

Blessed Are They Who Consider

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the importance of considering God's creation and our own lives to align with His divine purpose and provision.

Duration: 48:46

Scripture: Deuteronomy 32:7-8, Deuteronomy 32:10, Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:24

Topics: "Will Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on his personal struggle with leaving his job and following God's calling. He shares how God spoke to him through the sight of four birds pecking at the snow outside his window, reminding him of God's provision for even the smallest creatures. The preacher emphasizes the importance of trusting God and how his decision to leave his job resulted in miraculous provision for his family. He encourages the listeners to trust God and make Jesus known in their communities and the world. The sermon references various Bible verses, including Isaiah 41 and Luke 12, to highlight God's heart for his creation and his desire to provide for his people.

Transcript

Luke chapter 12, please, in the New Testament, if you'll go there. Blessed are they who consider. I think particularly of the fathers who are here today, I trust that this will speak into your hearts, although it's not exclusive to fathers, it's for everybody who's called to be partakers of the life of Christ.

Now Jesus, you said clearly in the Old Testament, come let us reason together. Lord, it's not that you are to agree with us, but we are to find agreement with you. And I pray God for an anointing today that you could, and you would, give me the power to be able to convey simply and clearly the words that you put on my heart.

I thank you, Lord, for the abiding presence of Christ in the word of God, in the vessels of God, in the house of God. I thank you, Lord, that it's your heart's desire that your kingdom advance in every life that is called by your name. Oh God, let this be a day of great victory.

Quicken my mind and body, my heart, and every part of me, and animate me that I may clearly convey your heart in this and your mind. And I thank you for it in Jesus' name. Luke chapter 12, beginning at verse 24.

Jesus said, consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them. And how much more are you than the fowls? And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow. They toil not, they spin not.

And yet I say unto you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothed the grass, which is today in the field and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not what you shall eat or what you shall drink, and neither be of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after.

And your Father knows that you have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Really, in that one verse of Scripture, verse 32, we see the absolute heart of God. God says to his own creation, do not be afraid. It is my pleasure to give you everything that is yours.

Everything that was in my heart for you to possess from before even the foundation of the world, it's in my heart now. And of course, we know this to be because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to give this to you, that it might be your possession. Now throughout the Scriptures, those who know God or are encouraged to know God are often called to consider.

Consider in the context of Luke chapter 12 means to observe something, to contemplate it, and to understand it. Not just look at it, not just say, well, this is interesting. God feeds the birds.

That's wonderful. It's nice. God decorates the flowers of the field.

Well, that's very, we appreciate that very much. No, he says, I want you to take it beyond this. I want something of this to come into your understanding of who I am and in that context, who I'm willing to make you and what I'm willing to do for you.

It's not just to observe, to accumulate knowledge. And that's what many, many people do with the Scriptures. Even going to Bible study, they simply observe and they accumulate knowledge, but they never appropriate.

They never come to the realization of what it is that God really desires to do in their own personal lives and who God is and who he's willing to be for them. Consider means to take it beyond just an understanding and by faith bring these principles that God speaks into our lives where God says, I will make them in you a reality. I will do the very same things in you and for you that I'm talking to you about and asking you to consider all around you.

Remember David, the King said, Oh Lord, when I consider the heavens and the works of your hands, what is man that they aren't mindful of him? God, David said, I know how powerful you are. I know the word you can fling stars into space and you can create constellations and galaxies and universe. And with all this power, why are you so concerned about man? Paul said to Timothy in second Timothy chapter two, verse seven, he gave him instruction about the qualities of determination and endurance and leadership.

And after he gave him these instructions, he said to Timothy, consider what I say and the Lord give the understanding in all things. Timothy, don't let them just pass you by, but give them all consideration. Let

these things that I speak into your heart become part of the very fabric of who you are in Christ.

Then you will be successful in what you are called to be and do in the old Testament. God speaks to the person who can't seem to get motivated. If you'll go there and if you're one of those persons this morning, it just can't seem to get motivated.

