

Mark - took... blessed... broke... Gave

by J. Glyn Owen

Jesus performed the miracle of feeding the 5,000 to show his care for the physical and material needs of his followers and to illustrate the way in which he would meet their spiritual and eternal needs through his sacrifice on the cross.

Duration: 52:45

Scripture: Mark 6:30-44, Luke 22:7-20, Ephesians 4:7-12

Topics: "Miracle"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses a miracle performed by Jesus that was meant to be more than just a miracle, but a sermon. The speaker emphasizes the four acts of taking, blessing, breaking, and giving involved in the miracle, which foreshadowed the disciples' ability to meet the spiritual needs of the spiritually hungry. The speaker also mentions another feeding miracle recorded in the Gospel, where Jesus fed 4,000 people who had been with him for three days. The sermon highlights the Bible's tendency to provide prefigurings and foretellings of future events, particularly in the life of Jesus.

Transcript

Now shall we turn prayerfully this morning to the sixth chapter of Mark's Gospel and to the record that we have there of the feeding of the 5,000, the 5,000 men besides women and children, the passage that we read earlier. I think we shall be focusing very particularly upon the significance of one verse and so it might be helpful if I were just to read verse 41 again as the kind of center point towards which we gravitate and there stay for a while. When he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven and blessed and break the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before them and the two fishes he divided among them all.

Now the resurrection of our Lord Jesus apart, this is the one miracle recorded by all the evangelists, by all the gospel writers, the one miracle that you find in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And that fact in and of itself indicates that the miracle must have had a tremendous impact upon them and also that the Holy Spirit had a good purpose for causing this one miracle very especially to be recorded in all four Gospels. Surely the Lord doesn't want us to miss this.

And yet I fear that in reading the record of this miracle, very few people seem to be aware of its real significance in the ongoing teaching of our Lord at the time and also its significance for the church in the remaining ages and for us this morning. Now let's just pause for a moment and see the occasion of this

miracle, the immediate occasion and the setting here. To get a fairly complete picture of course of the reason why our Lord did this we need to take the testimony of the four evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Matthew stresses the impact upon Jesus and his disciples of the recent news that John the Baptist has been killed, has been murdered in Matthew 4, 14, 13. Jesus may well have foreseen the possibility at that point of an attack made upon himself, perhaps alone, or of an attack made upon himself and his disciples because he and they and John the Baptist were all of a peace, all together formed a united front as it were against the superficialities of the scribes and of the Pharisees and of Jewish religion generally at that point in history. Mark and Luke stress the fact that just at this point that as the apostles, the disciples, the twelve had returned from their tour of ministry and it would seem that in their minds this had some bearing upon the fact that Jesus took them aside and having gone aside found this multitude pursuing them and in due course performed the miracle.

When you come to John there is another point that is mentioned by John or should I say two. The one point in John's presentation is this, he specifically links it with the Passover feast which was about to take place and this raises many questions in our minds. John is very keen that we should see that this took place just as the Passover feast was about to be celebrated and the other thing of course as far as John is concerned in the context following upon this miracle he tells us that our Lord Jesus went on to teach the disciples that he himself was the bread of life, the bread that came down from heaven to be broken and to be given to the world to bring life.

Now we need to bear all these factors in mind if we want properly to understand fully to appreciate something of the significance of this event for our Lord and for us according to his intention. Now let's look at the action of Jesus. As the day wore on the crowds have gathered alongside of him and around him.

The crowds have followed him across the lake or at least Jesus and his disciples crossed the lake but the crowds have gone by land and they're there even waiting his arrival. He had said let us go apart and rest a while and let's find a little desert spot where we can be alone that was in his mind. But when he got there with his disciples he found that the crowd were there already.

As the day wore on the disciples suggested that Jesus dismiss the crowd. They've heard his message now so the disciples felt and evidently they're hungry. So says they very matter-of-fact wise they said dismiss them now let them go to the surrounding countryside let them find villages or towns where they can buy food for themselves and whether they choose to come back again or to go home well that's for them to decide.

But let's let's liberate them let's loose them let's let's let them go. Let's dismiss them. Now it's necessary to remember that there are two feeding miracles two miracles of this kind recorded in the Gospels.

In the other one where Jesus fed the 4,000 the circumstances are different. When he feeds the 4,000 the people have been with him for three whole days. Now that's a long time to be in a wilderness.

