Christ's stead, in the place of the Lord Jesus, beseeching men and women to be reconciled with God.

And, the basis of that reconciliation is given in the twenty-first verse of these words, for God has made him, Christ, the ruler of sin, and made sin for us that we might become God's righteousness in him. Now, you see, inasmuch as the ministry of reconciliation, the winning of the law, inasmuch as the bearing of the name of Christ, and all those wonderful things God has committed to us as believers of stewardship, the devil immediately attacks God's people because, you see, if he can get at us and ruin our lives in Texas, if he can cause the Christians to fall, to stumble, to lose their Christian testimony, he does much to resist the privileges of God in this world. Which, incidentally, is the meaning of the word chagrin, and not in the word righteousness.

This is the only adequate explanation for the dark pages of the history of the church, gripped by numerous divisions, paved by moral evil, lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. The history of the church of God is strewn with the path of wrath and the wreckages of the lives of godly-meaning women who, for years, have gone on wealth for the Lord, and have been overcome by their flesh. Satan takes advantage of that and destroys them, and the Christian history book is covered with a sea of the wreckage and the wrecks of the lives of godly-meaning women who have been overcome by the wretched wrath.

This, dear children of God, is the objective of the devil regarding the life of God's people. Now, in view of all this, we as Christians should have a very healthy respect for Satan, and this is the word of God teaches us. Now, sometimes it is most gratifying to see people convicted through your preaching, and then eventually getting saved.

This is wonderful reward. But, when you get convicted through your own preaching, I don't know what to make of that, but it does work that way sometimes, and I did, and I'll tell you how it happened. Once I was preaching on the subject of Satan, and carelessly I referred to him as, Well, that's a southern nickname that people have given to the devil.

He's called Old Scratch, and, you know, I was preaching and called him Old Scratch, and immediately I was convicted that I had said something that was wrong. Not only was it wrong, but it was not according to the word of God, and it was also dishonoring to the devil. Now, if you think you can send me dishonoring to Satan, that sounds a little strange, but I want to show you something that the Lord taught me, and when we see this, it should instill in our hearts a healthy respect, not an admiration, respect in the sense of fear of his enemy, of our soul, the devil.

Now, it turns to 2 Peter for a moment. That's page 2 over to your right, and I'll show you how I made this discovery. Here in 2 Peter, chapter 2, and verse 9, it says, "...the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust under the day of judgment to be punished, but he for them that walk after the flesh in the lusts of uncleanness, and despise government." Now, these are false teachings.

"...presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries." Now, if you'll look briefly in your Bible, this word, dignitaries, is found as in 2, verse 8 and 9, and it's from the word doxa, and it is literally translated by the word glory. I notice the New American Standard Bible says they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesty. The New American or the New International Version says that they are not afraid to stand up celestial beings.

So, when I read this, the thought occurred to me that faith is one of these celestial beings. Faith is one of these lords. Faith is one of these supreme dignitaries of the universe, and God definitely prohibited that we should speak of him in an astounding manner.

Now, notice the next verse. "...whereas angels who are greater in power and might bring not a raring accusation against them before the Lord." Notice in Jude, verses 8 and 9, and we'll throw those over the back a full five pages, and you'll see that this is exemplified here in the words of Jude. And here, again, it's called Tinker.

In verse 8, the epistle of Jude, we read the following. 1 John 2, 58, verse. Likewise, also, he is still to dream of the child of flesh and to find dominion and speak evil of dignities.

Here, again, it is the word glory. "...Yet Mako, the earth angel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a raring accusation, but said, The Lord rebuketh." Here is a fascinating passage that instantly means that the devil is one of those glorious, one of those dignities which God forbid we should speak lightly about. We should not speak insultingly of it.

He tells us here that it is astoundingly an astronomical thing to do. Huh? Because, in our tradition on the cross, we're back down in regard to this devil, the enemy of God and the people of God, that he is one who is an exalted being. Now, I took this out of Mr. F. Jennings' book on faith, and he did an absolutely tremendous And, I'll just pass it on to you, that as such, the glory and dignity conferred upon him who is here called the devil, that even the highest of the holy angels, the only one ever called the archangel, that means the chief of the angels, Michael, recognizing that dignity holds that in some way he is even higher than himself, for none but the Lord can rebuke him.

