

# Sanctification

by J. Sidlow Baxter

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*J. Sidlow Baxter's sermon on sanctification emphasizes the importance of being set apart for Christ in every aspect of life.*

**Duration:** 1:02:03

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:23

**Topics:** "Sanctification"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of sanctification and its importance in our lives. He compares our physical bodies to the outer court of the tabernacle, which can be taken down and wrapped up for travel without affecting the sanctuary. Our soul is likened to the holy place, where our intellect, volition, emotion, and spirit operate. The speaker emphasizes that true sanctification occurs when we fully surrender ourselves to God, setting ourselves apart for Him. This process may be lengthy and winding, but once we wholeheartedly give ourselves to Jesus, we become truly set apart and experience a living communion with God.

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## Transcript

Mr. Chairman and my dear friends, after that naughty eloquence, I am comforted to know that you have enjoyed being inoculated by Sidlow's Bacsteria. Now, once again I have to inflict this most objectionable foghorn on you, but at any rate we've managed to get through. I think henceforth I shall always think of the letter TBI as War Baxter's indisposition.

But we've got through the week and now I'm glad for your sake that this is my last time of inflicting my trouble-throat upon you. Let me say just once again for your comfort, I'm not in any discomfort by it. It's not hurting, so don't think if it sounds hoarse and rough that it's hurting me.

It isn't. It's just, well, I don't know what it is. I'm blessed if I know what started it, and I'm blessed if I know what to do for it, and I'm blessed if I know when it's going to get right.

So we're very blessed indeed, aren't we? Now, Mr. Chairman, I cannot leave you without saying, with immediate affection in my heart, I have counted it an unspeakable pleasure and privilege to be with you. And from now henceforth I shall think of you often. And as often as I think of you, I shall translate thinking of you into praying for you, that the loving kindness of the Lord may abound in this place and invade every heart.

My recollections of TBI 1973, from now onwards, will be like fragrant evergreens in the garden of my memory. Didn't that sound nice? Well now, God bless you, and make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. Oh, I must mention one other thing.

I have such a pleasant batch of letters from students. How kind of you to write, and how little do I deserve your kind letters. I have one here in particular from a student who goes into the Greek structure of Ephesians chapter 1 verse 17, and at the end he wonders whether his note has been trivial.

No, it's just about the most common-sense thing I could ever have seen. And if my memory serves me well, the best word I can speak to you, dear Mr. Greek scholar, is look up Henry Alford's Greek commentary on that text. I won't start commenting on the others, but, and I can't reply by pen, so, dear brothers and sisters, it's been grand to meet you, and we have a dear Savior, and it's been wonderful to be with you.

Well now, as time will permit, I think I want to have a heart-to-heart talk with you this morning about sanctification. Yes, I do. Sanctification.

And you will find my text in the first epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, chapter 5, and the verses 23 and 24. First Thessalonians 5, verses 23 and 24. Here they are.

And the very God of peace, or the God of well-being, sanctify you wholly. Sanctify you wholly. And your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless even to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He that calls you to this in so doing is faithful. In other words, God is not lifting up before us some aesthetically beautiful ideal, which nevertheless is altogether beyond our experience. No, God is not mocking us by alluring us to the impossible.

Faithful is he that calleth you to this sanctification. Who also will do it, by implication, if you will let him? Well now, there it is. And before I dare to make my first reverent comment on it, let me deliberately read it again.

And the very God of peace, or perhaps we should render it, the God of peace himself, that's the emphasis in the Greek, the God of peace himself, sanctify you wholly. And may your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless even to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, if there is one thing more than another about which all of us Christian believers should be continually concerned, it is our inward and outward holiness of heart and life. Our true and practical sanctification of character and conduct. Other things may have their due and related importance, but beyond all, peradventure, this is our priority concern number one.

Before all else, God calls you and me in Christ to an experience and a life of real sanctification. That is more important than what we do, or what we give, or how we serve. Before all else, let me reiterate, for it is basically important, before all else, you and I are called of God in Christ to be a holy people.

