

Bible Text: Titus 1:1
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Titus chapter one and we want to begin reading at the first verse.

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.¹

¹ Titus 1:1-16.

Let's ask the Lord's blessing on his Word.

Our Father, we come to thee tonight to ask for blessing, for guidance as we come to these pages. We know, Lord, that there is a need for us to be conscious of the fact that without thee we can do nothing. It is so easy for us to get caught up in the rush and the hurry of this life, to be deceived by the things of this world into thinking that our activity day by day is going to profit. Father, we know that when we come and stop and consider the pages of thy Word that we see there a message, a message to our hearts that we must live our lives in the light of the knowledge of the truth. We are trusting you tonight to help us to see the Lord Jesus lifted up as that truth. We pray that the Spirit of God might be our teacher, to burn into our souls the message of the hour, that we might recognize with a new understanding what it means to be thy servant and what it means to have a life that is profitable in the light of eternity. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Perhaps the most perplexing question to confront a person that has been saved and born into the family of God is: What do I do next? Just what is it that God has called me to do now that I have come to know the Lord Jesus? And the possibilities when we look around us are very mystifying. Some people become pastors, others become evangelists, some Christian school teachers or foreign missionaries or housewives or Christian businessmen or youth workers and many other things that we might name. And some people just don't do much of anything.

But tonight I am going to tell you, I hope, just exactly how to find your place in the service of God. I have told you many times that I believe that most Christians in the world today are out of the perfect will of God. It is like that because of simple disobedience to his Word. If we believe this to be God's book and its teaching to be his truth, then we are left without excuse because it declares quite clearly that we can know the will of God, we can be in the will of God, we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.² And no one who is Christian, who obeys God's Word is wandering in confusion.

The Bible tells us that "God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind."³ And our soundness of mind is a result of two things. Number one, knowing that God has saved us and given us eternal life. And that is what it takes to fit us for heaven. But, secondly, knowing and believing that if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our path.⁴

Now that is what fits us for earth. It takes the salvation that God has given and it takes the direction of godly light and only those two things put together are going to free us from that spirit of fear and give us a spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Now if you will take God's Word unreservedly and give your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, you can't possibly miss heaven. It is another impossibility. And, by the same

² See Philippians 4:13.

³ 2 Timothy 1:7.

⁴ See Proverbs 3:6.

token, if you want with all your heart to know and to do God's will in serving him, you can't miss it. And I can say that to you from the authority of the Word of God.

Now this is the type of thing that we read about here in Titus chapter one in these first few verses.

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.⁵

Now there we have the first promise in the Bible in that second verse, not the verse in order of the verses, but the first chronological. God promised this eternal life before the world began. He offered this opportunity to men to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, this Lamb who was to be slain from the foundation of the world and believe in him to the salvation of their souls.

And when that happens a very familiar analogy comes in to play. We read time and time again throughout the Bible the analogy of a slave and his master. Now that is the idea behind the word "redeemed."

To be redeemed carries with it the idea in the Greek of being bought off the slave block of sin. When the Lord Jesus died for our sins there on the cross of Calvary, he purchased us to be his own possession. He bought us with his own precious blood, a price far greater than that of silver and gold. And by this purchase he redeemed those who would come to know him. He purchased them that they might become bond slaves of his. And that is what we read here in verse one.

"Paul, a servant..."⁶ or, in the Greek, literally, a bond slave, "of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness."⁷

And don't get the idea that it is easy, because it is one thing to call yourself a servant of God. It is one thing to say that you are acknowledging the truth which is after godliness. And it is something else entirely to do it. And that is the reason that most people are in confusion.

Now just suppose that God wants you to pack your bags tomorrow and move to the other side of the world. I wonder if you would be willing to do it. Or just suppose that he wants you to stay right where you are for the rest of your life. I wonder if you would be willing to do it. Are you content in your heart to go where he wants you to go and to be what he wants you to be? And that is the ultimate question.

⁵ Titus 1:1-2.

⁶ Titus 1:1.

⁷ Ibid.

In fact, when you come right down to it, that is the only real question that needs to be decided.

Now, very few Christians have ever come to grips with that question. And, therefore, they have no assurance of being in the perfect will of God.