Here is Michael, the chief of all of the angels, the one who's going to give the shout, the voice of the archangel, and Michael is the only one in the Bible ever called the archangel, the chief of angels, and with the voice of the archangel, he's the one who's going to give the cry. And, when Jesus comes, he is the one who leads the host of spite and the war in heaven in the future day in Revelation 12, when Satan shall be cast down from this earth. And yet, when disputing with him, and this is one of those fantastic, fascinating passages of Scripture that I wish we had absolutely no knowledge except what the Holy Spirit said in the New Testament, that on the occasion involving the burial of Moses, that Michael and the temple had an argument over the body of Moses, and when they were arguing about it, Michael, the archchief of all of the angels, realizes that, in some mysterious way, that the devil was a higher being than himself.

Realizing this, he didn't dare rebuke him. He said, the Lord has to take care of you. Now, it is possible for a superior to rebuke an inferior, or a parent to correct a child.

That's quite an order. But, you never hear of an inferior rebuking a superior, if that doesn't make sense. And, here is the most revealing passage in the whole Bible in regards to the dignity of the devil.

That's why people should stop looking at Satan's creatures, and I may tell you by saying that from the authority of the Word of God, that the devil is the second most powerful being in the whole universe, next to the Holy Spirit of God himself. The most intelligent creature being to ever live on this earth, and he could say, I believe, if he were to make his appearance here, his body would be so beautiful that the very dazzling splendor of him as set forth in Ezekiel 28, under those beautiful stones before he fell when he was crucified, I believe the very sight of him would put your eyes up. He'd be so bright and so shining.

And, you must remember the passage in the Corinthian epistle where Paul speaks of the devil having transformed himself into an angel of light. He's an angel of light. And, so once he said that the creatures of the ministers of faith transformed themselves into the ministers of righteousness, preaching righteousness without regeneration.

And, if you want to know by chance the definition of why there are so many more liberal preachers in the Protestant segment of Christianity than there are fundamental preachers, it's because the devil has more preachers than the Lord has. The servants of the devil, they are here. It is time for us to wake up and to realize this.

We have, for the word of God tells us in 2 Corinthians 2.11, "...beware that Satan should get the advantage of you, for we are not ignorant of his devices." So, you see, children of God, tonight, in order to live your life on, you ought to consider some of the traps we set for God's peace. Number one, I believe that immediately when you trust the Lord Jesus as your Savior, if he can call a Christian to doubt about salvation, he's got that person beat. I don't know what it means to have a doubt.

See, perhaps, as it goes, I would say so absolutely ignorantly that I didn't know a verse of Scripture, and I hadn't been to church in eight years, and didn't believe in God, heaven, hell, Jesus Christ, and didn't know how to pray. And, something just happened to me like slipping off a stick of dynamite in a pencil box. That's not what it amounted to.

It was a change, and then I didn't know what was going on, and I found out what had happened to me. I don't ever remember my life having a doubt as to whether I was saved or not. But, you see, many believers are plagued by doubt as to whether they've ever really been saved or not, and when I try to analyze this thing, I say, well, on some of the problems out there, I suggest that, number one, some

people are saved on a very cloudy gospel.

The word of God is not preached in all of its parish, in all of its stories. Other things, like tradition, and emotionalism, and objectivism, are mixed in with the gospel, and people are oftentimes freaked out, and told to try to get up straight, and they get occupied with such things. That's not the way to do it, since they're occupied with the Lord Jesus.

And so, you see, we need to remember this, that many people hear the gospel. I believe that my dear mother was saved as a girl, and yet I don't ever remember my mother speaking a word to me about the Lord Jesus. She whipped me for smoking, and she loved me, and she cared for me, and when we were saved in 1944, my mother blocked them right out for the Lord.

She could never put a finger on time in her life, she would say. I believe my mama was saved when she was a girl. I believe my oldest sister, who witnessed me for faithfulness for fifteen years, was saved when she was a girl.

But, after I got saved, she would be a less vocal preacher of pure, pure unadulterated gospel, and she got torn up, and she got an insurance in John 5, 24. So, I'm speaking of a pouty gospel, and a lack of good, clear teaching as a person becomes a Christian can cause them to doubt their salvation. The first thing the devil wants to do is to try to prevent you from being affected by love, and you will be assured that you are going to be saved.