Even if they brought their sandwiches with them that's a long time to be away and so you see the probability there is that they were on the point of starving. Well they were certainly feeling the pinch at any rate as you and I would if we'd been without food for three days or living on a meager handful of sandwiches. So at that point there was a kind of urgent necessity that he should do something.

Not so in this case. They were hungry but no one seemed to be on the verge of starvation or of giving up. They they needed food but but they could have they could have gone on until they got home probably.

But you see Jesus cared for them and I want us to get this point in the first place. Our Lord Jesus Christ was not simply concerned with people at the point of starvation but also at the point of hunger long before they came to the experience of starvation. He's not simply concerned about people when they've come to the end of their tether and they can do nothing and they're just about to flop.

He is concerned for such of course. But I want you to see that he was concerned for these folk when they were hungry. Not in any danger of losing their lives but hungry.

The disciples, bless them, turned to Jesus and said well now look if you're not willing for them to go and shop you suggest that that we feed them. Now that's what Jesus did. You give them to eat he said.

And bless them they were willing to pay up to the tune of 200 denarii in order to get food for them as I gather from the text. If Jesus had allowed that. But Jesus wouldn't allow it.

No no he says not that not that. Whereas they were willing to pay to procure some food for them. Jesus said look there's something I want to ask you.

How many loaves have you got? What have you got? What food have you got? What can you turn up with? You see this shows that he intended to do something. This shows that he was altogether determined to do something to work this miracle because he had a positive intention or intentions in his mind. Now the vital action is related to what Jesus did in relation to the paltry handful of food that they eventually brought to him.

Five little cakes and two paltry fishes, sardine like. You know the thing is laughable. They bring from this little boy out of his little packet of lunch.

They bring from this little fellow this meager amount that they have. No one had prepared you see. But now listen.

Let me read verse 45 again. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven. Don't miss that.

Taking from them and looking to heaven. Taking and looking. Taking and looking.

The heart of the Savior is in heaven. He's working in fellowship with his father. And this this was no mere vague empty gesture.

This was not doing something simply for men to see. This was this was a the living out of his life. He was going to do something in fellowship with his father.

Looking up to heaven. He gave thanks. He broke the loaves.

Then he gave them to the disciples and they set them before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. Now the miracle is evident and I'm not going to pause simply to quote verses 42 and 43.

Let's note the miracle. They all ate and were satisfied. And were satisfied.

They just didn't nibble a crumb each to say that they had eaten. There was no intrigue here to put on a you know a show that was not real. They all ate and were satisfied.

And the disciples picked up 12 basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of the men who had eaten was 5,000 men. You see over and above what was necessary to satisfy the number of men there.

They had more left at the end than they had to begin with. That's the miracle. And the basketfuls referred to here quite different from that in the feeding of the 4,000.

A different kind of basket altogether. The baskets referred to here was the kind of basket the Jews took everything with them when they went out anywhere. They would carry their bedding, a little bit of hay, a little bit of food, and all that they needed.

If there were children they would need things for the children. And everything went into this particular bag. Coffin I in the plural.

I don't like it very much. The word coffin in English speak has its connotation. But that's it.

It comes from this Greek word. Coffin I. It was a container. A container basket in which the Jew carried everything.

And there were 12 coffin I full of the fragments. You see something big has happened. The stomachs of those 5,000 people have been filled and yet there's more left at the end than at the beginning.

Now all right. What did our Lord have in mind? What was the intention of this? Oh may the Spirit of God give us a properly virile imagination here now. Without stepping over the leaping over the bounds of propriety.

Let's get try and get back into this into this New Testament scene. You see Jesus is teaching his disciples. He hasn't died yet.

He isn't risen yet. He's on his way to the cross. He's preparing them to be his servants.

And he's doing something which he wants to have relevance to all of them to teach them a lesson to move them forward as it were progressively in an understanding of his ways and of his will. What's he got in mind here? First of all there was an immediate intention and then there was an there were ultimate intentions. The immediate intention of course is evident.

He cared for their needs. And I mustn't come to the ultimate. Suggesting for one solitary moment that the immediate intention did not count or was not real.

If I did that I believe I would be quite untrue to the whole attitude of Jesus to the needy. True there was no apparent question of anyone dying from hunger as we've said already or even fainting. But they were hungry and he cared you see.

Though the Gospels show a consistent economy in the use of miracles, Jesus did not work miracles ad-lib. There's an economy you cannot read. You cannot read the New Testament without recognizing that Jesus did not always work miracles.