This might be a good scripture for you. Proverbs chapter six in verses six to nine and Solomon or the Holy spirit says through Solomon, he says, go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise. Consider this.

You can't seem to get motivated even in your daily affairs. You have all these great intentions, but you can't seem to perform any of them. Well, God says, I want you to consider something.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, which having no guide overseer or ruler provides her meat in the summer and gathered her, gathers her food in the harvest. And this is what the Lord is saying. The ant has within her and infusion of divine order and has an incredible ability to secure provision for her journey.

She doesn't have to be told what to do for. She's moving in the divine will of God for her life. And thus provision is the inevitable result of this.

When you and I are moving in God's divine will for our lives, there is a provision that comes from the hand of God that is all encompassing. We are given ability to perform that which we could never do in our own strength. We are given instinct as it is to know where to go.

God says it himself. I'll be a voice behind you saying this is the way. Walk in it.

This is what you are to do. I will order your steps. The Bible says the steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord.

That means I will prescribe your path. You will get up in the morning and not only will you know where to go, but you will have an infusion of my life that enables you to carry out that which I have destined or called you to do. Consider this.

Consider nature itself, which doesn't have a free will as it is, but has this divine order within it. It's only man, beloved, that's out of divine order. Did you know that everything else is suffering because man is out of divine order? Paul says in Romans that even creation itself is groaning for redemption, not because creation sins, groaning for redemption from fallen man that is virtually destroying its habitat because he is in constant rebellion, constantly out of order, constantly doing, saying, thinking, walking, planning things that are outside of the will of the one who created him.

And subsequently everything around him begins to suffer. And Jesus tells us all through Scripture, stop and consider my creation. Stop and consider the works of my hands.

Observe the order that is there. Now we see this same principle operating, if you go ahead in Proverbs to chapter 31, but operating of course at a much higher level. It's in the lives of those who are created in the image of God and of their own free will they have embraced his life as their own.

Now Proverbs 31 verse 10 says, who can find a virtuous woman? Now the word virtuous in the Hebrew means a woman of strength who has been given power and ability, who has a host as it is of, it really is

the word that is used for the host of an army, who has the strength of the host of God within her, who has forces, who has been given a deposit of God's health and God's life, who has substance, who has riches within her and wealth. This is of course all attributes of God. Who can find, if in other words, if there were such a person who is endowed with this power of God.

Now it's a word also used for the entourage of the queen of Sheba. I see a picture of majesty and you see the queen of Sheba coming in to the nation of Israel looking for wisdom as it is, hearing about this wisdom that is astounding the hearts of men all over the kingdom of Solomon at that time. And I see a picture of the majesty of Christ in everything that follows it.

When we are embracing the heart of God, when we are looking and considering the ways of God, the life of Christ that he wants to plant within us as we are approaching the throne of God saying, oh God, open my mind and heart. Give me wisdom. Help me to understand what it is that you have for my life and how it is that I can lay hold of this power that you say you will freely give to me.

There's this entourage as it is of majesty that is following those who are truly pursuing the heart of God. The woman in Proverbs 31 I see as a picture of the type of the church of Jesus Christ. Verse 30 says she fears God and she's in pursuit of his ways and of his kingdom.

Now look at what happens to the life when life is brought into divine order, when it is the life of Christ that is animating you and I in everything that we are and everything we begin to do. Verse 12, now I want you to see this in the context of Jesus Christ and his church. She will do him good, that is Christ, and not evil all the days of her life.

She is motivated. She is moved to honor her savior. Is that the heart that you have today? Is that something that God has put in your heart? God, everything I am, what I become, the grass of the field honors you just by its sheer beauty.

The ravens of the valley honor you just by the fact that they are provided for and their lives as it is are a testimony of your divine provision in everything that is walking in the order in which it should. She seeks wool and flax and works willingly with her hands. She's like the merchant ships that brings her food from afar.

Verses 13 and 14. In other words, this is a bride that has clear direction and vision. She knows where she is going.