Can you imagine what it would be like trying to recommend that the door-to-door salesman applaud us and give you an absolutely no confidence yourself? So, unless the Lord Jesus has really done something for me, and unless I know he has made me real good, I just recommend that everybody is only, only effective in our witness for Jesus Christ, as we are absolutely sure that he is ours, and he is all, and we are enjoying him. He is freedom. That's when you're affected.

That's the only time you're affected. If you go around seeking the witness of the Lord like Thelma, that salesman that used to be on the radio before TV came along, you know. You remember, I forget what night in the week it was, but Thelma was a very busy salesman, and he'd come on every night with a theme song and something going like this, and they worked together.

And he said, nobody could hear him. That's the way he came on. Well, if you are not sure you are saved, that's the way you're a witness.

So, assurance is so essential to effective witness of Christ. So, the devil starts at the beginning place, where it hurts the most, where it makes you doubt you're saved. Well, you've got a feeling that, are you sure you're saved? They're saying, oh, you've got to argue with him.

Well, I remember that's the most wonderful feeling I've ever had. The devil says, sure, I agree with you, but what's the deal with it? Well, you don't know, but it's gone, and I can't quite get it back. So, you see, you fall a victim to feelings.

Now, remember this, that in the temptation of the Lord, when Satan tempted him three times in response to each temptation, the Lord Jesus said, it is written, it is written, it is written. And, my dear brethren and sisters, the only source of the defeat of the devil, the only weapon we have, the only dissolver of doubt, is the word of the living God. It is written, by word of the Lord, it's forever settled in heaven.

God has sanctified his word of abominable nature. I've told this story so many times, I'm afraid I'm going to tell it to somebody that I've told it to before, but it's so good. It might be just what you need.

I remember hearing this story of a lady who had trusted the Lord Jesus as her Savior, and who, John 5.24, very, very, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth in me, hath everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation, but has passed already from death unto life. She received the assurance of salvation, and she was rejoicing in the Lord. And then, she had a season of death.

We didn't know exactly what brought it about, but Satan really attacked her, and she was the most miserable person in the whole world. He tells the story that she had a habit of reading her Bible or her testament in her bed, right? Just before she fell asleep. It was great, a pure insomnia.

I don't know when I ever put this advice into practice. I'm a five-minute preacher, and I'm a practitioner, but they tell me if you get to sleep and can't go to sleep, read the word of God. The devil will put you to sleep.

Well, she used to lay in her bed and read her text, chapter two, and then she would always get up and lay down on the night table, and wake up and turn out the light. And, she said, you know, it was so absolutely frustrating. Every time I would do that and turn the light off, immediately when the switch on the light would kick, now she said, you won't believe this, but I could almost declare I heard an awful voice, and the devil was under my bed.

And, he said to me, you are not saved. And, I said to him, well I think I am. Well, he would say to me, how can you be? You're off the table with your husband this morning.

You're strained at the children. Think of the evil thoughts you have. Every night, night after night after night, he attacked her like that.

And, she went on to say that one night the Lord came to me in mercy and delivered me. That night I was reading, and I had some guts to read by the grace of God, that passage in John 5, 24. And, I said, it's still there.

What a fool I have been to listen to the lie of the devil. The Lord has not changed his words. I have been saved by the grace of God.

That night, he said, I was so filled with joy that I didn't follow the usual procedure. But, I laid it by the dowel, pressed it towards me with all my breath, open like this, and I reached up to turn the light out. And, immediately when I turned the light out, there he was.

He said, Lord, you're not saved. You're not saved. And, he said, in a moment of frustration and anger, I took my pistol and off of my bosom, and I tucked it under the bed, and I said, read it for yourself.

And, he said, I testify to you from that moment to this that I've never had a doubt that I am saved. And, I heard that. I said, glory to God.

The devil must be a modernist freak. He can't take the word to the head. He read it.

He read it. But, dear friend of God, remember this. Don't ever get into an argument with the devil.

He's a smart lawyer. He'll never bring a false accusation against you. Everything he says about us is true.

He won't try to tell a lie about us. God will know that immediately. And, listen, dear friend, teach it.

And, don't talk under the Lord Jesus in the feet of the devil. And, he does it through the word of God. So, if the devil can get a new believer in Christ to doubt in their salvation, that person is whipped.

That person is set aside. They're immobilized. No longer living in the service of the army of God, they cannot open their mouth.

You show me a person that doubts, and I'll show you a person that doesn't doubt. Doubting and doubting don't go together. I guarantee you this.

