

The Key That Locks the Door of Blessing

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the destructive nature of fear and unbelief as barriers to receiving God's blessings.

Duration: 43:01

Scripture: Matthew 14:30, Mark 4:40

Topics: "Blessing"

Description

In this sermon, Lloyd and his wife Susan share their testimony of serving a living God and finding salvation through Jesus Christ. Lloyd emphasizes the importance of facing tough questions and seeking answers with the help of God, rather than settling for shallow or easy explanations. He highlights the sin of unbelief and fear, using biblical verses to illustrate how they can hinder blessings in our lives. Lloyd encourages listeners to reject and confess these sins, relying on the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus and the renewal of faith. He urges believers to embrace experiences as opportunities to demonstrate the reality of their faith and to trust in God's purpose.

Transcript

We want to welcome you this morning to Trinity Alliance Church. I have... Sting as the days go by Trusting Him whatever befall Trusting Jesus at His call I'm not Lloyd Morrison. So if you look in your program, that's not me.

But I thought I would explain who Lloyd Morrison is, let him give his testimony, and why he's here. As many, if not all of you know, Paul has been called to Pennsylvania To be the Extension Director of Church Growth. You get more money if it's a longer title.

So we feel the board met this week. First of all, we don't think we can replace Paul. So what we are doing is reassigning some of the duties.

Paris will be picking up more of the administrative functions. And we feel we need someone to work with the young marrieds, with the youth, to work with outreach. I know personally I don't attend the Wednesday night.

Because my kids go here and there and we're running. But another night may be more convenient for me to lead a Bible study. Did I just volunteer? But, so we are looking at Lloyd.

We invited him down this weekend to spend the weekend with us. And ask him to give his testimony this morning. Also, as Paul mentioned, the evening service will be at my house.

I have little maps that I can amend and make sure everybody gets there. It will be a potluck dinner. So he can watch how much we dribble down the front of us.

And we can watch how much he does and meet his two young children. And then this evening he will lead us in a Bible study. And I think it's a time for all of us just to get to know each other.

Because the board will be meeting this week. To decide whether we will, he is the man for us. And then should he be, he has to make the decision whether he is to come visit us.

So tonight is not at the Sternmans. It's at our house. It's at 6 o'clock.

So we can let the kids get to bed. So 6 o'clock, my house. And I won't tell you what I know about Lloyd.

Because I think he's going to give his testimony. I'm afraid I'd steal. I got to talk to him a lot yesterday.

So Lloyd, I'll let you introduce your lovely wife. Okay? Thank you, Jim. And this is my wife, Susan.

And we would like to thank all of you for inviting us to come down here. And my testimony in short would be we serve a living God. And salvation is through Jesus Christ.

And in my own life, God has done many things. So I'll have to pinpoint things which I would like to make known this morning. In which he has done immense things for me.

So I'll pick out the highlights. And I would also say that God has tended to work within me through gradual processes. Rather than pinpoint dynamic times.

That seems to be what he has done in my life. I was born into a Christian family. And so the aspect of Christianity, churchgoing, has been a part of me ever since I've been born.

The Lord found me when I was 13 years old. Our church was having special services. And it was that time where I felt within myself the need for forgiveness.

And found that through Jesus Christ. And I give him praise for that this morning. And I credit my foundation, my knowledge of God's word.

The basic fundamentals of the faith which I believe in. To the church in which I was raised. The Sunday school and the youth group.

We got into God's word. And the youth group was very active. We did community projects.

We had a youth choir. We were even able to take part in some of the worship services. And so through all of that I attribute my foundation to my teenage years.

But it wasn't until being a freshman in college. Where I learned about the filling and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. And allowed that to become a very vital part of my life.

And that came about through working with Campus Crusade for Christ. And if there's a dramatic change in my life. It definitely came at that point.

When I learned to give all of myself to leading the spirit. And seeking his will completely. And letting myself be by the sidelines.

And it was as a junior in college. Where the Lord really emphasized in my life the importance of missions. I had gone to a state school in Pennsylvania for my first two years.

Then transferred to Houghton College. If any of you know about that it's a Christian liberal arts school. And it was there that my best friend there was born as a missionary kid.

