

Choosing To Deny Yourself

by Dan Young

This sermon emphasizes the profound sacrifice of God sending His Son to pay for our sins, highlighting the need for us to understand and appreciate what Jesus did on the cross. It encourages seeking a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, relying on His grace and the promised Helper, the Holy Spirit, to assist us in times of need. The message stresses the importance of denying oneself, seeking God's will, and overcoming challenges with faith and a right heart attitude.

Scripture: John 14:16, John 14:18, John 14:21, Romans 8:13, 2 Corinthians 13:4, 2 Corinthians 13:5, James 1:12, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 10:13

Topics: "Sacrifice of Christ", "Relationship with God"

Description

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Transcript

Let's read a few verses from John chapter 14. You know, we sing that song that God sent his son. When you experience a child or somebody who's sick and there's nothing that you can do, it breaks your heart because it's in the Lord's hands.

But it's amazing that the Father sent his own son to pay the price for our sin. And if anybody here has sons or daughters, it's very hard when, you know, your children go through things. But Jesus was the son of God.

And God sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. And he laid all of our sins on top of him. I mean, that's a revelation in itself.

But we need to know what Jesus did for us on the cross. And through Jesus Christ, we are reconciled in a relationship with God. And it's only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ that we can have access into that relationship with him.

And we can have fellowship with him. But not only did he pay the price for our sins, but he also promised us that he would send us a helper. And when he rose from the grave, he would send somebody to assist

us.

And this is a wonderful promise that we need to receive by faith and that we need. We need to ask the Lord for the helper. Some of us are going through different situations.

We need the Lord's help. I don't care where you're at spiritually. If you're independent and you have no need of anything, then, well, that's great.

You have no need of the Lord. But to those who are sinners, they have need of Jesus. To those who are in a dire circumstance, who are in a challenging situation, they have need of the helper.

And this is a wonderful promise that we can have, that we can approach the throne of grace boldly in time of need. And he will give us mercy and grace. And we have to have faith in those situations that the Lord will help us, that he will hear our prayer, that he will give us sufficient strength for the day and sufficient grace to help us in our time of need.

And I'm thankful that the Lord keeps us weak, because otherwise we would become independent. I remember Emmanuel shared at Joshua House one day, and he says, you know, the one thing that we don't want to become is independent. When we become independent, that's when we lose that grace that the Lord has for us.

We don't want to be strong enough on our own to do it. We need to be on our knees, crying out to the Lord for mercy and help in time of need. And thankfully the Lord does that to us.

He does keep us weak, doesn't he? Some of us would like to have, you know, roses and butterflies in our spiritual journey, but unfortunately it doesn't seem to work that way. It seems as though the Lord leads us into paths that are difficult, but they're for his name's sake, and they're paths of righteousness. And God will give us strength to have a good attitude in every circumstance we're in.

He can give us strength to have, to overcome sin in the situations that we're in, that he will help us. He is able to do more than we ask or think. And the grace is there.

The grace is there. If we want it, we have to believe it. We have to lay hold of it.

The grace is there, sufficient for us to overcome sin, sufficient for us not to grumble and complain during the day, to not have a bad day. Yesterday was my birthday. I turned 42.

I feel older already. But, you know, the Lord allotted that the day was a tough day, and I said, Lord, I believe that you can help me overcome today. You can help me overcome.

You know, there was a time during the day where I did grumble and complain, and immediately I knew I grumbled and complained. And I said, Lord, I'm sorry. I want to overcome.

It says through him we overwhelmingly conquer through him who loved us. And God's desire is that we would overwhelmingly conquer, that we would get the victory through Jesus Christ. And so we need to lay hold of that.

We can't have a self-pitying attitude of poor me. My situation is bleak. My situation is bad.

There's no hope for me. I don't know what my future holds. No, that's a bad attitude.

Jesus never had that attitude. He never had a poor me attitude. He had a willingness to say, Lord, not my will, but your will be done.

And we have to have that same attitude. If you have an attitude of just feeling sorry for yourself, then you need to repent. That's the highest level of pride.

The highest level of pride is to feel sorry for yourself. You can't do that. You need to look to the Lord and say, Lord, you can help me conquer in this situation.

You can help me not to sin. I think the greatest victory in a person's life is not that they would never be sick. It's not that they would never go through a trial.

But that they would overcome in the trial and the situation that they're going through. That they would be able to give thanks no matter what. That they could say, the joy of the Lord is my strength.

Lord, you can help me overcome in this situation. You can help me have a right heart attitude. Because God is always looking at our heart attitude.

And our heart attitude, when we feel sorry for ourselves, is to run to some crutch and some vice to look for some temporary comfort. And it ain't coming. No, we need to look to the Lord and say, Lord, you've allowed this situation right now.

I want to overcome it. And it doesn't depend on anybody else, what they do for you, what they say for you, or what length they go to to try to keep you happy. It doesn't matter.

What matters is between you and the Lord. Lord, I want to be faithful in the situation that you give me. I think the Lord would love it if he could entrust so many things to his servants and his children on earth.