And we shouldn't be afraid of that word holy, as though it were some foreign shore. We should be eagerly fond of it, and long to live a life of holiness, because that is the secret of radiant joy. Well now, this text that I have quoted is a kind of standard-bearer text, representing many others in the New Testament, all of them calling us, exhorting us, admonishing us, alluring us, inviting us, to the experience of in-wrought

holiness.

So, I think we should look at this verse with careful particularity. Now of course, the first word that leaps from the page and commandeers our minds is that expressive word sanctify. What is the meaning of our English word sanctification? Well, perhaps I scarcely need say this to an educated audience, such as we have at TBI, but our English word sanctification comes from two Latin words, the Latin adjective sanctus, which means apart, and the Latin verb facio, which means I make, or set, or put.

So, sanctus and facio together mean I make, or put, or set apart. And if we want to give it a noun form, we can make a word in English, sanctification is set-apartness. Set-apartness.

Now, when the word is used in a religious connotation, sanctification means set-apartness to some religious function or service. And when we use the word in an exclusively Christian orientation, then sanctification means set-apartness to our dear Savior, to our Heavenly Father, to the Holy Spirit, the Heavenly Paraclete. But whether it's in the Latin, or in the Greek, or in the English, that is the first, the simplest, and the center-most meaning of sanctification.

In itself it means neither less, nor more, nor anything other than just this, set-apartness to Christ. Now, that may be very simple to say, but it's simply vital to grasp. You see, there are so many people go wrong on that very point.

Let me explicate a little. Sanctification, according to the New Testament, is not any kind of sinless perfection. I'm not watering down the meaning, I would never do that.

We are not called in this present life to anything in the nature of sinless perfection. In this present life, we shall never reach a position of inability to sin. But thank God, sanctification will give us the ability not to sin.

There's a difference. I'm not just hair-splitting. Sanctification is not some kind of pharisaical, spiritual, superiority complex with an attitude of, I'm holier than thou.

Oh no, no, no. One of the first, if not the very first, indication of true sanctification is a Christ-like humility. And when once you've seen the pierced hands and feet of the Immaculate Savior, you never talk about your own holiness again.

No, sanctification is no proud, spiritual superiority complex. But let's get this clear, too. Sanctification is not some pet theory of little groups who are extremists in one way or another.

Oh my, my, no. Over and over and over again, the New Testament calls all Christian believers, the oldest and the youngest, the wisest and the simplest, it calls all of us to holiness, this is one of the mainline emphases of the New Testament. Nor, are you listening, students? Nor is sanctification the monopoly of the spiritually elite, or of profound Bible teachers, or of reclusive mystics who do nothing but spend days in prayer and have a kind of aura around their brow.

No. Sanctification is not the monopoly of those spiritual extremists, and we must never think that. Look, I come back to this.

In its first and in its root meaning, sanctification is neither less, nor more, nor anything other than this set-apartness to Christ. But now let me make a further comment, for I want to be as lucid as I possibly can this morning. Sanctification, oh this will surprise some of you, let me put my glasses down.

Sanctification in itself is not the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the endowment of power from on high, the joy unspeakable and full of glory, the peace that path of understanding, the wisdom that is from above, the life that is more abundant, the victorious life, the higher life, the deeper life, the fuller life. No, no, no. In itself, if I may repeat, sanctification is neither less, nor more, nor anything other than this set-apartness to Christ.

Here's a great building, and a crowd of people are gathering, and there's just one door into that building, and that's how they all come into the meeting. Is that door the whole building? Not at all. One of the first lessons we learned in the logic class long ago was that none of the parts is equal to the whole, and that door being one of the parts must not be equated with the total building.

Now, is sanctification any one, or altogether, of those blessings that I have just enumerated? No, it isn't. But if sanctification set-apartness to Christ, is it the door, the crisis, the golden gateway, the entrance to all those blessings? Yes, it is. My, what a croak this is, isn't it? I mustn't try and shout any more.

Do you get that point? Sanctification in itself is not to be identified with those blessings to which it leads. But sanctification, this set-apartness to Christ, is the golden gateway to them. And just one further comment while I'm on this early part of my theme.