He grew up in the Middle East. And he was looking forward to being a missionary himself. So my relationship with him.

And also the college had a great emphasis on mission. And many of you probably know John Bechtel. Who's a dynamic Christian and Missionary Alliance missionary.

He came there for Missions Emphasis Week. And it was a combination of those two things. Where the Lord gave me a burden for the lost.

Not only around my own little life. But around the world. So missions became extremely important my junior year in college.

It was as a senior in college that God worked two different aspects into my life. I was what was called the RICL. It was R-C-C-L.

Which stood for Religious Coordinator of Christian Life. Which in short is the head chaplain of a men's dormitory. So there were floor chaplains.

Two on each floor. And I was responsible for them. And working all the different activities into that dormitory.

Through that experience I learned about leadership. And I have a business background. So I learned how to apply aspects of administration.

And putting some of the head knowledge into work. And also learning about interpersonal relationships like I never had before. Being responsible for people.

Being challenged by people. And everything that goes along with that. And at the same time as a head chaplain.

As a person who was responsible for people. I felt that I needed someone who I could interact with on a one to one basis. Whom I could pray with.

Share with and learn from. And at the same time hopefully encourage that person. And strengthen their life as well.

What happened is I met once a week with a New Testament professor of the college. And what I learned through that experience. Many things.

But what stands out far above everything else was prayer. I've never met a man or been affiliated with a person who knew how to pray like he did. And who could through his prayers lift another person up.

And so probably we met 30 to 35 times in a year. And that experience taught me prayer. And really caused prayer to become that much more of a part of my own life.

Then we moved down to Dale City. We lived in Dale City for one year. I felt that the Lord wanted me to take a year off from school before going to seminary.

Susan and I got married. She got a job at Garfield. So we moved down here.

And I got a job in Falls Church. And some people might think well what's that have to do with the testimony. I think God taught me how to understand and how to empathize with the commuting workforce.

I'm from rural Pennsylvania. We don't know what major traffic is all about. So we came down here.

And through that year I really think God gave me an understanding for it. Which if I would not have gone through it myself that's the only time I worked a full year. Because everything else in my life had been school.

And so I think the Lord taught me valuable lessons from that. Not ones which I didn't like learning that much but ones which I can empathize with through it. Then we moved to Boston.

Went to Gordon Conwell Seminary. And the education there was twofold. One it definitely was academic.

It's a top notch school. But what stands out to me is that by and large most of the professors emphasized the pastoral side of everything they were teaching. There's a lot of head knowledge that goes on in seminary of course.

But most of them tried to bring it down and pinpoint it into if you are a pastor, if you're in this situation, how do you apply it? And that made me do a lot of thinking that I would not have done otherwise. And I think that has prepared me more for what the Lord has in store in future ministry. And at the same time I was a youth minister for two years at a church.

And learning to teach, learning to encourage youth, learning to challenge them and at the same time receiving from them. Youth have no idea what the leaders learn from working with them. And so I learned valuable lessons.

And also we went to the Franconia Alliance Church to back up a little bit while we were down here. And Susan and I worked with the youth group. So both of those together taught me a lot about how to give and take in relationships.

And it taught the experiential part of education along with the academics that Gordon Conwell brought. And finally I would close that the Lord has taught me love. We hear about Christian love and that God is love.

But I've never learned love before like I have since I've been married. Which probably many of you can attest to. Through Susan and now through Jeremy who is 14 months and soon Timothy will be doing the same.

Of experiencing unconditional love. And that helping me to expand my horizons on the unconditional love which God has for us. And in closing I would like to say that just recently it was April 12th as a matter of fact in my daily devotions.

The Lord gave me a verse which I'm claiming as my life verse. Which came out of 1 Timothy chapter 1 verse 5. And my paraphrase of that verse which is my prayer for my future work for the Lord. My future ministry is my goal is love.

Which comes from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. And that's my life verse from now on. And that's my prayer of what God has in store in the future.

Shall we continue our worship as we bring our tithes and offerings to the Lord. And as we receive the offering we need some offering plates. Anybody know where they are? Paul says they're probably out on the table.