“Paul a servant [a bond slave of God], and an apostle of Jesus Christ.”⁸ The apostle Paul says, “I am a slave to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Now slaves have no rights. Slaves are not allowed to exercise their preferences. Slaves don’t live where they choose. Slaves don’t work at the occupation that they would like to have. In fact, slaves don’t ever make any decisions of any significance about where to go and what to do without permission from the master.

Now, of course, there is nobody to force that kind of restriction on your life. You can go out and get drunk tonight if you want to. Nobody is going to stop you, probably. You can jump in your car and you can go witness to Aunt Matilda out in Idaho. Or you can take a vacation in Europe. You can do anything that your heart desires and it is very probable that there aren’t too many people on the face of the earth that have the power to stop you.

But what we are talking about here is a slavery of love. That is the only slavery that is going to ever keep anybody in the will of God. It is the only reason any man, ultimately, is ever going to do what is right and live a life of godliness. It is going to be because of his love for the Lord Jesus. And this is the only bondage that God will ever impose on a Christian.

You probably love some people enough to give them a drink of cold water on a hot day. You probably love others enough to fix them a troublesome and expensive meal every now and then. No doubt you love others enough to sit up all night with them when they are sick. In fact, you may love someone enough to marry them and live with them all your life. But it takes a miracle of grace in our heart to love the Lord Jesus enough to put his will above every person that we know and every plan that we have and every possession that we own and every position that we might attain.

Now I am talking to you about serious business. I am talking to you about that which most people know absolutely nothing about. And yet it is that which can be a reality in your life as a bond slave of the Lord Jesus, a miracle of grace performed in your heart so that it is possible for you to put the will of the Lord Jesus above every person and every plan and every possession and every position of the work.

Now we get the ability to do that when we are born again. If we don’t have that capacity, we have never been saved. But having it and doing it are two different matters.

All right, now let me diagnose the problem for you. A Christian is kind of like a radio. It comes in a neat little package, capable of receiving signals from all over the world. And this is the way it is in our lives as believers. We get signals from the wife, signals from

⁸ Ibid.

the husband. We get signals from our circumstances or our job or our financial condition. We get signals from school or from the neighbors or from our parents. We get signals from books and magazines. We get signals from the devil and signals from the Lord. And you put all those signals together in your life and you have got confusion, absolute and utter confusion.

Now most people have to learn to live with that, either that or commit suicide, but it is still confusing. Just to be getting signals from the Lord and the devil at the same time is pretty confusing. And the question is: How do you know which is which? How do you know who it is that is sending these signals to your life and giving you these ideas and trying to tell you what to do?

But, you see, we have a secret device on our radio. It is a little button marked, "Surrender." And this little button is something of a work of miracle in our life. The surrender button is that which is the key to knowing the will of God. The surrender button doesn't get pushed automatically. In fact, we have to push it everyday by a conscious act of our own will. Sometimes we have to push it several times a day. But as long as that little button marked "Surrender" is pushed, the overriding signal coming into our life above all the others is going to be the will of God.

Now don't go around searching all over your body for a little button. But just think carefully about what I am saying to you. There is no such thing as striving and agonizing and scheming to know what God wants you to do. Don't be a tiller of the ground because God won't have any part of it. Just begin each day of your life by talking to the Lord about your situation. Surrender that day to him as one in which you are willing to do his will at any cost. And he is bound by his promises to make it clear what he wants you to do.

Now remember what we saw on Sunday night. The Lord Jesus refused to reveal his ways to those who were not already resolved in their heart to do it. The Lord Jesus refused to reveal his ways to those who were not already resolved in their heart to do. And again I say that most Christians walk in confusion for that simple reason, because they refuse to push that surrender button as a conscious part of daily living. They have their lives in a neat little package living each day by their circumstances and by their friends and by their family and by their job, by the devil, by the Lord and just by accident sometimes they get in the will of God.

They are afraid to push the surrender button because it might upset their plans and selfish living. And for that reason the perfect will of God remains a mystery. And one thing that we must understand above all others is that by nature we are in rebellion. It is easy for a new Christian to get out of the Lord's will very quickly because we just assume that now that we are saved everything will be all right. And it is easy for an older Christian to get of the Lord's will because we assume that since our life shows more sign of godliness than a lot of other people, then we will just go ahead and do the Lord's will quite naturally. But nothing could be further from the truth.