Oh, the joy of the assurance that my friend, though, was to know that I was saved by the good Lord. And, the devil knows this. He knows the value and importance of it as regards effectiveness in my life until he attacks me first on this issue as to whether I've ever really been saved or not.

Now, if that doesn't work, I believe step number two, then the devil comes to you and deception. He deceives many people of God into believing that the Lordship of Jesus Christ is not absolutely essential to a happy and effective Christian life. He convinces some of the people of God that I don't need to be concerned about a daily systematic method of Bible reading.

I don't have to read my Bible through once a year. I don't have to get the pillow off my head in the morning and get up and read the word of God and spend an hour in the Lord's presence. By goodness gracious, I go to church sometimes on Sunday, and I hear the man preach the church for 45 minutes, and I'm getting ready a Bible.

And, so the devil convinces you of that. You sit there and dribble up like a bird laid out in the sunshine, and you become spiritually dehydrated, and you become an infection, because the devil has persuaded you that you don't really need to discipline yourself. You don't really need to pick you up one of these poles which I just accidentally happened to have with me tonight, and a good supply of lines back there on the table, and your lights are out, and you don't need to be charged for nothing.

A system of daily Bible reading takes you through your Bible once a year in an interesting way. I was satisfied today when Brother Perry told me I had to do this in southern Spanish from Oklahoma four years ago, and he told me it's the best that he's ever had. The most interesting.

It keeps the Bible alive more than reading straight through. So, what can you do? If you let the devil convince you that you can get by without disciplining your life, and giving the Lord at least an hour a day in a quiet place and reading and in prayer, you are a dead duck. You are absolutely whipped as a fish, and the reason for many of us as believers, our testimonies are insipid and are not protected from God.

The reason we have no spirit of loyalty to the local assemblies which seek to represent the Lord Jesus, the reason we have no real joy is because we forget that Jesus said, "These things have I written unto you that your joy might be bought." And, I want to tell you tonight, my dear friend, you can serve the Lord in a ramble and go ahead. You can teach Sunday school. You can serve the Lord in the church, and you can do all of this as a matter of routine and ceremony, and you can do it effectively, but if you do not put the word of God first in your life above prayer, above service to God, above everything else within all of your life standing still right where you got into the Christian faith at, there is no progress in the Christian life apart from the word of God.

Now, if he can convince you that you can get by, then you are absolutely great. But, not the conscience, not only that, but the Holy Spirit himself comes to us so often and says, "Oh, why are you so lax in the reading of the word of God?' Is it not embarrassing to some of you dear people to be saved twenty years, and here and there get up on the track and read a text that you've never in your life heard about in the twenty years you've been?" This is embarrassing, isn't it? At least I hope so. I hope it gets so embarrassing you can't sleep until you get down to business with God over the word.

I tell you tonight, I am absolutely frustrated that the power of God in the Holy Spirit, the effectiveness of the witness of this ascent of the corporate testimony of believers is directly related to the faithful word of God that's given in the individual life of every Christian of this church. There is no substitute for it. The word of God is the only thing that God blesses.

Every time that you receive faith on the basis of God, if they are not brought under conviction through the word, if they're not regenerated by the word, if the word of God is not that whose worth is essential in their lives, there will be no use of God for anybody else. Now, I'm just telling you, love, if we do not put the word of God first, if we think that we can get by without making Jesus Christ our Lord, if we don't believe that Matthew 6, verse 33 applies to me, Cheat ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these other things of their likeness. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present the bond of the living sacrifice to God, which is a reasonable service.

Do not let this world around you squeeze you in this world. Do not let this world be renewed by a temple, rather by a reunion of your mind, proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God for our lives. And so, you see, the more you consider this wonderful truth of the scriptures, you'll find that the scriptures are absolutely indispensable in every aspect of the Christian life.

There's no substitute for the word of God. So, you see, we must verify. Again, it says that the Lord Jesus Christ is always, without an exception, followed by either a complete breakdown of the family altar, or by the absence of it altogether, where the father is morally obligated by the word of God to bring his children and his righteousness and maturity.

As the head of the house, the priest of the family, he is taking leadership. He must read and study the word of God. He'll have something to give his precious little children, to fortify them against the evil in this world.

He is responsible for this. But, you get into it, well, you're busy. You've got work to do.