He was careful. He chose his time and he chose his place. Though the Gospels show such a consistent economy in the use of miracles, Jesus was sufficiently concerned about their need here to intervene and to make this the occasion of one of his greatest, if not his greatest miracle.

Let's take this to heart, especially in an age when there is so much hunger. Now we find this very difficult to take in, do we not? You and I, brothers and sisters, in this Western world and in this North American continent, we do not know what the pinch of starvation is. It's kept so distant from us, even our wildest imaginations, with all we've seen and all we've read, we simply cannot take it in.

But brothers and sisters, the Lord of glory cared. Though his world was so distant from that of starvation in one sense, he was the Lord of all creation, and he could at will, if he pleased, change stones into bread, though he didn't. And for forty days and nights in the wilderness went without, though in one sense he was the Lord and could if he would.

He cared for those who could do nothing about it, who ached in their stomachs not knowing where the next meal was coming from and when. Do you? Do you know anything of that? I really believe that if we can close our eyes and our ears and our thoughts to what is going on in other parts of the world today, when all is so well with us, we shall have so much to answer for at the judgment bar of God. We need, as we've never needed it before, we need to have this sensitivity to the hunger, not just, not the end product, not the fainting necessarily, but even before people come to that point.

And especially, especially when they are members of the household of God, we are to have a special care for one another. New Testament Christians, when they heard that there was a problem in Judea and in Jerusalem, they immediately set about having a collection, so that the Jerusalem Christians, the Jewish Christians, should not be in need. It takes a lot of time for us to get there.

There was an immediate intention then, and I want to stress this morning the need for us to pray God to give us a sensitivity to the physical and the material needs of our fellows. There is a more ultimate intention, however, and I want to turn to that very particularly. John very emphatically relates this miracle to the fact that the Passover was at hand, as we've said.

He refers to it in the fourth verse of John 6. Now, what was the significance of such a relation? I wonder, why does John say that at this point, as if somehow it's related to it, Jesus worked this miracle and the Feast of the Passover was at hand? Perhaps the key to a partial understanding of our Lord's purpose, at any rate, is found in the fact that according to John 6, 26 following, Jesus followed the miracle with a discourse of the bread of life, and he proceeded, among other things, to say such things as this, I am the bread of life. He who came to me will never go hungry. I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

If a man eats of this bread, he will live forever. The bread is mine, this bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Now let's get the picture.

Among other things, at the Passover feast, Israel would be would be forcefully reminded of the great deliverance from Egypt. Many things will come back to the memory, many things would be stressed, but along with that there would come a reminder of the fact that Israel had been kept and sustained in the desert for 40 years, and fed upon the bread of God, bread which God supplied. Jesus is in that context in John 6, claiming that he himself is God's bread to give them eternal life, and no mere temporal provision.

And it seems that in and through the action in the miracle whereby he took, blessed, broke, and gave the fragmented pieces of fish and bread to the hungry, he was pictorially portraying something else. What? Now let's look at it. First of all, by his fourfold action of taking and blessing and breaking and giving, by his fourfold action in the miracle, he was prefiguring and pre-intimating what was to take place after the Passover supper was over.

Have you noticed, it's a feature of the Bible to give you some picture beforehand of what is to come. The Bible is so full of this aspect of what we may call prophecy. There are always prefigurings and foretellings and pre-intimations and a preparing of the way.

It's so very especially, of course, in the life of our Lord Jesus. The Old Testament is chock-a-block of ideas and notions and concepts and descriptions, all pointing forward to him that will come. And I believe that here is something, here is an incident, here is a miracle, which was meant to be more than a miracle.

It was meant to be a sermon. It was meant to show forth in some faint form, they wouldn't take it in just yet, later they will, but it was going to point forward to something else. That may pass over them just at the moment, but later they'll remember and later they will recognize.

I want you to note very carefully the four acts of taking, blessing, breaking, and giving involved in the miracle. Then let me read to you a description of what later took place following a Passover supper. Now let me read, and I'm reading from Luke.

I'm just taking some some verses out because the passage is long. Then came the time of unleavened bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. When the hour came, Jesus and his disciples reclined at the table, and he said to them, I have eagerly desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

Now notice. And he took some bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them. Do this, he said, in remembrance of me.

Now you can't miss it, can you? He's doing exactly the same when he instituted the Lord's Supper as he did the way back here in the wilderness to feed the people. He took, he gave thanks, he break, and then he gave. You can hardly miss the identical language.