I think it would be his desire. As a father, I want my children to be able to entrust things to them later so that when I'm not around, they can make those good decisions. They can make the good decisions.

They can make those times where they can say, you know what, I can entrust my responsibility to them. And that's what God wants. But God has to wait for that.

Sometimes he has to wait for us to mature. Sometimes he has to wait for us to grow up until he's able to entrust us with these things so that we learn to handle them in a correct way. That's my desire for my children is that I can raise them in such a way that they would see the decisions that I make, that I would guide them in the right way.

And I would say, okay, now I can entrust these things to you because I know you're going to make the right decision. And I believe our Heavenly Father wants to do that with the Holy Spirit. He wants to give us a measure of the Holy Spirit.

He wants to give us a greater measure of grace. Jesus was full of grace and truth. And he had grace for grace.

And I believe God wants to pour out more grace on us. But I don't think that we would handle it correctly. I don't think we would.

Because you can see that we, in the situations and the trials, when they come, we quickly falter. We quickly grumble. We quickly complain.

We quickly want to run back to our old life. That's wrong. We need to repent of that attitude in our heart and say, Lord, forgive me for that.

John 14, it says, verse 16, or verse 14, let's start this. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it. This is a great privilege that we can come to the Lord and say, Lord, I need your help in this time.

I'm asking you for help. I'm asking you for wisdom. I'm asking you for your strength.

I'm asking you to show me what to do with my future. I'm asking you to direct my steps. Not my will.

Your will be done. Because the next verse says, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. So we can ask him for anything.

But if we don't love him and we don't keep his commandments, he's not going to give us what we're asking for. Because partially we're probably asking for selfish reasons. We're asking it so we can spend it on our pleasures.

That's the wrong motive for asking him for the helper. No, we need to ask him to help me to overcome in time of need. To say, Lord, I'm boldly coming to you in the throne of grace.

I'm asking you for the grace to overcome at this time. To not be discouraged. To have faith.

To trust you. To trust you and not be afraid. Verse 16, and it says, I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper that he may be with you forever.

That is the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it does not behold him or know him. But you know him because he abides with you and will be in you. You know in the truth.

You know when you're walking in the truth. You know when you're being truthful. The spirit of truth will guide you into the truth.

And so sometimes you're wrestling with a decision and we need to cry out to the Lord and say, Lord, send me the helper to know which way to go. And the helper will teach you one thing. He will teach you to deny yourself.

Yesterday I went to the mall and my kids were like, Daddy, you need to buy yourself something for your birthday. It's your birthday. You need to buy yourself something.

And you know what? I bought myself nothing. And I said, you know what? The greatest thing I can teach my kids is not to get what I want. It's to deny themselves.

And I need to deny myself. You don't need to get everything you want. You don't need another 20 bucks in your pocket.

You don't. You need to be faithful with what God's given you. And if he hasn't given you 20 bucks, you don't take it.

You only take what God gives you. And if God hasn't given me anything, then I don't want it. The true gift I want on his birthday is his blessing on my life.

It's that close walk with Jesus. That's greater than any \$20 bill. We need to be faithful.

We need to treasure the value and the gift that he's given us in Jesus Christ. All the treasures of godliness are in him. And he can satisfy that longing desire that we have in our soul.

Those are the things we want. Have you asked the Lord for the helper? Or have you asked the Lord for a handout? We need to be careful that we don't do that. Because that's sin.

It says right here. This is really encouraging to me. I will not leave you as orphans.

I will come to you. Some of us feel very alone. My father passed away a number of years ago, and sometimes I realize, Lord, I don't have anybody who I can really go to.

Sometimes I can go to people for advice. But this one says here that I will not leave you as an orphan. Parentless.

I'm not going to leave you parentless. Spiritually, he says, I will come to you. That's encouraging.

We can go to him because he's going to not leave us as orphans. He's going to come to him. He says, after a little while, the world will behold me no more.

But you will behold me because I live. You shall live also. Because Jesus lives, we can have life in ourselves.

We can have that joy. We can have that peace. We can have that faith in the midst of a trying circumstance.

We can say, Lord, because you live, I live also. In that day you shall know that I am in the father, and you in me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.

And he who loves me shall be loved by my father, and I will love him, and I will disclose myself to him. When you keep God's commandments, God will reveal himself to you. There was many times in my life I said, Lord, I need an answer, and the Lord would just convict me of a sin in my life and say, Dan, I don't want you to do that.

I don't want you to walk with the same friends that you have. I want you to separate yourself from them. And as I would be obedient to that, the Lord would reveal himself to me.

And the presence of God in my life became so real that the moment I didn't have that presence, I knew exactly where did it go, Lord. And then I had to search my heart and say, Lord, I'm sorry. There's something that I've done wrong.

Help me to examine myself and see if I'm walking in the faith. I want to turn with me to 2 Corinthians 13 here. We know that the Lord will send us a helper, but there is a time too where we also need to examine ourselves.

The Holy Spirit will come and convict the world of sin and of godliness and of righteousness, and we need to examine ourselves and search our hearts to say, Lord, is there any unclean way in me? And this is what

the Holy Spirit does. The Holy Spirit will give us strength to put to death the deeds of our sinful flesh. That's what it does.