Born again believers have the same old nature they have always had. It is not one bit different. Born again believers have the same amount of pride and the same amount of lust and the same amount of selfishness and the same amount of laziness and the same amount of rebellion. Nothing has changed about that old nature when a person is born again.

When you have been saved you have just begun to fight. The battle is on because now you have a new nature, one that has come from God, one that cannot sin, one that will do right when given the opportunity. And before you are saved you have no alternative. Before you are saved you can do absolutely nothing to please God. “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.”⁹

But if you are saved tonight there is a new spirit in you. You can be humble instead of proud. You can be submissive instead of rebellious. You can be zealous instead of lazy. You can live for others instead of self, but not without your finger on the surrender button. It is an utter impossibility.

Now all of this is critically important because our lives can never be used in the Lord’s service in any significant way until we learn this. Now that is not to say that all pastors, including this one, or evangelist or missionaries or church leaders and workers have learned it. But why go to the other side of the world to walk in the flesh? Why get into the pulpit to demonstrate carnality? If you are going to be a carnal Christian, it is better to do it with as little publicity as possible. It is better to be out of the will of God in a cave somewhere than holding yourself up as an example to a lost and a dying world.

Now the very foundation of the Lord using your life is to learn how to keep your finger on the surrender button. One of the truly astounding attitudes that we have adopted in the church of the 20th century is that anybody can do anything in the Lord’s work. Anybody can be a children’s worker. You can go out and get a hold of a bunch of children. Anybody can be a Bible teacher. Just pick up a Bible and go to work. Anybody can be a missionary. Just run on out and get on the field. And it is not like that in any other area of life.

Now everybody can be a witness and a testimony every day because God has told us that in his Word. Every Christian has been commissioned to do that specific work as a part of daily living. But aside from that we don’t get a plumber to do our brain surgery. We don’t call the dentist to come fix the stove.

Now things are not that way because a brain surgeon is any better than a plumber. In fact, when the pipes are leaking all over your floor you wouldn’t give two cents for all the brain surgeons in the world. You want somebody that knows how to stop the water from leaking.

Certain jobs just call for certain people. And it is like that in the Lord’s work. Now I have been commissioned by the Lord to be a testimony everywhere I go, to let my light

⁹ Romans 8:8.

so shine before men that they may see my good works and glorify my Father which is in heaven.¹⁰ And every person here tonight who knows the Lord Jesus has that same commission. But it is pretty obvious that the Lord hasn't called all of us to get up here and speak tonight. We would have confusion if everybody here was here trying to preach a sermon.

Now there are millions of lost people in India and they need to get saved. There are millions of lost people in Africa and South America and China. So the question is: What am I going to do? What are you going to do? Maybe I ought to get up in the morning and leave for India. But if I do, what about all those people in Africa and South America and China? It is obvious that the Lord hasn't called me to five places at once. There can only be one place in all the world that is the perfect will of God for you or for me in any given time.

Now Vance Havener used to say that he thought that all invitations to preach came from the Lord until he got invited to speak in two different places on the same night. You see, the devil's business is to get us out of the will of God. And he is going to do it any way that he can.

I have been invited to a church twice this size on more than on occasion to be the pastor. I have been invited to do nothing but hold Bible conferences with all expenses paid. I have been offered foreign lands and more money and bigger crowds time and time again. But when I push the surrender button the Lord said, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."¹¹

Now I say those things to you not to try to make you think that I am a great preacher, because I know that it probably cost me rewards in heaven to even mention it. But I also know that there are some of you who are young men who are going to be considering what the Lord wants you to do with your life. And I know that you could be very easily deceived into thinking that promotion in this world always comes from God.

Now, it is not like that. Just because you get invited to do something, don't think that it was necessarily God who did the inviting. The devil is a great flatterer. He is out to lay a net for men's feet. And he will promote you into thinking that you are something when you are nothing and deceive you. Now he has tried it on many times and he has failed for one reason, because by the Lord's grace I have been able to push the surrender button and discern his will. And it is critically important that we have this attitude that no matter what the Lord wants us to do, we will do it. Go anywhere, be anything, do anything that he would have us to do. And that not only applies to the great possibilities of going upward and outward, but it applies to the great possibilities of staying just exactly where we are and what we are. Certain jobs call for certain people in the Lord's work.