Sanctification is not something which has to be postponed until we are the other side of the pearly gate. Now, some of our largest Protestant denominations today, I won't mention any one in particular, but they teach that sanctification is not attainable until we are in heaven. Now, as a matter of fact, sanctification isn't attainable at all.

It isn't something that we attain by self-effort, it's something that we obtain in Christ. But those denominations that teach that there cannot be sanctification until we are on the other side of the grave, they're wrong, not because we say they are, but because they plainly part from Scripture. Listen to our text.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved without blame to the coming of our Lord Jesus. So that's quite evidently something we are meant to experience here, isn't it? Let's get this clear. Sanctification isn't a beautiful ideal that God set before us, and which we ought to be ever everlastingly pursuing.

But just when we think we're getting nearer to it, it removes itself farther away, and so we live in lifelong pursuit, but never experience it until we are in heaven. Oh no. No.

Young people, listen to this. The moment I look up to the dear Savior and say, Lord Jesus, my King and Savior, I love thee now so dearly and so deeply, I cannot bear to think of anything coming between thee and me. In the totality of my humanhood, I give myself to thee for time and forever.

The minute I get there, really, that is being set apart, and I'm sanctified. However long drawn out the process may be, however winding or circuitous it may be, the moment I get to the place where with eager, almost desperate abandonment, I give my all to my adorable King and Savior, that minute I become truly set apart. Well now, it's time we moved on in the text.

The next word that commands our undivided interest is that word holy. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and because of that word, we rightly say that this verse teaches not only sanctification, but entire sanctification. Wasn't it the other morning I was pointing out that the Apostle Paul, besides being a supernaturally inspired theologian, was a wonderfully penetrative psychologist? I'm inclined to comment

the same again just now.

In order that you and I may know precisely what Paul means by sanctified wholly, he specifies the three distinct parts of our mental constitution, and of our physical part as well. He says your whole spirit, the pneuma, and soul, the pneuchae, and body, the soma. Pneuma, pneuchae, soma.

So we human beings are not just bipartite, body and soul. We are tripartite, body and soul and spirit. By the body we have world consciousness.

By the mind or soul we have self-consciousness, and by the pneuma or spirit we have God consciousness. Now the most exhaustive animal psychology has never discovered the fleck of a hint of any moral awareness or God consciousness in the animals lower than man. But wherever you find the foot tracks of the human race, you find the unmistakable and ineradicable evidences of this constitutional God consciousness indicative of the pneuma, the spirit.

I mustn't go into that, it would take time. But in the threefold, in the triunity of our humanhood, spirit and soul or mind and body, we are to be entirely given up to Jesus, set apart to him. Just for a minute or two, let me transplant your thinking away back to the books of Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers to the old Hebrew tabernacle in the wilderness.

May I remind you, if reminder is necessary, that that old Israelite tabernacle was a threefold or tripartite structure, consisting of one, the outer court, and two, the holy place, and three, the holy of holies. As for number one, the outer court, it was a considerably spacious, quite uncovered area, 100 cubits long by 50 cubits wide. And in as much as the Phoenician and Israelite measurement of the cubit was approximately um one foot six and a quarter inches, I think, that means that in length the outer court was approximately 150 feet, and in width it was about 75 feet.

That was the outer court. Toward the westerly end of the outer court was a twofold structure called, because it was covered in, called the sanctuary. And it was in the sanctuary that the other two parts of the tabernacle coexisted.

Those two parts were A, the holy place, and B, the holy of holies. Now the sanctuary was 30 cubits long by a consistent 10 cubits wide, and the first 20 cubits were the holy place, and the remaining 10 cubits were the holy of holies. That was the old Israelite tabernacle.

Outer court, holy place, holy of holies. Now one of these days when I get a little bit of that elusive commodity that we call leisure, I want to conduct a protracted inquiry into the similarities between that threefold Israelite tabernacle and our threefold human constitution. It seems to me as though it's going to be a quite fascinating and illuminating study.