It says in Romans 8 verse 13, if by the Holy Spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh, you will live. So the Holy Spirit is the one who gives us victory over discouragement, over depression, over self-pity, over fear about what to do when your mind is being bombarded with all these thoughts. Those are things.

The Spirit of truth will lead you into all the truth, and he usually will lead you to the cross. He will lead you to the cross, and he will lead you to die to yourself. He will say, Dan, in this circumstance and situation you're in, I want you to die to yourself, even if it's a very simple thing.

Forgive me, Lord, for what I've taken when I shouldn't have taken. Forgive me, Lord, for when I didn't die to myself. And this is how we know when we're walking in the faith.

It is the Spirit of God leading us to deny ourselves, to take up our cross, to follow after him. If you are doing that, you will be walking on the narrow way, and the Lord will reveal his path for your life. He will.

But if we are going the way of the world and we're looking to the world for answers and we're looking for our own ideas, the Lord won't give us those answers. He won't. He will withhold them from us because we're not dealing with the one thing he's been convicting us of.

And if we start to respond to that one thing that he's convicting us, then the Lord will make our path known. Little by little, the light will shine brighter and brighter until the noonday sun. Verse chapter 13, it says, this is the third time I'm coming to you.

Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses. Paul here had gone to the Corinthian church to, in fact, this is the third time. So he says, now it's the third time.

I'm going to say the same things that I said to you before. Sometimes we hear the same message and we don't want to hear it. But Paul said the exact same thing to them.

I'm now back the third time, and I am the testimony of two or three witnesses. I've come to you three times now to talk to you about it. The Lord sometimes, I think, I wonder if he speaks to us three times before we finally listen.

I said, I have previously said when present the second time, and though now absent, I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again, I will not spare anyone. Since you are seeking for proof of Christ who speaks in me and is, who is not weak towards you, but mighty in you. For indeed he was crucified because of weakness, yet he lives because of the power of God.

This is a wonderful thing is that we are made weak, but we live because of the power of God. It says this, that we carry about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in us. And so the Lord allows us to be crucified.

He allows us to die. He allows us to go through sufferings. He allows us to go through these difficulties.

Why? So that the life of Jesus may be manifested. Some of us want to get out of the difficult circumstances, but it's in those situations that we become more like Christ. So we need to accept those gladly and say, Lord, I need your help in this time.

I need your help in this time. Jesus was crucified because of weakness. Yet he lived because of the power of God, for we also are weak in him, yet we shall live with him because of the power of God directed to you.

That's a wonderful promise is that we are also made weak, but we shall live through him. That's one thing that we can have hope in today. And that's one thing I want to leave you with, is that when we're made weak, we can trust the Lord.

We can ask him for a helper, and he will give us the strength to overcome for the day, just for the day. Enough trouble we have today, don't we? We don't have to worry about tomorrow. Some of us are anxious about tomorrow.

You don't have to worry about tomorrow. We have to get through today. I had to get through last night.

We need to come to the Lord for help to just get through the day. Help me to get through the next hour, Lord. Help me.

I'm asking for your help, Lord. Don't worry about tomorrow, my friends. Tomorrow is enough trouble of its own.

Don't worry about it. The Lord will take care of it. The Bible says, Seek first his kingdom.

Seek first his kingdom for your life. And all these things will be added unto you. Seek first his kingdom and say, Lord, I'm putting you first.

I'm surrendering my will to you, my future plans. I'm leaving it in your hands. I'm not going to worry about tomorrow.

Help me to get through today and to overcome right now. And if you haven't been overcoming, say, Lord, forgive me. My attitude's been wrong.

I've been having self-pity. I've been discouraged. I repent.

And I ask you to help me to get back up and to look to you again, Lord, because you're greater than all these mountains, bigger than all my problems, bigger than all my fears. God is bigger than any problem that I can or cannot see. He's bigger.

And so we can look to him and he can help us. He is mighty to save, my friends. We live in weakness, but we live because of the power of God.

I want to ask you this. Test yourselves to see if you were in the faith. Examine yourselves.

Or do you recognize that this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless indeed you fail the test? Do you know that you're being tested? Do you know that your faith is being tested? We need to examine ourselves to see if we're in the faith even in the midst of the test, to see if we are going to overcome. Because the Bible says that the word of God gets sown on the rocky soil, and when the tests or trials come up because of the difficulty of the word, immediately they fall away. I want to ask you, are you in a test? Are you going to overcome because of the difficulties of the word, because of the challenges and the lusts in your flesh and the desires for other things? Are you going to fail the test? My friends, I pray that God would plow your heart even more.

He would make that heart even softer so that He may do more work. And the only way that your heart is going to get soft is if you go through trials, you go through difficulties, you get made weak, so that God can produce the fruitful peace of righteousness. So He can produce it in your heart and that you became more Christ-like and you might learn the lesson that the Lord is actually trying to teach you.

May you overcome today and not fail like you did last time at this exact same test. May you overcome today. In Jesus' name.

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