You've got other things to do. And, we can't do this because we have used the revised third version of Matthew, Matthew 33. Keep the other things first, and then the kingdom of God will be added to it.

That's the way it is. Seek it first, the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to it. What a great time it is to see a Christian family sitting around a table three times a day, and the family never taking the word of God, and reading around and around, and the father leading the family in prayer.

I'll tell you this, little Bob. If our lives are inflicted or tasteless, if they're not affected in our fellowship, and, of course, if unsafe people are contacted, it's our fault. And, it stems from our zeal to be filled with the word of God.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. And, the dwelling of the word of Christ in you richly is synonymous with being filled with the Holy Spirit, and only as we are filled with the spirit of God will our ministry throughout us be effective. You see, not only this, but oftentimes the husband and the wife do not pray together, and this makes for strife and friction in the home.

My dear wife and I, by the grace of God, will have been married forty years this coming April. I hope that's not the right month. I'm never going to remember the date.

But, I believe it's April this coming. Forty years. And, Martha, I'll tell you the like, and we're still working on this thing of getting along together.

She has raised about her that I don't like. In a second. I used to hear some of the discussions we have in the kitchen over the way to cook.

I haven't commenced them yet, but I'm a better cook than she is. And, these little differences come in, but I'll tell you what we have discovered. The direct and the proportion to which my wife and I bow our knees together in prayer to God every day, and pray out loud in one another's presence, is the direct proportion to which there is absolute tranquility in our home.

And, I want to testify tonight, and my wife will check me up. Not now. She can't see the public.

She'll tell you after the meeting. We haven't had a real knock-down, drag-out fight in many years. And, harmony in the Christian home will be promoted more by dancing, kissing, married couples down on knees, praying out loud in one another's presence.

You know, I was ministering on this one time somewhere, and a little fella came to me after the meeting. We'd been married a couple of years, and he'd just begun to learn, after the new world had opened up to this thing, that it was real work, that long-term. And, he said, Doug, what? He said, you know what she's talking about tonight.

I said, what's that? He said, how on earth can I get down on my knees, sit down with my wife and pray out loud? If I tried to do that the moment I started to open my mouth, I'd be so consumed with those of all the other things I've said to her, the mean things I've done to her. I said, that's exactly what it's all about. You'll have to quit.

Let me tell you something tonight, as a man who'll be 60 years old in April, if you want to have peace in your home, you and your wife sit on your knees together and pray out loud. Nothing will promote harmony between you and your wife. Think of it.

The two of you could have been in touch many, many years. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every one of us is married, couples, and make up a decision where our knees, every day without fail, agree on what our children say, what our children say. You see, this is where we're different.

This is indicative of the authority and the power and the pressure of our life. The relationship between a husband and wife is so effortless physically, and yet when it comes to getting down on your knees and praying out loud, you can do it with every system you can. You better understand your own rights.

And the reason is because you know too little about that. But, you see, if we pray together, we'll put out that nonsense. I think you might call this line of ministry practical, wouldn't you? Very practical.

You see, have you ever noticed that Communism, when they take over a country, the first thing they set about is to break up the family unit? That's why they have communes. Do you know why they do that? Because they're smart enough to know that the fabric of any sensible society is based upon the unit known as the human family. Now, the devil is smarter than the communists, and he's got a lot of money.

And that's why the devil's main attack is on the Christian family. This is why the people of God are having so many problems when they're children. It is satanic, and it is demonic, and the devil knows that you can get a man and a woman fucking at one another, and the children sitting around looking at them and talking about behind their backs.

I'll tell you, it takes a super, super, duper hypocrite to raise a man against a woman. I'll tell you, it takes a super, super, duper, duper hypocrite to raise a man against a woman. I'll tell you, it takes a super, super, duper, duper.

When the devil is out there worshipping somebody, he's sure to get a boyfriend or a girlfriend accumulate much in this world, leave it all and go to the next world with nothing, is success. But, to have nothing in this world and go to the next world with everything is failure. You see, that's what he's convinced us of.

And, if he can get us as God's people occupied with the material things of this cosmos, this order of the world of politics, religion, and so on, if he can get us occupied with things, occupied with things, look at verse 15 of 1 John 2, love not the world means the things that are in the world. When men love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. The world that is in the world, the lust of the friends, and that word desire is lust, and the desire of the eyes, and the desire of life.