We need desperately in the work of God today to have pastors to establish independent fundamental churches. We need just as desperately separated missionaries who are

¹⁰ See Matthew 5:16.

¹¹ See Jeremiah 45:5.

grounded in the Word of God. We need them all around the world. We need just as desperately strong well taught men and women to be part of local churches as Christian business men and women. We need just as desperately godly, dedicated Christian school teachers all across America.

But, you see, it is back to the plumber and the brain surgeon. One calling is no more important than another. Certain jobs call for certain people in the work of God. And the important thing is determining which one of those jobs God wants you to do.

And we see that here. You will notice verse three.

But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour. To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:¹²

Now here we see three types of situations. We see the apostle Paul. He was a traveling missionary and an evangelist. Here is Titus. He is a pastor and a Bible teacher, going to teach these people what Paul is telling him here. And here are elders and people in every city as we see them there in verse five, all of them equally necessary to the work of God.

Now if it hadn't been for missionaries like Paul these cities would have had no Christians in them. If it hadn't been for pastors like Titus there would have been no established churches. If it hadn't been for elders and solid Christians who lived and worked in these cities there would have been no continuing work. So it was not a matter of every man doing that which was right in his own eyes. It is a matter of keeping our finger on the surrender button to determine where we fit in the purposes of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The issue, you see, is very clear. Are we servants? Are we willing bond slaves who will do any of these things at any cost in order to please the Lord?

Now as I begin to think that the Lord needs me in Southern Pines, I have been deceived by the devil. And if you begin to think that the Lord needs you to get people saved in Michigan or Texas or Alaska or anywhere else, you have been deceived as well. He doesn't need anybody. But it pleases him to use our life if we are willing for our life to be used. The secret is to keep your finger on the surrender button until it is clear that God is directing in your life.

The very thing that much of the Old Testament warns us about is just wandering around. And those people there could have been in the perfect will of God in two weeks if they wanted to be. But they spent 40 years wandering and they died out of the will of God

¹² Titus 1:3-5.

because they wouldn't push the surrender button. And they were a picture of the average Christian, a whole life wasted by unbelief, wandering and dying in the wilderness out of the will of God.

The Lord wanted so badly to take them into a land flowing with milk and honey, but they wouldn't let him. They were afraid of the giants that lived in the Promised Land.

Some of the things that confront us when we think about pushing the surrender button may seem like giants. But if you keep your finger there long enough they soon begin to look like grasshoppers. That is what Caleb and Joshua learned. But we have to remember that most Christians in the world today are wilderness Christians. They are wandering without purpose from one job to another, from one town to another, from one promotion to another thinking that somehow, someday, they are going to accidentally step into the will of God.

And when you are wandering without purpose, when you are complaining about the wilderness, when you are looking back toward Egypt God can't use people like that. He couldn't use them in the time of the children of Israel and he can't use them today.

Now, if we want to find the stability and the peace that brings joy to daily Christian living, it is going to be when we recognize what God is trying to do in our life. Only a few can be called of God to the mission field for that simple reason. Only a few can be outstandingly effective as members of the local church. Only a few can have an impact as pastors or Bible teachers or something of that nature. Because to be effective in any calling means keeping our finger on the surrender button. If we don't do that, if we don't do that and practice it and work at it, we end up dominated by that old nature, unable to discern the will of God, wandering around in the wilderness, caught up in a life of selfishness, a life that is unprofitable.

Now again I say, you can be a pastor, you can be a church member, a missionary, a youth worker or a Christian school teacher. You can be anything and not be surrendered. [?]. Thousands go out and do those things and waste their lives wandering, thinking that somehow activity means something. Just getting out and doing means something. But what I am throwing out to you is how to get in the Lord's perfect will and to know that you are there as a daily reality.

Now the foundation, as we have seen it, is to push the surrender button. And if you do that in a very real sense you can start your life all over again. For example, you can start out tomorrow morning committing that day to the Lord and consciously aware that whatever his will is you will do. I am not talking about a bunch of foolishness or those empty promises that you make time and time and time again with God. I am talking about something real. If you really mean it, if you will get down on your knees tonight before God and you will tell him that this is a new thing in your life, that you are going to surrender your life to him to do what he will, no matter what it costs, no matter where it takes you, no matter what the effect is going to be on your life, some immediate changes are going to take place.