Let me just dip into it a tiny bit this morning. You see, in that old Israelite tabernacle, the outer court was the body, and the holy place was the soul, and the holy of holies was the pneuma, the spirit. The outer court gave that tabernacle its contact with this visible physical world of flesh and blood.

The holy place was the center of everything where the principal ministries of the priests were daily perpetrated. The holy of holies gave that tabernacle its capacity for, and when the Shekinah came to blaze inside it, its communion with Jehovah the God of Israel. Have you got it? The outer court, contact with the physical world.

The holy place, the center of the priestly ministry. And the holy of holies, communion by the Shekinah with God. Now so it is in our threefold tabernacle.

The outer court, the body, makes you and me part and parcel of the ongoing human life of this earth. It makes us social animals. It gives us our contact with this present visible material physical world.

The soul is the holy place, the center of everything, where there continually operates, one, intellect or reason, and two, volition or free will, and three, emotion or feeling. And three, the pneuma or the spirit, that strange wonderful attribute of the mind or the soul, makes you and me capax dei, to use the old latin expression, capable of God. And in those who are born again of the holy spirit, and they're true christian believers, there's not only the capacity for God, there's actual living communion with God.

Let me have a look at you. Are you following? Say yes. Right.

Now the more you look into this correspondence between our threefold constitution and that triple tabernacle of long ago, the more fascinating it becomes. I mustn't spend too long on it, but let me remind you of something else. I can't help noticing that when God gave the specifications for that tabernacle to Moses, he indicated that the materials and adornments for the holy place, and the holy of holies, were to be much superior to the materials and adornments prescribed for the outer court.

Or to put it the other way around, the materials, etc., of the outer court were noticeably inferior to those of the holy place, and the holy of holies. And as it was then in that tabernacle, so it is now in your tabernacle and mine. The body, wonderful as it is, is the least important part of us.

As the old theologians used to say, man has a body, man is a soul. Now the body is the least important part. I agree at once you wouldn't think so from the run of modern commercial advertisements, or from the usual kind of newspaper or magazine articles.

If you take your criteria from those sources, oh my my my word, there's everything from the from the crown of your head to the sole of your feet. I agree at once you wouldn't think so from the run of modern commercial advertisements, or from the usual kind of newspaper or magazine articles. If you take your criteria from those sources, oh my my my word, there's everything from the from the crown of your head to the sole of your feet.

Everything from your eyelashes to your toenails. Everything you can think of for the body, the body, the body. The whole emphasis is upon the body, the body, the body.

Until if you're not careful, you could get swept off your feet into thinking that human beings are little more than glorified animals. No, the body is the least important part of us. Mind you Mr. Chairman and friends, I would be the last man ever to come to this honored platform and speak one derogatory word about the human body.

Shall I quickly refresh your minds with a reminder that Christianity has always put honor and sacredness and dignity upon the mortal body. Why two thousand years ago when Christianity first came into human history, all the well-known religions were shot through with the Gnostic idea that matter is the source of evil. And therefore in the case of mankind, the source of all the evils that plague and scourge mankind come from the mortal body, the material part, the flesh.

We've got used to it, but two thousand years ago when Christianity first said it, it was like a bombshell. The word, the infinite wisdom, the architect of the universe, the word became flesh and dwelt among us. It was staggering.

But Christianity didn't stop even there. It went on to say that in the blood-redeemed, spirit-born members of the true ecclesia, Christian believers, even the mortal body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit of God. Yes, beloved fellow believers, Christianity has always put honor and dignity upon the body.

And in line with that, I think that we Christian believers should be careful how we treat the body. Don't you? I think we should be careful what we eat and what we drink. I'm neither a finicky gourmet nor a panicky food fad.

I have a rare good appetite, and I like to eat an all-round diet and to avail myself of the full cuisine that nature supplies. And in our home, my precious Ethel has never had any problem feeding the brute. But even so, I'm always careful what I eat, and she's always careful what she buys.

You can call me a crank if you like, but I look in on the packages to see what's in. And in these days when we are eating more and more packaged and chemically preserved foods, and when we're having to buy commercially devitalized foods, you're not a crank if you take care. See how well I am, except for me voice.