Now, it says that these are not of the Father, but they are of the world, and so they are enumerated for us here. First of all, is the desire of the flesh, something to gratify the taste of the human body, and then there's the desire of the eyes, to show the desire to be often patient, show it, to keep up with the judges, to accumulate things, and then the pride of life, to impress people with the fact that I have a lottery. Now, the reason the Spirit of God tells us that we as Christians must not be over-occupied with things is that God must, in verse 17, because this world is going to pass away, and all the things we lust after in it are going to pass away with it.

For he that doeth the will of God abides forever. And, you see, the great tragedy before the Christian church today is we have too much. We've got too much money.

We've got too many things. Well, I'm telling you what it's like. It has a killing effect upon people.

There's just something about possessions and wealth that seems to have a paralyzing effect upon the spirituality of our spiritual being, because it's in this area of things that affect the eye and the taste of the human body and pride that are ultimately opposed to Christian progress. Now, you remember in Luke chapter 12 and verse 15, Jesus said, Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consists if not in the abundance of the things that he may possess. Say, where? Take heed of covetousness.

Do you know what I discovered about covetousness recently? I used to think because the law says in Exodus 19 and 20 about something like covetousness and death, it was our neighbor's wife and our neighbor's donkey that was bullying what someone else had. Well, when I've searched for this testament in all the uses I've found, that covetousness in the testament has it in an entirely different connotation. It's not wanting what you've got, it's wanting more than I need for myself.

And, when it comes to the problem of determining just how much I need, then what matters to you for wealth? Well, I can convince myself that I need a lot. Well, heaven knows I should be satisfied with my 16-foot, Alabama-sized dress, fast clothes, and two hot silver seats in the Paddinghall Pavilion. And, it's poor, and I'll be satisfied with the things for myself.

But, you know, I just admit to myself that it's not big enough. But, when I see these fellows running around with these 115-horsepower Mercers on their back roads, I say, well, Lord, that's what I need. And, I've got to be on guard.

So, then your friend Ron told me this, and you heard him say it right from this platform. Cheer up, little boy, and don't you cry. You'll be a necessity, by and by.

That is the subtlety of covetousness. What happens? So, that's where Ron's little world becomes a necessity. And, I'm marching on, holding the excitement of payment, knocking down, and everybody gets excited.

You get excited when you've got enough to live with payment. The man, you know, he gets quite excited when he's got enough to pay it. That's called, not in scope, but excitement payment.

So, I can buy what? I can buy a Cadillac. But, you see, this is particularly attractive to young people, young married couples. This calls for a second job.

Oftentimes, it calls for the right to go to work, and there's never been a man living who was a spiritual giant enough to maintain fellowship and vigorous communion with God and hold down two jobs. I don't care who he is. You cannot do it.

A hurry, uptight schedule is the wrong thing to bring this in. It's a communion with Jesus Christ. So, what do you have? You have a society that is geared to everybody working.

I want to touch right now on a very, very tender subject, and I'm going to say it very tenderly, and I'm going to say it very firmly, that with some acceptance, some acceptance, working mothers may well be the biggest curse that has ever befallen a Christian. Now, I have in mind tonight some fine Christian couples and families with whom I've had wonderful fellowship for 25 years at the most. They were saved in that lifestyle for working.

Many of them to this day are still working, but not anymore. And, I am not being critical. I'm not one of them.

You see, we are not injected for our knowledge through the rationalizing of man, or man's reason, but without revelation. So, we let the word of God speak, and oftentimes it is justified. Whenever a husband is sick, it's perfectly in order, in my judgment, for the wife to work.

Whenever the children are old, grown, and in the way, it's far better for her to be working than it is for her to be on the telephone, sitting around the house trying to figure out something to do. Nothing wrong with that. But, the word of God teaches when a woman is married, and God gives her children the first responsibility for her husband and her children.

Now, people who were saved, wealthy, are still in life, as I say, have grown in wealth. And, I hate to be injected for this comment, fact, observation, that some couples who have done this have some of the

sweetest Christian families I know. That's why I'm not saying that it's a hard and fast rule that it's destructive.

It is not. It is not that it's destructive, it is unstructural. Unfortunately, by the sovereign grace of God, everything that is unstructural is not necessarily destructive.