What have we got here then? Well, in the first place we have this. We have our Lord Jesus Christ actually prefiguring what was going to happen to himself as the Passover lamb. He was using the occasion of meeting men's material needs to illustrate the way in which he would meet the spiritual and eternal needs of our whole community that no man can number in the wilderness of life.

He's telling the disciples, you see, however much you rejoice at seeing this, I want to tell you there's something bigger ahead. The best is yet to be. Of course, we must remember that Jesus was both the sacrificing priest in his own death, as well as the sacrifice itself.

If we don't remember that, we shall find difficulty in applying this. Jesus was the sacrificer and the sacrifice. In the Jewish Passover, the priest was separate from the sacrifice.

But Jesus was both at Calvary. He was both sacrifice and sacrificer, victim slain and priest offering the sacrifice. So that sometimes at the communion table we sing, and through thy blood accepted with thee we keep the feast.

Thou art alone the victim, thou only art the priest. He's the sacrificer at his own death and he's the sacrifice laid down. That's what he had in mind when he said, no man takes my life from me.

I deliver it up of myself. I am the priest administering the sacrifice. I am giving myself as priest.

Therefore, Jesus took his human life and delivered it at the cross. He blessed it. He gave thanks for it to the Father, and he broke it.

It was he who did the breaking. Just as he broke the bread, and he did all this in order to give himself. He was giving himself away.

And this miracle, I believe, was pointing forward to that. Now you tell me, are you sure you're right? I want you to come with me on a long walk, though we'll be very short about it, very quick about it. But it's a long walk from Jerusalem to Emeus on the morning, or was it the afternoon rather, leading into the evening of the first resurrection day.

And I want you to see those two unnamed disciples on the road to Emeus. They're so downcast and disillusioned, they don't know what to say. They're turning their backs upon what they deem to be the scene of unmitigated tragedy.

And they're going home, into the country, away from it all. And as they go, they say, we hoped, we had hoped that it was he who should have redeemed Israel, but we don't hope anymore. That's the implication.

Their hearts were sad, and they didn't even know the stranger was joining them on the way. And they think he's a bit of a fool, because he apparently isn't aware of everything that's been going on. They come to the end of the journey, and evidently they're so full of their sorrows that they've got not time really to consider him.

Though they're very much, very much excited by some of the things he said. And when they came to the end of their journey, to the little place that turned into their own little home, he was apparently going to go further. And they said to him, come in with us, join us, it's nearly evening anyway, come and stay with us.

And he did. Do you remember what happened? Exactly what happened here. As he sat at meat with them, he took the bread.

And he gave thanks. And he broke. And he gave.

And suddenly they've got it, you see. They see it. It's Jesus.

And suddenly he went. And what did they do? They got up, tired, weary, disillusioned as they were, leaden as their feet were with tiredness and downheartedness. And they turned right away around.

And the whole process is in reverse. And they go right back into Jerusalem, marching now as soldiers, knowing that their Lord was alive. How did they know him? In the breaking of the bread.

See? Those who were present when the advanced lesson was given, as the miracle was performed, to heard the discourse on the bread of life, later remembered what had taken place and how it all found fulfillment in the death of our Lord Jesus. But now something else I want to say. All that is objective in a sense and doesn't come down to you and to me.

I think there's another significance here. And with this I must pause for a moment. By his fourfold action in the miracle, Jesus also pre-intimated the kind of thing which would enable them, the disciples, to meet the spiritual needs of the spiritually hungry.

How, by being like little cakes and fishes in his hand, that he could break, that he could take, and bless, looking up, and break, and give. Yes, the news of John the Baptist's death was most challenging. John was so cruelly mutilated and broken.

I don't want to go back into the gruesome details we were with it one day. You remember them? Mark 6. John was broken, physically as well as otherwise, in order to be given. John's testimony, and John's work, and John's ministry did not end when his head was severed from his torso.

But the servants of Christ must be ready to be thus broken if they are to serve God and meet the needs of men. Especially if we are justified in thinking of ourselves in a secondary sense as being bread to the hungry. He took the bread.

He took the bread. Now you see, that word describes exactly what Jesus did when he called the disciples. He took the bread.

He was taking into his hands a few cakes, a few barley cakes, and a few little fishes. And at that time, let me tell you, at the time when he thus took them, they were exactly, exactly of the order of a few insignificant little cakes and insignificant fish. They looked so paltry.

There was nothing big about them. There wasn't one, there wasn't one loaf, full-sized loaf among them. They were all just ordinary, insignificant creatures.