She knows what it is that she's supposed to be accomplishing. Verse 15 says she arises also while it is yet night and gives meat to her household and a portion to her maidens. She has within her a selfless strength.

She has a strength that is not her own. She has an ability infused in her to reach out beyond her own needs. She sees not just her own self anymore.

She sees the needs that are evident all around her in society and men and women who are created in the image of God. And she begins to move out and she moves out with an incredible resource and an incredible wisdom. Verse 16 says she considers a field and buys it.

And with the fruit of her hand, she plants a vineyard. She has a wisdom. Psalm 112 speaks about the wisdom that God gives to a man who fears him.

He has given discretion in all that he does. He or she has an ability to know what it is that God wants her to do. Verse 17 says she girds her loins with strength and strengthens her arms.

This is a bride who is spending time with her Savior. She knows that the very essence of the strength that she has comes from the lifeblood of God that is within her, the mind of God, the spirit of God. She's not attempting to do things in her own strength.

She perceives, verse 18, that her merchandise is good and her candle does not go out by night. She has discernment. She knows what is good.

She knows what is not good. She knows where to set her hand and where to withdraw her hand. She is given an incredible wisdom of God.

Verse 19, she lays her hands to the spindle and her hands fold the distaff. She stretches out her hand to the poor, yea, she reaches forth her hands to the needy. In other words, she has a right focus.

She's beginning to understand the work of God. She knows what it is that will bring honor to the heart of her husband. She's not afraid, verse 21 tells us, of the snow for her household.

Verse 22 tells us she makes herself coverings of tapestry. Her clothing is silk and purple. In other words, she knows her position in the household.

She knows that she has been adorned with the beauty of her Savior. She knows who she is in Christ. She knows who Christ is in her.

Her husband is known in the gates, verse 23, when he sits among the elders of the land. And in great measure, her husband is known because of her. You see, Christ is either known in the nation because of his church or he is brought into obscurity because of his church.

If his life is within us, if we are moving in divine order, Jesus has to be known in the gates. He cannot be pushed out of the marketplace of society when he is evident in his people, when his voice is heard in those who are called by his name, when his hands and feet are moving through those who are destined to be glorified by the presence of his life within them. She opens her mouth with wisdom, verse 26, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

She looks well to the ways of her household and eats not the bread of idleness. This is the bride of Christ. She opens her mouth and the wisdom of God is within her.

She is able to discern situations, able to give comfort and direction, and she is constantly moving in a divine stream of life with her husband. Because the two are no longer apart, the two have become one. Paul said, this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

People came out in the Old Testament of captivity and they were called of God to go back into Jerusalem and rebuild what had been lost because of a carelessness. And throughout history, men and women lose the presence of God when we become careless with his presence, when we fail to understand why he has chosen to dwell in us and among us and what it is that we are called to build. And at a time when God's people began to pursue their own interests and they left off the priority of building his house and his kingdom, he called upon them to consider their ways.

He raised up a prophet whose name was Haggai and Haggai said, Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. You sow much, but bring in little. You eat, but have not enough.

You drink and are not filled with drink. You clothe you, but there is none warm. And he that earns wages, earns wages to put it in a bag with holes.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. Consider your ways. You are moving, you are working, but there doesn't seem to be any kind of a definitive end to all of this labor.

You are never satisfied because you are moving in a stream that cannot satisfy the heart of God. You are moving and doing things. You are focused.

The things that you are building are not the things that are in either the heart or the mind of God. And because of it, you come home empty constantly. You go to church and you are infused, as it is, with hope about what life is going to be or what life should be.

And by Tuesday, your hope is gone. By Thursday, you're starving one more time. By Friday, there's hardly enough to get you through.

You show up in Friday night service because you don't have any resources to even get through to Sunday. You're among the congregation of the desperate on Friday night, saying, God, speak to me one more time. Not that you come back in to say, God, thank you.

What a week this has been. I've walked in divine order. I've seen your provision, O God.

I have moved in spheres of supernatural life and energy. Words of wisdom have been flowing from my lips and I have had compassion for those that are out of the way. I've had words to speak to those that are lost.