We were going to sing our own offertory so we shall begin by singing our offertory. And you'll find it in your bulletins the song of offering. Shall we bow our hearts in prayer.

Our heavenly father we ask now that as we come to this word that we've read. That the Holy Spirit may take of the things of Christ. And apply them to our hearts and to our lives.

Minister to us we thank thee for thy presence. And for what thou are going to say and what we are going to do. In obedience to thy word in Jesus name amen.

Now as you understand we're in the midst of a series of messages on faith. One of the questions that's asked very frequently is this. Why are not all prayers answered? Why are not all the people prayed for healed? Why should some be healed and not others? Why should some prayers be answered and not others? Honest hearted honest minded people are not afraid to face the question.

Nor are they satisfied with a cheap or easy or shallow answers. We who believe that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever. Are prepared to face the questions.

And to seek by God's help to understand the answers. Regardless of what they may be. Now we've had three portions read for us.

I bring verses from those three portions. To put into focus the key that locks the door of blessing. In verse 30 of Matthew 14.

But when he saw the winds boisterous. He was afraid. Matthew 17 20.

And Jesus said unto them. Because of your unbelief. And in Mark 4 40.

And he said unto them. Why are ye so fearful? How is it that you have no faith? Now we must face the fact that fear. Is indeed an ugly fact in human experience.

As you know. It began the day man sin. First mention of fear in the scripture occurred.

In Genesis the third chapter. After mother Eve had eaten and Adam had eaten. Toward the close the cool of the day.

Anticipating the Lord's coming. They hid in the shrubbery. Trying to escape from his presence.

And Adam. Heard God's voice calling. Adam where art thou? It isn't that God didn't know where he was.

But he wanted Adam to acknowledge his voice. That God cared. And you know what Adam said? I heard thy voice in the garden.

And I was afraid. Isn't that astonishing? First day. After they've disobeyed.

And here is fear. As a full grown emotion. It's come into Adam's heart.

And into Adam's life. I was afraid. Because I was naked.

And I hid myself. And you recall what God said. Adam who's told you that you were naked.

Eliciting from him testimony that he had eaten. And also he is trying to escape from blame. The woman thou gavest me.

Gave me to eat. It's not my fault. It's her fault.

Looking for someone to blame. But he was afraid. Because he had discovered his condition.

Adam did confess his sin. Blamed it on Eve. But fear became an integral part of the result of sin.

And since all have sinned. And come short of the glory of God. Fear is a universal experience.

Now we find that the relationship of fear to sin. Is confirmed in Revelation. The 21st chapter in the 8th verse.

And you do well to turn to it. If you have your Bible. And you might see it.

And not think that I am reading. Something that is less than the text itself. You might be wise to underline it.

If you please. Because it tells us something that is really not at all pleasant to understand. Hear it.

But the fearful and unbelievers. We've got those two haven't we? Unbelief and fear tied together. But look at the company it keeps.

And the abominable and murderers. And whoremongers. And sorcerers.

And idolators. And all liars. You know that's kind of an ugly crowd wouldn't you say? So when you talk about well fear is not terribly bad.

And unbelief isn't all that horrible. Remember where God puts it. List he puts it in.

And I think our attitudes are going to change a little bit. About the nature of fear and unbelief. We're going to see them for what they really are.

But look what happens. Look at the ultimate destiny of the fearful and unbelievers and the crowd they keep. They shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

Which is the second death. So I think right now we ought to recognize that fear when it occurs in our hearts and minds. Must be dealt with as the sin it is.

It is a sin. It is wicked. It is evil.

And unbelief is not just a polite little party problem or a polite little social indiscretion. Unbelief is sin. And we've got to deal with it as sin.

We've got to forsake it as sin. Confess it as sin. And know the cleansing of the blood.

So what have I said? The key that locks the door of blessing is the sin of fear and the sin of unbelief. Pretty harsh. You know if I had said that I'd feel that somebody might take up after me and argue a bit.

But since I'm a devout coward and always hide behind the scripture. I'm like a rabbit on the opening of hunting season. First time a rabbit hears the guns go off it looks for a stump.