Who ever had heard of them? They were just one of the many, one of the crowd, all of them. There was not a theological giant among them, not a philosophical or intellectual or social giant, not one. They were all just tiny little fellows, little cakes and little fish.

But he took them. And Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians that this is the kind of thing that God does. He chooses the small.

He chooses the insignificant people. He chooses those that have got very, very little in them. And just as he took the five little loaves and the two little fish into his hands, he takes men like that still.

Has he thus taken you into his hands? Oh my friend, I mean to ask this question this morning. It's not a rhetorical something that's just come to the lip. Tell me.

I don't know what you think about yourself. You may be suffering from, from, from pride or you may be suffering from an inferiority complex in which you see yourself as capable of nothing. But I am concerned in my Lord's name this morning to ask this.

Are you in his hands? See, you can't be given until you're in his hands. This is the greatness of the privilege of being involved in the work of our Lord, being given to others. But in order to be given, you must first be in his hands.

The spiritual hunger of the world is a concern to the heart of God. If you are not in the Savior's hands this morning, will you put yourself there today? Will you make this morning hour the occasion when deliberately you come and you say, Lord I'm thine. In full and glad surrender I give myself to thee, thine

utterly and only and evermore to be.

Place yourself there today. Do it deliberately. Paul says in Romans 12, 1 and 2, it's the only sensible thing to do for a Christian.

If you've been bought with the blood of Christ, if you've been justified and you've been sanctified and you're in process of being sanctified more and more and you're looking forward to the glorification day, then it's the only sensible thing to do. For you to do otherwise is nonsense. And it is contrary to hold all the logic and morality of the Bible, to try and live to yourself outside the hand, the controlling hand, the sovereign hand of God.

But you notice what he took? He blessed. He always does of course. So this is the secret of the multiplication here.

Jesus took those five little loaves. Now there was nothing unusual about the five little loaves until looking up to heaven, he blessed. Oh brothers and sisters, this is where the miracle takes place you see.

Our God in Jesus Christ comes down to the most ordinary of men and women in history and he lays his hand upon them and he takes them into his hand and then he blesses them. And in the blessing he gives them a capacity to be this and to do that and to go there and he gifts them and he graces them. Of course, you've got to be in his hand for this blessing.

And that's the rub, isn't it? Many of us don't like to be in anybody else's hand. We like to have our own hand upon the tiller. With such a blessing, twelve ordinary men can change the history of the world, not can, have done so.

And the destiny of millions. They can become bread to dying men the world over. He took, he blessed.

But now notice, before he gave, he broke. He broke. Whom Jesus takes and blesses in order to use, he first breaks.

It sounds cruel, doesn't it? But it's a principle embedded into Scripture. Many of us are too big to be given as we are and we have to go through a process of breaking. This is characteristic of every Christian.

You know, the reason why we can't be given as bread to the hungry spiritually is that we are far too big in our own eyes. And part of God's problem with us, should I say, if such language is admissible, God's main problem with us is that we're too big, not too little. And he has to cut us down to size.

And he has to humble us in our own eyes. And this is a very difficult thing. Said Jesus, accept a grain of wheat, fall into the ground and die.

Get out of sight and die. It abides alone. It's only when it's gone out of sight and died and become as it were a non-entity that it'll bring forth fruit.

A field of standing grain, be it of oats or of barley or whatever, is a great promising sight. I've seen some on my travels this week up north. A field of standing grain that's been taking in all the sunshine and all the rain, the thundershowers, what am I going to say, the thundershowers of these latter days, and taking all the sap from the earth and the nutrition.

A field of standing grain. It's a beautiful picture, but it's not bread. And a lot of things have got to happen before a field of standing grain becomes bread to the hungry.

Ere it can become bread, it'll have to be cut, threshed, ground into flour. Then it can be placed in a hot, it has to be placed in a hot oven and baked. This congregation this morning resembles the field of grain.

Every Christian is a stalk of grain. But that grain must be broken ere it becomes bread to the hungry. And that means, my friend, that you and I've got to be broken, ground to powder.

Lest you be misled to think that this is an exaggerated view, let me say to you that each of the disciples in turn had to undergo it. And if we were here for a longer time, I could prove to you how Peter and the rest of the disciples and how the Apostle Paul had to come to the end of their tether and look upon themselves as crucified men. Ere the Master could give them as broken bread to feed a hungry world.

And so must we all. But the last word is this, and I'm glad it's here. He took, he blessed, he broke.