No. Many, many come Friday night, not to give a testimony of praise, but because all of the labor has left them so empty. It's a call of Christ to consider your ways.

What are you doing? What are you building? Where are you going? Even as a Christian person, as the church of Jesus Christ, stop and consider your ways. What are you doing? And if you're doing the work of God, why is it leaving you so constantly empty? Why are you so unsatisfied? Why is your thirst never quenched? Why? Why are you clothed as it is? Why do you go about talking about the righteousness of Christ and who you are in Christ, but you don't seem to ever derive any comfort from this conversation? Consider your ways, the Lord says. Go to Deuteronomy chapter 32, please, in the Old Testament with me, where the Lord said to the people of that time, I want you to consider the years of many generations.

God is saying to his people, consider who I am, consider what it is that I have done and consider what I'm willing to do for you who will come to me in sincerity and in truth. Deuteronomy chapter 32, verse seven. He says, Remember the days of old and consider the years of many generations.

Ask thy father and he will show thee thy elders, and they will tell thee when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance. When he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people, according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people.

Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness. He led him about.

He instructed him. He kept them as the apple of his eye. Think about your own life from the day that you found Christ as your savior.

As an eagle stirs up her nests, flutters over her young and spreads abroad her wings and takes them and bears them on her wings. So the Lord alone did lead him. And there was no strange God with him.

This is exactly what God has done for you and I. When we first come to him, we begin at this stage to be aware that there is a source of strength that God is willing to give to us that we've never known. How many sitting here today, the morning after you received Christ as your savior, you woke up and there was a wisdom in you that you had never possessed before. And you knew it.

It's as if your eyes were open. Some scales fell off. And you seem to instinctively know what is right and what is wrong.

Things that you'd not even thought of before. Now we're very, very clear. All of the gray areas were beginning to dissipate.

They only become gray again when we start moving away from God's divine purpose and his life that he has provided for us. We are born on the wings of God. We are carried from place to place, as Paul says, image to image and glory to glory by the spirit of the Lord.

You've heard me say it a thousand times in this pulpit because it's one of the most profound truths I've ever known in my entire experience with Christ. We are made to be what we could never be in ourselves. We are taken where we could never go.

We are given what we could never possess. We are called to do what we could never accomplish apart from the strength of Almighty God, that Jesus Christ might be glorified. We are brought into divine order.

We are brought into divine life. And as that divine life begins to be infused in and through us, we begin to move in a realm that this world knows nothing about. It's what this world was created to be.

It's what man was created to be in the image of God, but lost because of sin in the Garden of Eden. But in Christ, everything that was lost is brought back. All that the moth and kangaroo have eaten have been restored to us.

We are recreated in the image of the one who was raised from the dead and the same spirit that raised him from the dead now lives in you and lives in me and quickens us, makes us alive from the power of death and brings us back into divine order, back into the life of God, gives us a new mind, gives us a new heart, gives us a new spirit, gives us a new direction. And in our heart, there's one cry, Father, glorify thyself. Glorify yourself, O Jesus, in my life.

Whatever you have to do, if you have to put me in the olive press and squeeze me to get olive oil, do it, O God, that you might be glorified in my life. He made him ride on the high places of the earth. Verse 13.

In other words, I took you over that which would have obstructed you in your journey and you no longer had to climb and claw your way through life. But I gave you the power to rise above your circumstance. Oh, your circumstance may have fiercely opposed you, but could never destroy you or stop you.

That he might eat the increase of the fields. He made him to suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. I love that verse.

It's amazing. The Lord says, I gave you provision in the hardest of places. The devil threw mountains at you and you just bored a hole and drew honey out of these hard places.

When the enemy tried to stop you with sorrow, you just walked out and you were sweeter than ever before. When he tried to stab you in the back with vicious words, you walked out of these places with the wisdom and compassion of Almighty God. A determination to see hell exposed and destroyed and to see men and women released into the glory of God.