Yes, I think we should be careful what we eat and what we drink. And not only for our own comfort and convenience, but for the Lord's sake. And I think we should be careful what we wear.

I think we Christians should be clean in body, and in our clothes. And I think we should be hygienic in our habits. And I think we should be tidy in our way of behaving.

I think our Christianity should show in the way we walk down the street. One of my problems has been to show it in the way I drive the car. But I think that to the last detail our Christianity should manifest itself.

Now, I'm not against certain hairstyles for men, but when I see fellas with an effeminate kind of hairstyle, and with a bedraggled mop that looks unclean, or like some superannuated scrubbing brush, I maintain that is not for a Christian. And when they start telling me that our Lord had long hair, I can only say that's part right and part wrong. Our Lord kept to the usual fashion of the time, which was to have the hair falling just roughly to the shoulder, and then neatly turned up a little.

He never had a scraggy sort of mop like many of the fellas that they go about wearing. And I'm just, yes I'm going to say it. I know you'll never want me to come back, but I'm going to say it.

I'm quite sure that our women and young ladies and girls should not be such dupes of unbecoming fashion that they wear unduly figure-pronouncing attire and skirts that are too short. Friends, I am against the miniskirt. Now, oh, that's the minimum I could say.

And listen girls, I'm against the miniskirt for your sake. I'll tell you what I found during the past 18 years of non-stop peregrinating up and down the North American continent. Women and young ladies today, they have more equalities with men.

Of course they've all, in my judgment, they've always been basically equal. I don't know what all this talk about women's lib really means. Christianity has always made woman, man's equal and friend.

Always. But woman today has privileges and equalities that she's never had before. She's man's equal now in the political realm, the commercial realm, the social realm, in every realm.

But there's one thing that modern woman is losing that knocks the good out of all those, and it's this. You'll have to forgive me if I'm blunt. I notice that more and more women and young women are losing the respect of the male.

More and more I find men are inclined to look upon women in a mere fleshly way. I also maintain that no nation ever rises above the level of its womanhood and its motherhood. And I hate to see the way that the esteem for woman is declining in the estimate of the male.

I maintain that no man ever really loves a woman that he doesn't respect. And I would say to all you young women, there's a kind of way of dressing which will cause the eyes of young men to look you over. And there's another kind of dressing that will cause young men to respect you.

And if I were a young woman, the only kind of husband I would want would be one who respected me. Don't you feel the same? Oh, you mustn't be angry, young women. It may cost you something to be a bit out of fashion, but I'll tell you this.

You'll find many a young man will say to you, you know, I'm really glad you dress like that. If I were a young man again, I know I would, and I'm not an old fogey. I'm just as human as every other person here this morning, except for this sauce.

I have to keep bringing that in. Where were we now? Yes, well, I say that we Christians should be careful what we eat and drink and what we do and what we wear. I can't help saying again and again down in the USA, in Santa Barbara where I live, I go on to the beach in the summer, and again and again I can only find myself wishing that a good many of the women had a few more hangings for the outer court.

That was almost the bare truth. However, without going any more along those lines, I come back to this. However important the body is, it is the least important.

The fabric of this material part, in comparison with that indefinable substance that we call the mind, the soul, the spirit. Oh, I remember when I was in my early teens, the leading astronomical scientist in Britain wrote a series of articles in one of our leading daily papers. And at that time, they were making a great deal about the immeasurable immensities of the physical universe and the littleness of man.

And all the time he was poking sarcasm at little man, and his last article ended with the words, astronomically speaking, what is man? And you know, a Sussex farmer wrote a little note, which the newspaper published, and said, Dear Mr. Scientist, may I humbly remind you that astronomically speaking, man is the astronomer. Yes, the biggest of the stars is blind. It can be seen, but it can't see.

It can be known, but it can't think. It can be weighed and measured and analyzed, but it can't know and reason. One human soul is more wonderful than all the flaming material wonders of the Milky Way.