Now, for one thing you can't be confused and worried about his will for tomorrow because you are already committed to it and you are going to take it just as it comes to your life. In the second place you can't be laboring over what he might want you to do six months from now because he has given no indication. And you are trusting that whenever he is ready you will get the news. You will hear about it because God is trying to help you. He is not trying to hurt you and whatever is best for your life if you have got your finger on the surrender button that is exactly what God is going to give you.

“No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”¹³

And with all the confidence in the world, you can know that you are in the perfect will of God tomorrow, on that basis right there. So there you are walking around all day with your finger on the surrender button. And the opportunity comes up to sin and you check to see if your finger is still on the button. The opportunity comes up to witness, to give out a tract. You have to check and see if your finger is still on the button. And you come to the end of the day and you confess the places that you have failed and you start all over again.

Now let me warn you that if you do have, that some of the changes in your life are going to be very frightening at first, enough to scare you to death. It might look like some giants out there, just like the children of Israel heard about.

For example, you might get convicted about fiddling around the yard when you could be out talking to somebody about coming to church or coming to know the Lord Jesus. The next few sermons could scare you to death over the sin in your life that you didn't even know was there. You may find that for days on end you hardly see your family just like a preacher or missionary. Wouldn't that be strange?

But don't take your finger off the button or you will end up back in the old condition, just the way you were before, just like most Christians wandering around in the wilderness. But, you know, there is one thing that is especially amazing and that is the long range changes in your life. Before long instead of dreading to put your finger on the button, you like it. In fact, you get to the point that it hurts terribly when your finger slips off the surrender button because you remember how it was in the wilderness. You remember how it was when selfish interest was the king of your life. All those opportunities that were wasted, all the time wasted on foolish things that could have been counting for eternity, the high cost of daily rebellion as a way of life. And, beloved, when that reality dawns, when that breaks over your soul, you would rather die than go back to the wilderness.

What we are talking about here is the growth process. And it begins with learning the value of that surrender button. All the static from your circumstances and your family and friends and your job and the devil, anything that is out of harmony with the will of God becomes easier to discern with each passing day. It takes time to work at this thing.

¹³ Psalm 84:11.

But one day you wake up and you say, "Imagine that. I know what the Lord has called me to do." No question about it.

Without even realizing it, my whole heart belongs in the jungles of South America. He has been giving me these ideas, placing these situations in my life until all of the sudden I realize the truth. My whole heart belongs in becoming an evangelist. My whole heart belongs in pastoring a church. My whole heart belongs in the work at Calvary Memorial.

And, beloved, when that happens the vast majority of your problems are over. Now, I don't mean to say that there won't be difficulties along the way. But when you know what God wants you to do, when you get that thing settled in your life, you have learned enough about the surrender button to get it done.

Every single day is a challenge. You know that the giants are coming, but it is a thrilling thing to watch the Lord cut them down to size.

Now what I have talked to you about thus far is general. It is a matter of looking to the Lord Jesus as a daily experience in a surrendered condition, waiting for him to show you a definite leading in your life. Now if we wait without surrender, we find ourselves wandering around in the wilderness just like the children of Israel. But if we wait with our finger on the surrender button, every day is profitable because every day we are growing in grace. Every day we are being trained in the school of God for the work that he wants us to do.

There is no set pattern for waiting. I wish I could figure one out.

The apostle Paul waited three years in Arabia. Moses waited two thirds of his life. That's a long time. But it takes time in the school of God to be educated in that which is truly important.

But there is one thing that stands out to me in all this. The basic qualifications are all the same. The basic qualifications of what God wants in human beings are the same. And it is like that because everywhere you go in the world you are going to be dealing with people. You are going to be trying to get people saved and people right with God and people strong in the faith. And man, by nature, is basically the same everywhere in the world.

Every area, of course, is a special calling. It takes a special calling to be a pastor or to be a missionary or to be a church member or to be a Bible teacher or to be an evangelist. And all of them are equally important. It takes a special type of person for each job. But the basic qualifications are all the same.