Not just your own home, but your own community, your city, your town, your state, your country, your world. For the glory of Almighty God. Jesus be known in the gates of New York City again.

Jesus be known in the marketplace. Jesus be known on Wall Street. Jesus be known in Central Park.

Jesus be known. Be known. Don't be hidden any longer.

Butter and kind, he says, milk of sheep, fat of lambs, rams of the breed of bashing goats with the fat of the kidneys of wheat. And you drank the pure blood of the grape. Hallelujah.

You were washed in a pure blood and you drank that pure blood. You knew who it was that I had made you. You knew where you were going.

You knew why you were called. Consider this. The years of many generations.

Isaiah chapter 41, please, if you'll go there. Isaiah again declares, as it is, the heart of God for every person. This word has as much an application to you today as it did the moment it was penned back in history, because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

You say to me today, well, Pastor, you don't understand. I'm poor and needy. I mean, I just spend my life.

I grabbed hold of the concept that the church is a Holy Ghost hospital. And so I'm just its everlasting patient. And I come in here every week to get bandaged up and a little oil poured into my wounds.

Oh, folks, we've got to get beyond this. We are called to glorify Jesus Christ. We are called to stand and fight the giants in our generation.

We're not called to cower and lick our wounds from now till Christ returns. We're called to stand in the glory of God. Verse 17 says, when the poor and needy seek water and there is none and their tongue fails for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them.

I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water.

I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shite tree, the myrtle, the oil tree. In other words, there'll be fruit. It just abounds.

There'll be provision for every need. I will set in the desert the fir tree, the pine, the box tree together that they may see and know and consider and understand that the hand of the Lord has done this and the Holy One of Israel has created it. God says, I will do this.

All I need is a person who's thirsty to do it. It's all I need. I don't need your talent.

I don't want your ability. I want your heart to thirst for me. I want you to come.

And when you do, I want you to come honestly. I want you to come with a design and desire in your heart to be used for the glory and the purposes of God and my kingdom. And God says, then I will just command in your high places, your low places, your dry places.

I'll just command life, water, provision, fruit to come into your life that you may know, that you may consider and understand that I am a God of the miraculous. Hallelujah. Deuteronomy, Moses said, they're a nation void of counsel and there's no more understanding in them.

And then he cries out and this cry emanates right from the heart of God. He said all that they were wise, all that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end, that they would consider what the end of their days could be. All that we would stop in the myriad of what calls itself Christianity in our generation and consider what the end could be, how that one should chase a thousand and two should put ten thousand to flight.

And this all could happen if God chooses to release his life within them. He says, if they'd only known the provision that I would have given them, it was far beyond all of their natural ability could ever gather for them. Luke 12 again, verse 24, Jesus says, consider the ravens for they neither sow nor reap.

They neither have storehouse nor barn and God feeds them. And how much more are you better than the fowls? Now, folks, there was a time in my life as a young pastor where I was bivocational. I was pastoring a church out in a little town in Canada.

And at the same time, I was working a full time job, a very well-paying job with a lot of benefits, dental plan, pension. I could start naming full health coverage, everything. All these benefits and the type of a job that unless you really, really messed up, you could never be fired your whole life.

I'm pastoring a group of people or meeting in a hotel because that's the only building that would have us in town had had wagon wheels that you had to jump over if you wanted to get saved. The organ at the front of the hotel had so many cigarette burns, you could hardly tell what color it used to be. We had to turn over all of the posters on the walls for church on Sunday.

It's the only building. And it was there that God began to speak to my heart. I want you to leave your full time work and I want you to trust me.

And I remember the battle, and it was a six month battle, wasn't an easy one. It's a God, my pension plan. We fight on a realistic level and I am preaching my heart out in this church and the church is growing.

It's getting to the point where it's packed out. People are they're leaning up against the walls. The whole place is full and I'm preaching my heart out.

And I remember one service where I am absolutely exhorting the people just as I'm doing today. Follow God, find his will, live for him. And as I look out the window, there's a few little brown sparrows and they're pecking at the snow.

