

Remember Lot's Wife

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dedication, the principle of dedication, and the responsibility of parents, while also highlighting the kingdom of God and the Christian application of Lot's wife's story.

Duration: 39:28

Scripture: Matthew 10:13

Topics: "Warning", "Spiritual Transformation", "Child Dedication"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the importance of dedicating children to the Lord, drawing parallels between the dedication of Benjamin and the biblical example of Hannah dedicating Samuel. He highlights that children are a gift from God and that parents have the responsibility to raise them in the ways of the Lord. The sermon transitions to the significance of remembering Lot's wife, illustrating how she was delivered from Sodom but failed to let go of her past, serving as a warning for believers to fully embrace their new life in Christ. Beach encourages the congregation to seek a deeper relationship with God, shedding the old life and embracing the new life filled with Christ. He concludes with an invitation for prayer and commitment to God.

Transcript

Why don't we proceed with the dedication ceremony here. I'm going to invite Norman and Suzanne and of course the grandparents to come. And I'm going to ask that they would just stand right here in the front, just right along here.

If they'd love, of course I'm sure if you wanted to come you wouldn't have to, the grandparents, but you're welcome to come stand up here. And why don't you stand over here and let the grandparents come in and we can just sort of stand in a big line here. That's good.

You can just... Okay, very good. I'd like to, if I may, at this time, first of all, just as I had mentioned before, introduce everyone. This is, of course, Norman and Suzanne.

We all know Norman and Benjamin. And this is Charles and Audrey and Solveig. Charles and Audrey, Norman and Suzanne's parents.

And Solveig is... What did I say? Okay. Okay, I'll be alright. Solveig is Norman's mom.

But, praise the Lord. And it's a real joy that they have come. This is a very special time.

And we have prayed that this would be a very special time of dedication. So we're just asking that everyone would just join your hearts with us as we proceed with this short ceremony. And then, of course, we will pray for little Benjamin Phillip and dedicate him to the Lord.

Before we proceed, I'd like to read a verse of Scripture in Matthew chapter 10, beginning with verse number 16. Matthew chapter 10, beginning in verse 13. And they brought young children to Him, that is, Jesus, that He should touch them.

And His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them. So, immediately, we see that children are very near and dear to the Savior's heart.

And, of course, during the time when Jesus was walking on the earth, His disciples didn't think that children were very significant, at least to the point where Jesus should stop His busy schedule and minister to the children, but Jesus disagreed with them. So, we see by Jesus' response that the young child is very significant to Him. Now, I want to give one example of a dedication of a child in the Bible found in the Old Testament.

It's a familiar story, and it's when Hannah asked the Lord for a child. She had no children. And I would like to just comment on a few things about Hannah's dedication to the Lord.

First of all, Hannah prayed to the Lord, and this is what she basically prayed. I'm going to paraphrase it. She said, Lord, if You give me a child, I will give the child to You.

And consequently, the Lord gave Hannah a child. And she took care of the child as long as he was young and needed to be nursed. And as soon as the child grew old enough to minister in the temple, Hannah kept her promise, and she gave the child, whose name was Samuel, to the Lord.

And Samuel ministered before the Lord all of the days of his life. And we know that through the Scripture, Samuel became a great prophet. He became a great leader in the nation of Israel, and he loved the Lord with all of his heart.

So that's an example of dedication, dedicating our children to the Lord. But now we want to look at a very important concept, and we can call this a principle of dedication. And that is this.

When we dedicate children to the Lord, what we are doing is we are acknowledging three things. And this is the main emphasis of our dedication service this morning. First of all, we are acknowledging that the child came from the Lord.

God is the one who enables us to have children. God is the one who opens up the womb. So number one, the child came from the Lord.

The child technically is not our property. The child belongs to the Lord. Secondly, we must remember in dedicating our children that since the child came from the Lord, when he is given to us or she is given to us, we must offer the child back up to the Lord and acknowledge to God and to man that we have received

this child as a gift from you and recognize that it is not ours but yours.