How many times I have seen a Christian girl marry an unsaved boy or girl, and plain disobedience to the faithfulness of the word of God, be not unequally yoked together with unbelief. And, in many cases, that poor, weak Christian has married some unsaved person, knowing they were unsaved, and that person has gotten saved, become all real strong and left the Christian in a cloud of dust. And, God overrules our mistakes.

It doesn't mean he'll prove all this. Oh, bless God, I was just reading God's word. Is it in Malachi? Yes.

Malachi. I am the prophet of change. It's not there for you, sons of Jacob.

And, because God blesses my mistakes, doesn't mean he'll prove them. And, Moses smote the rock the second time, and when he smote the feet, there was a water came, and it kept Moses out of the promise. You see what I'm talking about? And, I'll look at you and say, do I love you? A little critical of you, working-wise.

You love me. So, here's something you have to do regarding this. It has a tremendous demoralizing effect upon the family, doesn't it? For, I believe that you Roman folks are honest.

It gradually, almost imperceptibly, creates in you a spirit of independence with your husband, because you have your own paycheck. Anybody here tonight like to confess that? Don't be embarrassed if a woman has to work for her husband if she wants to. I mean, she shouldn't have to.

And, I'm trying to work this out now, but for the life of me, I don't know how much she needs, or how much she's holding out on me. That's the only problem. I don't think any Christian wife ought to go to her husband and beg money, or become used to the daily workout where he gives her money as a supply, but she doesn't come to him asking for money.

So, don't you believe this? Don't you see the likeness? If a woman has a job, and oftentimes a better paying job than her husband, she has a spirit of independence with her husband. Now, let me give you some proof here, so I've got the building here. I mean, if you want to get together with the girls for a little fellowship, that's what you need.

In terms of temerity, I want to show you something that what the word of God very plainly says is what you're going to do. Now, let's look in 1 Timothy 5 and verse 14. 1 Timothy chapter 5, and here Paul is giving Timothy instructions regarding the different people in the church.

Now, in verse 14, 1 Timothy 5, he says, Now, will, therefore, that the young women marry, their children guide the house. And, notice, we'll understand the Bible says, keep house. In an extra verse, it says to manage their homes, and notice the purpose to this, and give not occasion to their adversaries to speak reproachfully.

You'd be surprised at how many times I have heard sinners criticize Christian mothers for working, leaving their children to roam all over the neighborhood. It gives the adversary an opportunity to speak

reproachfully, as the gospel you see. Now, look at the tended passage in Titus.

We're going to rewrite this a little bit in Titus chapter 4. Titus chapter 4. Well, please don't turn to Titus chapter 4. Chapter 2, Father. First one, to speak thou the things which become sound teaching. That the aged men be sober, brave, sensitive, sound in faith, in love, and patience.

That the aged women, and may I suggest, dear women, that here's where we have missed it in the assembly. The older women, that they be in behaviors that kind of pull them from falsehoods, and not give them the much-loved teachings of good faith, that they may teach the young women. Now, these now young women don't know how to behave as wise and loving, because these older women who have learned have not spoken.

I take patience, because I'm not a wise little mother. You've got experience. Now, what? To love thy children, to love thy husband, to love thy children, to be discreet-faced, keep this at home.

You understand the Bible? Work this at home. You're an international burden. If you did this at home, Mr. Darby, just let them work at home, or at your house.

You see? Good, obedient to their own husbands, notice again that the word of God do not last in So, you see here that one source of weakness is occupation with material things, and we get used to more than we need, and to keep it up, we violate plain principles of the word of God in order to have more, more, more, more, more, more. Now, you'd be surprised. I don't want to make superficial.

I'm going to close. I'm the only one that can send it out to confessors. I don't know where I'm going to have to put this man.

But, I'm going to put my closet there. I love clothes. I love clothes.

They're cheap. I'm going to put my closet there. Accountant's jacket and pants, you see? I have eight outfits.

Ain't that a shame? And I can't wear them one at a time. Now, I've got enough clothes after six other meetings. Closet is next.

It's the only way to start. More than I need. Now, may I say it again? I am not trying to change the lifestyle of the older women who were working when we were saved.

But, I am speaking a word of warning and love to the younger women, recently married, and those anticipating that. If God blesses you with children, they begin to come, the word of God distinctly teaches without any expectation to replace it in the home. Right? How do you do that? Well, the concept and the solution is, you figure out all the things you don't need.

And adjust your living to the script. And learn to do that. Right.

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