There doesn't seem to be anything in the snow that they're eating, but nevertheless, they're eating. And the Lord spoke to me as I'm preaching. Consider the ravens, or in this case, it was the sparrows.

Consider them. Now, I'm in a twofold stream. On one hand, I'm preaching, follow Christ with all your heart.

On the other side, I'm in an ongoing battle with God about leaving my job. And he's speaking to me and every time I pass by the window, the four birds are still there. They're still pecking at the snow and the Lord is still speaking to me as I'm preaching.

He's speaking to me, but he's not speaking about what I'm preaching. He's saying, are you not worth more than these four birds? Consider them. I feed them.

I look after them. They don't toil. They don't store in barns, but they are provided for.

Will you not trust me? How can you even preach about me if you don't trust me? Now, I remember the day that I finally, in my heart, made the decision to leave and to trust God. And folks, all I can tell you is that that's a long time ago. And the provision of God for my life and family has been nothing less than miraculous.

Everything he said he would do, he has done. And even when I lost everything at one point, preaching in eastern Canada to come home and find my house burned down and all everything, we lost everything that we owned was lost. We had a bit of insurance, but even that didn't cover what was lost.

And I remember leaving a friend's house because we had to stay with friends. We had nowhere to stay. I had given away everything we had in the bank.

We'd lost everything we owned, but I had trusted God. And I remember going out for a jog one morning and I just said, Lord, I don't have anything other than a toothbrush at the moment, but I have this. You said, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

I said, Lord, I just rest in you now. I have your promise and God, you called me and I followed you. And so I trust you.

And folks, I just saw heaven open. The Lord showed me I can take it all away and I can give it all back. I want I want this provision issue dealt with in your heart once and for all.

It will always be leading you. You seek first. He told me my kingdom and my righteousness.

You look after my house and my kingdom and I will look after your house and everything that concerns you. And folks, to this day, I have to tell you, God's provision has been phenomenal. And I thank the Lord for this with all of my heart.

Consider. Now, we would like a definitive word. We would like a prophet to walk in the door and open the Bible and say this, thus saith the Lord.

And half the church does this. They run around the world looking for a word that's going to give them assurance and direction. When God says, I just want you to consider the birds, that's all.

That's the issue. I provide for them. They're in my hand.

They're completely trusting of me. I do not fail them. Not even one of them falls to the ground without my knowledge.

Luke 12, 27, he says, consider the lilies, how they grow, they toil not and they spin not. I was at one of my son's sporting practice several years back, and we had about an hour to go. I was sitting in the stands and

there was a man next to me.

I thought, well, I'll make some conversation with him, introduced myself. He told me his name was Nigel. I said, Nigel, what do you do for a living? He said, I'm a scientist, a research scientist.

Oh, I thought, well, that's interesting. I said, what do you study? And he said, I study the sunflower. And I said, is that all you do? And he said, yeah, I've studied the sunflower for 27 years, 27 years.

And I remember the first thought in my mind was who pays you to do this? And he had this look on his face. He was looking at me so intently. So he'd been waiting for 27 years for somebody to say, what have you discovered? I looked at my watch to practice with another hour.

And I was sitting there like a deer in the headlights. I said, I don't dare ask this man, what have you learned? Because it's going to be one hour of nonstop talking about a sunflower. And so I just sat there for a moment.

And it was a very awkward moment, because he's looking at me very longingly. I'm looking at him very. And he's waiting for me to say something.

And I said, God, give me wisdom here. I don't know what to do. And I said, then the Lord gave me something to ask him.

I said, have you discovered everything there is to know about the sunflower? And he looked at me, said, oh, no, oh, no, not even not even remotely. I said, ah, therefore, it must really make you think about the wonder of God's creation. I said, because you are obviously an intelligent man.

You've studied the sunflower for 27 years. And you haven't even gotten remotely close to the bottom of one flower in God's creation. And now the whole table's returned.

I was looking at him very long. He was like a deer in the headlight. You see, Jesus said, consider the lilies, how they grow.