And lastly, the third principle in dedication is after we give the child to God, listen, God gives the child back to us but only lends the child to us. And he lends us the child for one purpose and one purpose alone. That we may take the child and train him in the way of the Lord and teach him the word of God and pray for that child so that that child can grow understanding his and her need of a Savior.

We are not born Christians through natural birth. We become Christians through being born again, by becoming saved, through placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And the principle chief responsibility as being a parent, and of course the Bible speaks of grandparents and great-grandparents too, that their chief responsibility with grandchildren is to love them, to accept them, to unconditionally be their friends, but most importantly, the Bible commands that parents and grandparents and great-grandparents have the responsibility to lead the children in the ways of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So consequently, Norman and Suzanne, this is a time of great joy, it's a time of great excitement, but yet it's a time of sober responsibility. There's three things that I'd like to say to Norman and Suzanne as the parents of Benjamin Philip Svensson. Number one, God, because you are parents, has given you the grace that will enable you to, number one, stay very close to God in prayer and sense the Lord's heart about your children.

Number two, God has given you the grace in order to help you stay very close to the Word of God and be able to teach your children, Benjamin and Timothy, the beautiful Word of God. And then number three, most importantly, God has given you the grace to be able to sense the leading of the Holy Spirit in the mind of God for that perfect time when you can sit down and experience that joy of being able to lead your children to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ so that they will know that Jesus has become their Redeemer. And mind you, may I address everyone at this time for a moment, if you are a parent, God has given you the same grace and it's a joy to be able to do this.

So, therefore, during this special dedication service, we remember these principles and we are completely dependent upon God for His strength. We live in a very evil and perverse generation and it's so important that we pray for our children. Your prayers will be so important for Benjamin and Timothy.

And I thought possibly I might bring out one more thing before we pray for Benjamin, and that is Benjamin's name. It's such a significant name in Scripture. The name Benjamin means son of the right hand.

And, of course, son of the right hand suggests an unquestionable faithfulness, an unquestionable dedication, and an unquestionable consecration to the father of that son. Son of my right hand. And it will be our dedication prayer this morning in response to Benjamin's name, that he indeed will be now and become an unquestionably dedicated servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And if Jesus should tarry, Benjamin would become a man in whom God could say, now there's one of my servants that love me with all their heart. What other better thing could there be? Amen? So, we'd like to at this time, I guess I'll take Benjamin. Now watch, I'll probably wake him up.

Don't wake him up. He's not cold, is he? Okay. I want to just invite everybody to just bow your heads and have a word of prayer.

Father, we thank Thee, Lord, for this beautiful child, Benjamin. We thank Thee, Lord, for Your love for Benjamin. We thank Thee, Lord, that You have given him parents that love You, in whom the Spirit of God dwells.

And Lord, we lay our hands upon Benjamin, asking You to lay Your hand upon him now at this time. Lord, I know that Norman and Suzanne are taking this child and they're giving him to You, recognizing that as Moses, You gave the child back to his mother, only to take care of him until he was a man. And then You called him by Your voice because You had a plan for his life.

And Lord, as Norman and Suzanne take the child back, as it is lent by You to them, I pray God that You will place Your Spirit upon Benjamin and that You will fill him with Thy presence at a young age and that You will take his heart, O God, and make it Thine, so that when Benjamin, if the Lord should tarry, becomes of an adult age, his ear may hear Thy call, come and follow me. Lord, bless Benjamin with this honor, I pray. For Jesus' sake, amen.

Amen. He's staring at me saying, what is this guy doing? Just want to be able to shake the grandparents' hand. God bless you.

Amen. Amen. God bless little Benjamin.

Thank you for your patience. Well, praise the Lord. Isn't the Lord faithful? Just for a few moments now, I want to bring your attention to the New Testament.

I want to turn your attention to the Gospel of Luke, verse number 17. The Gospel of Luke, verse number 17. Luke chapter 17.

Is that what I said? Oh, I'm sorry. Luke chapter 17, beginning with verse number 20. This short exhortation and teaching from the Word of God this morning correlates to the dedication service.