Now, for example, if you want to be an evangelist it takes a special qualification.

I heard an evangelist [?] say one time that 350 days out of the year he was on the road living in motel rooms, meeting strange people every week of his life, hardly ever seeing

his family, 350 days out of the year. And you have to be ready for things like that if you are going to be an evangelist.

If you are going to be a foreign missionary you have to be able to adapt to a foreign culture, to live in adverse conditions, to experience things that you never dreamed possible living in the United States of America.

If you are going to be a church member, not the average kind, now, the kind I am talking to you about tonight. It takes the ability to deny yourself, to face the kind of temptation that most people are completely unable to overcome.

I have said it many times. It is a great deal easier to live for the Lord Jesus in the jungles of Africa than it is to live for him in Southern Pines, North Carolina, because, beloved, when you get out there all by yourself nobody but strangers, nothing but adverse conditions, there is nobody to turn to but the Lord. When you get home and plop down in front of your color television and walk on your soft carpet and walk over to the refrigerator and get a sandwich, it is so easy to forget that we are living in a lost and dying world. It is so difficult to deny yourself, to take up your cross and follow the Lord Jesus in the midst of the affluence of the American society.

But there are certain things which must be true of all these people if they are going to be effective in the work of God. There is a quality of life that must be learned in the school of God or there is going to be no profit. Now you may think that you are doing nothing tonight, just marking time. But you are doing something. You are living the Christian life. You are living right now tonight the same quality of life that you would live if you were on the mission field. You are exactly the same kind of witness that you would be if you were a preacher. If you were an evangelist somewhere half way around the world you would be just exactly the same type person you are right now. And it is not going to be one bit easier to change there than it is here.

Now that is why God makes us wait in his school. That is why he trains us in these qualifications that are needed in the life of every single individual. I am not going to preach about them until next week. But I just hope you will remember tonight from this message that one important thing. You need to keep your finger on that surrender button. You need to come to that point in time where you mark it, where you say, "Right here and now I am looking to the Lord to do a new thing in my life. It is going to work tomorrow and at the end of the day where I fail I am going to confess it. And it is going to work the next day and the next day and the next day as a practical reality, a practical demonstration of godly Christian living so that the Lord can have his way in my heart."

I have heard an awful lot of people who don't have the capacity to live that kind of life. They don't have it because they are lost and in need of a Savior. They have a form of godliness that means nothing. The Lord Jesus has never transformed their heart and life by his mighty power.

Beloved, when you get born into God's family, when you look back to the hill of Calvary and see what the Lord Jesus did for you, you are not going to think it anything strange when I talk to you about becoming a bond slave to the Lord Jesus. If you realize what it means that he has lifted you out of the miry clay and set your feet upon a rock and established your goings,¹⁴ you are not going to think it strange when I ask you to speak to the Lord, to tell him that you will do anything that he wants you to do, that you will go anywhere that he wants you to go, that you will be anything that he wants you to be. Not an unreasonable request in the light of Calvary and the price that was paid, the death that he died that we might have eternal life. And when we come to that reality, when we come to know him as our Savior, then we are ready to begin the life with these opportunities that he has set before us.

I hope tonight that as a believer that you will think carefully about what you have heard because in the next few weeks we are going to be talking about this matter of Christian living, not the kind that most people are living. That is not Christian living at all, but the kind that is set forth here in the New Testament, the profitable kind that is going to make your life count whether it is here in the pastorate as an evangelist on the mission field, wherever you might be, the quality of life that you must have if you are going to be successful in Christian living.

Let's close with a word of prayer.

Our Father, we are trusting you tonight to take these words that have been spoken, to cause them to linger in our hearts that we might meditate on these things, that we might think of the responsibility that is ours. We know, Lord, that no doubt, there are some who are here without the Savior. This has been a message almost entirely to the believer. And we are just trusting you to take some word spoken, to sow it in that heart that there might be a means of conviction to point them to their need and cause them to see the wondrous blessings of the cross of Calvary, the opportunities that are ours to have this gift of eternal life if we are willing to come to you in simple childlike faith and believe your promises and trust your Son as our only hope for life eternal. We pray these things in his precious name. Amen.

In closing we want to turn to number 245 and sing the first and the last verses.

¹⁴ See Psalm 40:2.