There is in them an infusion of order. There is an abundance. Everything that they require is there.

It is part of a supernatural design. There is life. There is wealth.

There's provision inside of them for everything that God has destined them to be. And all these things are within them because they are in conformity with God's intended purpose for their existence. And this is why Jesus is saying, I want you to consider the lilies.

They are not trying to be tigers, unless they're tiger lilies, of course, but they're not trying to be other than what they are. They are put there for a reason. And in performing that reason that I put them there, they have everything in them that is necessary to become all that I have intended them to be.

And that's why Jesus said, consider them. Consider the lilies. Now, they, of course, don't have reasoning power.

If they had reasoning power like the human race does, then they would obviously be trying to be other than what they are. And there's the dilemma of fallen man. We're always trying to be something other than what God intended us to be.

The issue is for you and I, there was an intended purpose for our lives from before the foundation of the world. Nobody here is a fluke of nature. God knew you.

I can prove it in the scriptures before you were born. And even if the circumstance was not holy, he allowed you to be born. He called you by name before you were formed in your mother's womb.

And he said, I have a purpose for your life. The human dilemma that we run into is because we are free moral agents and have the ability to reason. The only thing of God's creation that has this ability.

We attempt quite often in our own reasoning to become something else, something other than what God intended us to be. Therefore, we work and are not satisfied. We labor and put our money in a bag with holes.

We drink, but our thirst is never filled. Because most often we're in the wrong place, doing the wrong thing. Asking God for his provision.

But we're not becoming what he intended us to be. The greatest thing that you can ever do and I can ever do in our Christian walk is just simply stop and say, Jesus, lead me. What is it that you want me to do? How do you want to be glorified through my life? What is it, Lord, that you want to accomplish in me? And it's not necessarily some great evangelistic thing on a foreign or domestic field.

No, Jesus will say, I want to be glorified in you, right in your dining room. Right where you live. Right where you walk in the building.

I want to be seen in you. I want to be known in the gates when you walk in the doors of your apartment building and you go up the elevator and down the hall. I want people to see who I am.

I want them to look at you and have to consider the reality of God as they see an infusion of divine life. Somebody whose steps are ordered. Who seems to know what to do.

Who's not afraid of evil tidings. Who's got a hope and an assurance for tomorrow and the day after and the day after. Seems to have a word in season for every situation.

Is calm in the midst of the storm. Can stand on the deck and say, don't be afraid, I've been with God. This is what I want to do, the Lord says.

This is how I will be glorified. This is my purpose to have a bride at church on this side of eternity. The church, like the ravens who don't spend their time worrying about tomorrow.

Worrying about what am I going to eat? What am I going to wear? Where am I going to live? Oh, yes, of course. God gives us the abilities to do the things we need to do for the provision which he makes. We don't just sit at home.

I'm not talking about a pacifism that sits at home and stares at the mailbox and waits for a check. He gives wisdom. He makes the provision as we move in divine order and in divine life.

Hallelujah. Consider the lilies. He goes on in verse 31.

He says, seek the kingdom of God and all these things should be added to you. Fear not, little flock, it's your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have.

In other words, whatever your trust is, whatever your pursuit has been, get rid of it. Auction it off. Give it away to the lowest bidder.

Let it go. I remember my unsaved partner in the police department in a shopping mall. Finally, I'm in this battle.

Do I go? Do I stay? Do I? Well, why can't I do both? Why can't I do this and preach the gospel at the same time? Why would God have a problem with this? And finally, my unsaved partner stops in the middle of a shopping mall, looks me in the eye and says, you don't belong here anymore. You are called to preach the gospel. It was like Balaam's donkey talking to me in the midst of a shopping mall.

You have to know this man. He's not known for his wisdom. Said your heart is not here.

You're called to preach the gospel. You know, that was the defining moment. Seek first the kingdom of God.

Sell what you have and give alms. It just simply means begin to give to the poor. That's really all that means.