I wanted to be able to bring them both together so that the concept of dedicating Benjamin can also be understood to us as adults. For even as we dedicated Benjamin this morning to the Lord, the Lord Jesus asks that we would dedicate ourselves to Him as well. So, I want to read a familiar portion of Scripture, beginning in Luke chapter 17, starting in verse number 20.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here or lo there. For behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here or see there. Go not after them, nor follow them.

Verses 20 through 23 describe the precise location of the kingdom of God during the church age. And I want to remind us all this morning in a very clear way, in a very definite way, that the kingdom of God is not coming by observation. That is, by natural observation.

God is not going to set His kingdom up in Hackettstown, New Jersey, or in Zion City, Illinois, or in San Diego, California, or in Fort Worth, Dallas, Texas. Unfortunately, there are those who seem to feel that God is establishing His kingdom among their group. Not so.

The kingdom of God, the word kingdom comes from a Greek word that means reign. The reign of God in this hour that we are living in is not in Jerusalem, it's not in Palestine, it's not in Zion, it's not in Bethlehem. It has nothing to do with the nation of Israel at this time.

But the kingdom of God, the reign of Jesus Christ is in the ekklesia. The word ekklesia is the word for church in the New Testament. The word church means a called-out people.

Now, the church is not a denomination. The church is not an edifice. But the church consists of redeemed, saved people who the Holy Spirit has called out of the world.

Now, there is where the kingdom of God is. Therefore, the kingdom of God is wherever the true church is. It does not come with observation.

That is natural observation. But the spiritual eye sees the kingdom of God. Understand that when the scriptures speak of the kingdom of God beloved, it is referring to the reign of Christ in the believer's life.

Listen, either Christ is reigning or self is reigning. You see, before Jesus sets up a physical kingdom, He is setting up a spiritual kingdom. And this is the kingdom that Christ is concerned about in this hour that we live in.

Now, in 1 Peter, I'm just going to read these scriptures quickly. In 1 Peter chapter number 2, the Bible says in verse number 5, Ye are as lively stones, are built upon a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Listen to this now.

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone. This sounds like the ingredients that you would use or the building blocks that you would use to build a temple, doesn't it? Cornerstone, living stones, what's he talking about? He's talking about the church where the kingdom of God is being established in this age. Jesus is the chief cornerstone.

He's reigning in Zion. Well, what, you mean in physical Zion? No, the church is the spiritual Zion of this age. It's what it says in the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews chapter 12, verse 22, But ye are come unto Mount Zion. You have come to Mount Zion now that you are a Christian. You are a part of the spiritual Mount Zion where Jesus is setting up his rule.

Now, may I ask a question? Rhetorical. Are you daily seeking that the Lord Jesus Christ, listen closely, may increase his reign in your life? For if he wants to rule as the king, then what does that imply to the believer? He's Lord, we are servant. He's teacher, we are student.

He's boss, we are servant. Thank you, Neil. You got it? Now, in Christendom, we've got it completely backwards.

But God wants to turn it around. Now watch this. Back to Luke.

We're going to just read here. Luke 17, right? Jesus describes in verse 24 that when his kingdom does come, that is his physical kingdom, there's going to be no mistake about it. We're not going to find out about it by word of mouth.

Hey, did you hear what God's doing in California? There's the kingdom of God. You who have studied church history know that every 20 to 25 years, some nut raises up and says, here it is, God's kingdom is

being established and he's called me to lead it. Well, let me tell you something.

Let me tell you something. When you hear that, the best thing to do is just turn the other way and pray for him because there's great danger in that. There's only one master, his name is Jesus.

There's only one Lord, his name is Jesus. And you and I are equal, we're servants. And let the greatest among us wash the feet.

You want to be great in the kingdom of God? Don't look for a pulpit position. Don't look to impress people. You want to be great? Stop thinking of yourself, think of others and start washing the feet of the saints.

Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Let not every man think on his own things but on the things of others. Jesus was the greatest among us and he came to serve.

Shall we be greater than him who is our master and think we shall not serve? Let us serve. Now watch this. For as lightning that lighteth one part of the sky shineth to the other part under heaven, so shall also the Son of Man be in his day.

But first must he suffer many things and be rejected of this generation. Now here's the main teaching this morning. Watch this.