And it's clear all the way around. Because the rabbits have discovered that if they can just run around a stump. And the hunter has to shoot in the stump the rabbit isn't hurt.

And years ago hunting rabbits I decided that's what I was going to be. And I would find a stump, the word of God. And I'd get down behind it.

And I'd shout out from one side or the other. And let them shoot. Because if they're going to shoot into the stump I'm not going to get peppered.

I'm not going to get injured. So when I say unbelief is sin and fear is sin. I'm perfectly secure.

Shoot if you must this old gray head. But you're not going to hurt it because I'm hiding behind the stump of God's word. It's God who said it not me.

And it means that we have to deal with it as it is. Now the nature of fear, of this fear, well it's insane isn't it? It's absurd. It does seem that we should not commit the sin of fear, of circumstances, of conditions, of problems, of waves.

Peter is there, invited by the Lord. He has his eyes on the Lord. What is that thing that caused Peter to look at the waves, take his eyes off the Lord? Habit? Freight? Disposition? I don't know what it is.

I just know this, that it's something, a problem we all have to deal with. Now if we can label that the way Peter should have labeled it with the nature that he knew he had. Because this man who's looking at the waves and is fearful and starts to sink is the same man that when a little girl lifts her finger and points it at him and says, I've seen you, this Nazarene, he denies the Lord with a curse.

But was he so much worse than we are? Was he much different than we are? Are we not afraid of the pointed lip and the sneer and the question? Why is it that the sin of unbelief is the sin that's in good standing? Why are we afraid of what people will think or people will say? I don't know. But we are. And if we deal with it as sin, we're going to have a better chance of getting cured of it than if we just accept it and make excuses for it.

Now usually, the person that is afraid of what people will say or think, if he trusts God and if he believes God, really doesn't have any fear of God. He's afraid of men. No fear of the problem, but he's afraid of the answer to the problem.

He's not afraid to doubt God. He's only afraid to believe him. What insanity in this thing of fear as it affects our life of faith.

So let us then be alert to the emotion of fear when it occurs in respect to our life. Because you know, the reason why we don't see God work in answer to the needs could very well be traced back, in part at least, to this thing of fear. Now I've said unbelief is the sin that's in good standing.

That's actually the paraphrase of Hebrews 12.1 When it says, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, it's the sin of unbelief. The father brought his son to the disciples and they wanted success. They wanted to set themselves as those who were able to minister as did the Lord, but the child was not delivered.

And the Lord did speak to them and bring deliverance to the child. And they asked him, Lord, why couldn't we cast him out? And the Lord's words, so simple, so straight, so honest, so telling, because of your unbelief. Because of your unbelief.

Now, remember one occasion the father said, yes, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. And we've tried to make that pious. We've tried to make that religiously acceptable.

Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. That's not given to us as by God. God, the Holy Spirit, inspired the writer to include it in the text as what a natural man said, but not what a born-again spiritual Christian should do, say, or believe.

It's not instructions for us. It's not the way we ought to approach the problem. That's the way he and his ignorance approached it.

But what we do when we say, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief, we're trying to sanctify our unbelief instead of dealing with it as the sin it is. Now, we can't use that verse as though this were divine instructions as to what our attitude should be. This was what a man came who had no spiritual insight and no relationship to the Lord other than that he had wanted a miracle in the life of his child.

For us, it's a little different. We can't use that scripture. We've got to deal with unbelief as the sin it is.

Now, it was unbelief on the part of the disciples, and that is one of the reasons why some prayers are not answered. The prayer doesn't believe. Oh, how many times.

You know, when I was a young pastor in Little Falls, Minnesota, one of the deacons came to me and said, Brother Parris, I'd like to have you go with me to the hospital. A lady there is sick, and she's asked to have the elders come and anoint her. Now, in Baptist churches, you only have one elder.

He's the pastor. All the rest are deacons. But the deacons were willing to pretend they were elders because they really were whether they took the name or not.

But you see, I was thoroughly schooled in ultra-dispensationalism. So I spent the next 30 minutes telling good Roy Larson why anointing with oil had no relevance now in this dispensation, that it was for the early church and that it was this and it was that. He says, I guess you don't believe in anointing with oil.