If you dig it out in the original text, it means get rid of your trust and your pursuits, this hoarding of materialism and begin to give to the poor. And you will find a treasure that will never fail. A treasure in heavens, he calls it, that never fails.

Where no thief approaches and neither does moth corrupted. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. I want to look at that verse as I close in a different way.

He says, if you begin to do these things and move in divine purpose for your life. I will also give you my heart. Yes, you'll have the treasure.

The treasure is supply. It's the supply of Christ's life. But I will also give you my heart.

And it's a heart that gives from an inexhaustible supply of divine life. I'll give you your treasure and I'll give you the heart that comes with it. And you'll no longer be running around worried about tomorrow.

You'll be giving to those that have need. And I will become an inexhaustible supply. Consider the ravens, consider the lilies.

Whatever you need to be what I've called you to be. God says, I will be that to you. And an exhaustible supply of wisdom, compassion, life, direction, health, charity.

There have been people here today have been afraid to trust God. Afraid as I was to step from security to faith. Now, you know what I'm talking about.

Listen to me carefully. You've been afraid to make the step. Some people here are sinners and you are secure in your sin.

And you are afraid to step from the security of your sin to faith in God. You live in adultery. You live in immoral relationships.

You survive by doing things that you shouldn't do. You're not financially honest in your dealings. You're fraudulent before man and God.

And you're afraid to let go of these things and to step into faith as if God will let you fall. Oh, no. If you step into faith, God will give you provision that you've only been able to dream about.

There'll be a supply of life because you see you are obeying him and seeking first his kingdom. That means stepping away from sin, stepping away from that which offends the very nature of God. Stepping away from that which can never honor his life within you.

And he says, I will set you free from this and become to you an inexhaustible supply of life. And some others are afraid to step away from self-reliance to trusting in God. It's hard to step away from self-reliance because that's the way many of us were raised.

That's how we learn. The Lord helps those who help themselves. Well, of course, that's not in the Bible.

The Lord leaves those to their own devices who help themselves until they exhaust themselves. Stepping away from self-reliance. And beginning to trust in God for victory over sin.

For victory over a situation that you might be facing where you cannot get through it in your own strength. Or even just to move towards God's purpose for your life. Just stepping up, stepping out.

My two sons, when they were boys, we'd play a game. And we had a refrigerator in our basement of our house. And I used to set them up on top of it.

And we'd play the game called Jump to Daddy. And I would step way back. And I just keep going farther.

And one of my sons was hesitant. And I said, I would never let them fall. And even if I was only two feet away, he was always hesitant.

He was always calculating the risks. Very calculated. Always thinking about what could happen if Daddy let me fall.

And my other son was just recklessly abandoned to the game. I had to be careful never to turn my back on him in walking away because he would leap at me. And a lot of us are like that.

This is Father's Day. And our Heavenly Father says, jump to Daddy. You have two choices.

You stay on the fridge and calculate the risks. Or you recklessly abandon yourself to a Father who says, I will never fail you. I will never forsake you.

Your enemies will never triumph over you. I have determined to establish a testimony for my name in your life. That you're going to be able to go the rest of your life.

And you might have an earthly father to let you down. But for the rest of your life, you're going to say, I have a Heavenly Father. And every time he's called me, I've jumped to him.

And he's never failed me. And God will be honored through your life. Would you stand, please, with me? Hallelujah.

The Holy Spirit speaking to you this morning. Would you please come and join me at this altar? If you just need the courage to step out of a situation, a sin, a lifestyle. Today, he promises to give it to you.

Step out of where you are and he'll give you the victory. Lord Jesus. Thank you for speaking to my heart.

And allowing me to consider your promises to me. This day, I make the choice to step out and step away from everything that dishonors your purpose and your person in my life. And I step away from all directions that are confusing and lacking of divine order.

I come to you as your child. And I say in my heart to you, Jesus, I believe you. That you will provide for me.

You have a divine purpose for my life. You will not fail me. You will not forsake me.

This day, I make the choice to trust in you in all things. And as my father, I just want to say to you. I just want to say from my heart, happy Father's Day.

Amen.

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