That's the part of you and me that matters. And I say, young folks, and older folks too, get it ingrained into your thinking. God never made you and me just for this 70 or 80 years on this planet.

This is just a little preparation for a great destiny. Why? I read an article not long ago in which one of our leading British astronomers today says that they can now photograph 20 million light years away. And they

can do it because they photograph by sound waves instead of light waves.

That sounds comical, doesn't it? But think of it, 20 million light years away, and light travels at 180, what is it? Go on, go on, somebody tell me. 186,300 miles a second, that's it. 186,300 miles, multiply that by 60, and that's the way light travels in a minute.

Multiply that by another 60 and it won't fit in this room. And that's the distance light goes in an hour. Multiply that by 24, and there isn't room for it between here and Calgary.

That's the distance that light travels in just a day. Multiply that by 365 and a quarter, and now you can't fit it between the Atlantic and the Pacific. That's the distance light travels in just one year.

Now multiply that by 20 million. And the scientists went on to say the only reason we can photograph 20 million light years away is because we're photographing 20 million light years ago. It's taken 20 million light years for the race to reach our camera.

And then people say, do you think we'll find it uninteresting living for eternity in a universe like this? Oh, God has made you and me for a destiny that sweeps through millions of years. Well now with all that in mind, don't you see how important it is that here we should know the experience of true sanctification. Sanctify you wholly.

I see my time once again has gone. You see, I get on more slowly with this throat trouble than if I were normal. I would have been finished half an hour ago if I'd... I won't go any more into the matter of the tabernacle.

I'm tempted to do, because it is full of interest. I'll just touch on this. You see, they could take the outer court down and wrap it all up for travel without in any way affecting the sanctuary with the holy place and the holy of holies and through to the parallel.

So it is with our tabernacle. You can take down this mortal body. It can be disintegrated in the grave or by other means without affecting the continuity in any way of the basic human consciousness, the human ego.

I mustn't go into that, but don't you think it's all very interesting? I do. Well, I'll close my Bible to let you know I'm soon going to finish. Mind you, I can open it again.

No, Mr. Chairman and friends, look, this is what I'm really driving at, and let me have both your ears, please. There came a time when all the materials and adornments and furniture and appurtenances of that tabernacle were all subscribed, were all made, completed, constructed, and finalized. And there it stood, outer court, holy place, holy of holies, but it wasn't in service.

Why? Because it hadn't become sanctified. It had not been completely set apart. But there came a day of August convocation when in solemn ceremony that threefold tabernacle became wholly set apart to Jehovah.

There was the venerable Moses leading the proceedings. He was assisted by Aaron, the first high priest of Israel, in his robes of priestly splendor and beauty, and he was further assisted by the subsidiary priests of the Aaronic household in their white garb. And all around the tabernacle were the groups of the Levites at their separate posts of service.

And beyond them there were the thousands of Israel families. Remember, over one and a half million people came out of Egypt in the exodus, and they all gathered round for that great occasion, the setting apart of that tabernacle. And that threefold tabernacle became entirely set apart.

And when that happened, something happened inside the tabernacle that the gathered thousands outside couldn't see. But when that something had happened inside that they couldn't see, something happened outside that they all could see, and it brought them at once to their knees in worship. The thing that happened inside which they couldn't see was this, that beyond the sacred veil into the holy place, just above the golden throne, the cherub-guarded mercy seat, there suddenly appeared a light, a glow, a luminous radiance, a flashing, flaming, opalescent fire.

The Hebrew word for it was the Shekinah, meaning God is in it. Now, the crowd outside couldn't see that happen inside the holy of holies, but it happened. And when that happened inside, this is what happened outside.

As the people watched, they saw rising somehow from inside the holy of holies, and slowly spreading over the sanctuary, and then covering the whole of the outer court, they saw a kind of silvery glory light, and it covered the whole tabernacle with a heavenly radiance and shine. And the people saw it, and at once they fell on their faces and worshipped the God of Israel. Oh dear, it's time I stopped, isn't it? It's protesting.