I said, that's right. I don't. And I can't participate.

Well, he said, I got a couple of the other deacons, and we'll go then. We believe in it. They went.

They prayed for her. God answered prayer. But I knew it was an accident.

It wasn't really my dispensationalism was right, and theirs was wrong. But nevertheless, nevertheless, a doctor at the hospital a few months later called me. He said, are you Pastor of the Baptist Church? I said, yes.

He said, there's a woman here that says if she's got any church at all, it's yours. She doesn't go, but if she ever went, that's where she'd go. And he said, I don't believe in God, and I don't believe in prayer, and I don't believe in prayer for healing, but just because I don't believe in it doesn't mean that miracles don't happen.

This mother has five children, and medicine has done all that it can do, and if something doesn't happen, this woman's going to die. And I think it's a tragedy for her to die. And if you claim that you believe anything about the Bible and anything about God, I don't, but you better get down here and pray for her.

Well, that was an agnostic doctor putting the pressure on a fundamentalist preacher. So I called Roy Larson, and I said, Roy, do you got that bottle of oil anywhere you use? I got a case I can't talk my way out of this time. He said, well, I've been praying you'd get cornered.

God answered it. So we went down, and we went to the room, and we stood there, and I said, Lord, I don't know what I'm doing or why I'm doing it, but the Word says it, and I believe your Word. It is a tragedy that this mother is going to die, and she doesn't have to die, Lord.

Here's the oil, and putting it on her, and whatever it does, you do it, Lord, and we'll give you all the credit because I sure haven't got much, either faith or anything else, but we're doing what your Word says. And five days later, she left the hospital and went home to her children. It wasn't a matter of the faith of the prayers, at least this one.

It was a matter of obedience to God's Word, and maybe God in His sweet grace is going to teach us stubborn, stiff-necked dispensations a little bit about how gracious God is. Anyway, she went home. And I submit to you that it's not always the faith of the prayer, it's just the grace of God.

Now look at the time when the Lord Jesus, after His baptism in water and the Spirit of God came upon Him, and He went back to Nazareth. Oh, my, what a longing He had for those people. I see the Lord Jesus as He comes in, and there's that demon-possessed man out on the garbage heap howling, and there's a spastic and a crippled man in the blind tapping along the wall.

And as the Lord came in, His heart bursting with love, waiting, wanting to touch, but there had to be acceptance by the people. And in the synagogue, He read the Scriptures, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, He has anointed me. And the elders got around Him, and they walked Him out to that little cliff outside of Nazareth, and they're going to push Him over.

And the testimony is, He could do there no mighty works because of their unbelief. All the love and power that had made the world wasn't enough to help the people in Nazareth. The blind man still groped for the wall.

The crippled still dragged their withered limbs. Demon-possessed still howled in the refuge pit. Spastic couldn't bring water to his lips.

And the Lord Jesus was pushed away. Unbelief. Listen, you can't make peace with it.

You can't accept it. You've got to reject it. Look at the woman, with the issue of blood, who'd spent all of her living on physicians.

And she saw the Lord Jesus coming, and she said, Oh, if I could just reach down and touch the hem of His garment, excuse me, please, would you let an old lady through, please? And just as He walks by, the hem of His garment goes through her fingers. And the Lord Jesus stops and He says, Someone touched me. And the disciples said, What do you mean, Lord? Look at all these hands pawing you and trying to pat you.

No, no, no, no. I didn't say they jostled me and bumped me. For I perceive that virtue went out.

What was it that went out? Virtue. Well, that's the King James translators. They had a problem.

Because the problem was this. If they translated that word by the way they were going to translate Acts 1-8, they were going to say something. So they said, Well, He's the Lord.

Let's call it virtue. But it's identically the same word that you get in Acts 1-8 when He says, After that the Holy Ghost has come upon you. Ye shall receive power.

The word is, I perceive that power hath gone out of me. Dunamis has gone out of me. Dunamis shall come upon you.

The very same thing came upon the disciples, the people when they were baptized, and us that went out of Christ to heal the woman. It wasn't anyone's faith but hers. So unbelief, unbelief wherever it is, is going to paralyze and lock the door of blessing.