What comes after the breaking? Hallelujah, isn't it wonderful? Giving. He gave. I was thrilled this week, as I was reading about this, to find this very language used of the Apostles, for example, and of others too.

How God gives men to people. Let me just read to you from Ephesians 4. These words, they're very familiar. The ascended Christ leading captivity captive and giving gifts to men.

Listen to these words. It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be pastors, some to be teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service. It was he that gave them.

And I know men and women in spheres of service that are being given to others. They're becoming bread to the hungry and water to the thirsty and life to the dead under the blessing of Christ. I was very smitten this week when I heard of a dear girl in this, in this city, whom I know is one of the main kingpins in rescuing others from sin and shame and other things and other forms of evil.

And yet the Lord seems to have laid his hand upon her, almost saying, this is the end of your earthly road. But if ever there was a soul who's been given, given, given, given, given, and others eat her as bread and are experienced and come to life. And there are some here this morning who've come to life through her.

The precious truth that glares challengingly at us as we read the book of Acts and the epistles is that the whole twelve, Judas apart, were given by Christ to feed the hungry. Paul in prison was a man who, whose very life was transformed through his writings to become food for men and women, even for you and for me this morning. Now is your life becoming bread to the hungry? Is Jesus Christ giving you to men? Have you been broken to be given? Have you been blessed to be broken? Have you been taken into his hands? Are you in his hands? The only tragedy that supersedes that of not being thus given is to be unconcerned about it.

And I hope that is not true of any of us this morning. We are living in a desolate and a dying world. Men are starving for the bread of life as well as for food for their physical stomachs.

And the Savior cares. Will you not become the simple little fish? The little loaves in his hands and ask him to break you and bless you that he may give you. See this is the purpose why we were redeemed.

No, this is the purpose why we were created as well. I close with this. And I say to you quite honestly, oh, for the spirit of men like Ignatius of old in the early Christian church, one of the early Christians, who

amidst his many, many sorrows and sufferings and persecutions for the sake of the gospel, said this.

God has made me brave for his elect. And if it be needful that the bread be ground in the very teeth of the lion to feed his children, blessed be the name of the Lord. That's it.

He's got it. He's got the secret. And the lion was not a distant threat.

The lion was an imminent threat. That's why he's saying it. What he's saying is this.

I'm not only ready to die, but I'm ready to die in the mouth of the lion torn to shreds. If that's the price of feeding the children of God, what do we know of that? Brothers and sisters, let us place ourselves at his disposal afresh and say, take my life and let me be consecrated Lord to thee. I don't care what language we use, but let's do it today on this lovely summer's day.

Isn't God good to us? Have you blessed him today for this day? And it's the Lord's day and here we are in his house. Now listen, why not come and fulfill the purpose of your existence and see yourself as a little cake in his hand and let him break you through sickness if needs be through sorrow, if needs be through dispossession of your goods, if needs be any way as he sees fit. So that having been broken, you can be given, be small enough to be given, humble enough to be given.

Oh, I know it's challenging and I know it'll hurt us all. And yet this is the purpose of life as I understand it in the Christian sense. Oh Lord, give me faithfulness, give us grace all to be faithful to the heavenly calling.

Let us pray. Father, write your word deeply upon our hearts. And if your servant has said ought this morning, which is improper or inconsistent with your purpose, please let us forget that.

But write deeply upon our hearts the message as you want us to retain it and to obey it. And may we live in the light of it to your glory. Amen.

Our concluding. We do not often sing this hymn because it is a hymn that we can so easily sing when we don't mean it. And of all hymns, I don't think we should sing this if we don't mean it.

I ask you this morning, therefore, to seek with me an honesty of soul whereby we can really sing this closing hymn prayerfully. Each verse begins, and you know it's the centenary of the death of Francis Ridley Haverhill. We remember her life and her ministry with great thankfulness to God.

Take my life and let it be. You know she wrote a sequel to this in which she changed the take to keep. Some of us this morning may be able to say I've given myself to the Lord and I've said to the Lord, Lord take me and we know we're in his hands to be broken and we're happy whatever he does with us.

Well all right, perhaps you'd like to change the language and say keep my life and let it be consecrated Lord to thee. Keep my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love. Keep my voice and let me sing.

All right, sing that. But if you've never sung take, sing it this morning. And as you sing it, let him do exactly that to his glory.

Thank you. So now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy to the only wise God our savior be glory and majesty dominion and power both now and ever. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/26/SID26536.mp3>
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