Another two minutes and I'll be through, just stick it to your voice. Now, don't you see friends, that's where the parallel completes itself. When Jesus really, really, really gets you and me, there's something happens inside.

For the first time, we begin to know what Romans 5.5 means. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, speaking of copiousness, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He's the heavenly Shekinah.

Our Lord said of John the Baptist, he was a burning and the shining light. The burning was inward, the shining was outward. And if there's no inward burning, there's no outward shining.

Now we all want to shine outwardly for Jesus, but many of us forget that there's no outward shine before the inward burn. Every now and again we have a crisis, and oh, we have a great time, and for a little while afterwards, oh, such a blaze, but it's a bamboo blaze. Soon over, we've got to learn the secret of this inward Shekinah, this being filled with the dear Spirit from heaven.

Then we shine. I think I'll close with a story. It's a true story.

Oh, I am sorry about this, it's miserable to listen to. Please say no. I'll close with this story.

When I was, let me think now, yes, when I was 29 years old, my precious Ethel and I went to begin our ministry in Sunderland, County Durham, on the east coast of England. Anybody here from County Durham? No. We went to a great church, Bethesda Free Church.

Bethesda means house of healing, but you know it had had such great Bible teachers all around that area, it was known from John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress as the House of the Interpreter. What a lovely name for a church, the House of the Interpreter, and they'd had such great Bible teachers, I was afraid to go, as it was with Nebuchadnezzar when he saw the handwriting on the wall, my niece smote one against another. But we went, and you know we hadn't been there very long before we began to hear the most

wonderful reminiscences about a former deacon.

He must have been a lovely man. I always had a quarrel with heaven that he was taken to live up there before we went to live in Sunderland, but the memory of him was evergreen. I remember they would tell us that if a group of them were chatting together, if this dear brother joined them, somehow at once the level of thought and conversation rose.

They said it was almost impossible to think or to say a mean thing about somebody else if that dear brother was there. And I remember one elderly lady saying it was almost a luxury to be ill in order to have a visit from this deacon. He must have been a therapic fellow.

And last but not least, I was told again and again that his influence in the office bearers' meetings was benign. Now there were 12 elders and 26 deacons and the pastor, making 39 of us. I used to call the upper room where we met the lion's den, and we met there once a month.

And of course they were the lions, and by implication I was little Daniel. The only difference was, in my case, the Lord never shut the lion's mouth. Well now, I was told that again and again, if some troublesome matter was on the discussion, and the patience of the brethren was frayed, and tempers were a little bit raucous, and anything might be said that shouldn't, this dear brother would get up and he would say, Mr. Chairman, do you think at this point in the meeting we might have a little word of prayer? And before the chairman could say yes or no, he would go wandering up into the heavenly places in Christ, and the brethren would have to bow in prayer, and he would lead them into the green pastures, and beside the still waters, and into the sequestered places of communion in the heavenlies.

Oh, they'd have a great excursion, and they'd wander up there with him, and he'd have a lovely time of communion, and eventually he'd come down again. Meanwhile all the brethren were coming under conviction for their naughtiness. You could hear them, but at last he would come down, and he would say, Amen, blessed Lord, how lovely is our fellowship, and the brethren would look up, and the office bearers meeting would become like a convention for the deepening of the spiritual life.

I wonder, did you ever hear the name of him? His name was William D. Longstaff. Did you ever hear of him? You did. His hymn is in your hymn book.

Take time to be holy. Speak oft with thy Lord. He not only wrote the hymn, he lived the life, and what we are preaching this morning is not just wishful theory, it's magnificent reality.

And young people, let my last word be this. Sanctification is not some mysterious, complicated thing, and consecration to Jesus isn't some complicated, problematical thing. All you need is to be head over heels in love with Jesus, and unemotionally, with your reason unclouded, deliberately give him everything, give him everything, and believe that he's taken you, and then simple-heartedly trust him, and you'll know what it is to be sanctified, and to be filled with the Spirit.

Mr. Chairman, Amen, and if I don't look at the chairman when I leave the mic, it's because I'm afraid of the look he's going to give me.

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