Now God is concerned to cure us of this curse of unbelief. In the portion, Mark, where we read that the Lord Jesus, after the miracles of feeding went off alone, and the disciples were quite capable, good fishermen they were. They knew the lake.

They started home. Why did He go off alone? To let them get into trouble and discover how much they needed Him. He wanted to cure them of this curse of unbelief, and so He permits His disciples to enter into peril.

He had to get into circumstance that their skill on the lake and their strength and their character and all of the experience they had weren't enough to solve their problems. And so was you, and so was me. We're going to have problems in the next week or the next two or the next month that's going to test our faith.

We're going to be tempted to be fearful, but we're going to reject that fear as the sin it is. We're going to be tempted to unbelief, but we're going to reject that unbelief as the sin it is. I refuse to let fear intimidate me.

I refuse unbelief. I reject it in the name of Jesus Christ. I will not accept it.

You don't have to accept it. God is doing everything He can to prepare us, to put us into situations whereby we can have opportunity to accept His cure for this curse of unbelief and fear that locks the door of blessing. And that's what He gave evangelists and pastors and teachers for.

That's what I'm endeavoring to do this morning. In Ephesians chapter 4 it says, He gave evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry. And the work of the ministry is going to be forwarded in your life when you deal with unbelief as the sin it is and fear as the sin

it is.

When it occurs in your heart and life, you're going to reject it, forsake it, confess it. Know the cleansing of the blood and the renewal of faith and go on to give God the opportunity to be God in your life. Let's not be afraid of the experiences that come, but let's recognize that if He permits it, we're to give thanks, recognize that He has purpose, and that purpose is to let us demonstrate the reality of the professions that we make.

Father in heaven, we lift our hearts to Thee now with thanksgiving in the peerless, matchless, resistless name of the Lord Jesus. Three illustrations given to us in our Lord's dealing with His disciples to teach us the curse of fear and of unbelief so that we will be prepared to deal with it the way Thy word is prescribed that we deal with all sin and everything that displeases Thee. Father, we would be those who believe Thee, who trust Thee.

We've heard the song, only believe, only believe all things are possible. Only believe. This we would prove again and again in our hearts, our homes, our lives, that we might reveal the Lord Jesus Christ to our day and our generation and our neighbors in this community as mighty to save, strong to deliver.

In His name and for His glory we ask it with thanksgiving. Amen. As Paris was preaching, I could only think of my favorite song, Psalm 304, Like a river glorious, Is God's perfect peace, Over all victorious, In its bright increase, Perfect yet it floweth, Fuller every day, Perfect yet it groweth, Deeper all the way, Stayed upon Jehovah.

And it continues to grow, Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand, Never fool can follow, Never traitor stand, Not a surge of worry, Not a shade of care, Not a blast of hurry, Touch the Spirit there. Every joy or trial falleth from above, Traced upon our dial, By the Son of God. We may trust Him fully, All for us to do.

They who trust Him wholly, Find Him wholly true, Stayed upon Jehovah. Let's stand as we sing. Like a river glorious, Is God's perfect peace, Over all victorious, In its bright increase, Perfect yet it floweth, Fuller every day, Perfect yet it groweth, Deeper all the way, Stayed upon Jehovah.

Hearts are full with joy, Finding as He promised, Perfect peace and rest, Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand, Never fool can follow, Never traitor stand, Not a surge of worry, Not a shade of care, Not a blast of hurry, Touch the Spirit there. Stayed upon Jehovah, Hearts are fully blessed, Finding as He promised, Perfect peace and rest. Every joy or trial falleth from above, Traced upon our dial, By the Son of God.

We may trust Him wholly, All for us to do, They who trust Him wholly, Find Him wholly true. Stayed upon Jehovah, Hearts are fully blessed, Finding as He promised, Perfect peace and rest. Heavenly Father, as we've heard the Word, as we've sung the hymn, as our minds are put in action, endeavoring to reach out to You in total belief, we pray that Thou will meet us.

This week we will need to be able to trust You for those things You cause to come across our pathway in our dial. May we find You wholly true because we are stayed upon Your Word, Jehovah. Bless us now as we find our ways for this afternoon.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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