And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Now here's one illustration teaching us what the setting is going to be like right before Jesus comes.

Now if you want to do homework, go read the story about Noah. Now next he uses another example. Secondly, verse 28, likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. So the Bible says that Jesus is going to be revealed from heaven as great lightning which signifies every eye shall see Him and the setting is going to be very similar to the events that were occurring in Sodom and Gomorrah. Now how many here are familiar with Sodom and Gomorrah? How many can look at the news and read the newspapers and see what's happening and say, is this Sodom and Gomorrah? Isaiah said there would be a day when right would be called wrong and wrong would be called right.

Good would be evil and evil would be good. Beloved, is this the day today when it's good to be bad and it's bad to be good? When everybody's out for themselves at the expense of their brother? Ah, beloved, how we must be careful that we don't allow these principles and these concepts and these attitudes to creep into our hearts who are called of God and saved and redeemed. Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Paul exhorts the Christians, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, these things are not from the Father, but are of the world, and they shall pass away. Oh, how we need to have a love, a burning love for our Lord and Savior so that we are not seduced and spiritually raped by the spirit that is now working in the world.

Now, watch this. Verse 31, And that day he which shall be upon the housetop and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away. And he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

Now, verse 32 is the title of this message this morning. Remember Lot's wife. Why did Jesus tell us to remember Lot's wife? I'm not going to turn to it and read, but listen.

What did Lot's wife do? Wait, wait, wait. Before you ask that question, did God save Lot's wife out of Sodom? Lot's wife was taken out of Sodom, but what did Lot's wife do? While she was running out of Sodom, she stopped and went like this, and immediately she turned to a pillar of saw. My God, my God, why did she turn to a pillar of saw, and why did Jesus tell us to remember Lot's wife? What significance could that have to you and I? I'll tell you.

Very simple. Listen. God delivered Lot's wife out of Sodom.

Now, listen. But Lot's wife did not want Sodom delivered out of her. I'll say it again.

Lot's wife was delivered out of Sodom. It was a free gift, but as she was running, her glance turning around signified a reflection of her heart, and because of that, she was turned to a pillar of saw, listen, for an everlasting remembrance to all who are freely delivered from the curse of sin by trusting in the wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ. And this is what God wants us to remember this morning.

You can be delivered and translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and there be thankful that God has delivered you from wrath and He has delivered you from the day of eternal damnation, but that is not the end. It's only the beginning. Verse number 33 interprets and shows us what Lot's wife failed to remember.

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall what? Lose it. The life that Lot's wife sought to save was the life of sodomy that had been ingrained in her soul that God wanted to deliver her from. And whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

Beloved, this morning, the Holy Spirit simply wants to instruct us in this way. Very simple and we're about to close now. Listen carefully.

Remember Lot's wife. She was delivered from sodom, but failed to understand God wanted to deliver sodom from her. Now here's the Christian application to this story.

The cross of Jesus Christ is the believer's place of identity through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The believer not only experiences the joy of being saved from the consequences of sin, but then God invites the believer to participate in the deeper working of the Holy Spirit where God delivers the believer from the sodom within. And that, dear friend, is what Jesus meant.

Whoever shall seek to save, watch, his old life shall be destroyed. But whoever, what? Shall lose his old life. How do you lose your old life? By agreeing with God's Word that everything about your old life is cursed.

It's hanging on the tree with Jesus. It's cursed. So that means, Lord, give me a hatred for my old life.

For everything that has to do with my old nature. My old disposition. Lord, I don't want to gain that.

I want to lose it. He that loses the old life shall find his life. What life? A life filled with Christ.

A life filled with Jesus and all that He is. And you will be blessed. And double blessed.

Remember, Lot's wife. The way to victory is through Jesus Christ. Honest heart.

Lord, here I am. I want your Holy Spirit to so work on me. Here's what we need.

Open heart surgery. You know, I think the reason why there's so much heart problems today is because God's trying to tell the church something. Everybody has to go for a heart bypass.

How many know somebody who has gone for a heart bypass surgery? Everybody. What is the Lord saying to the church? There's some heart problems. Here's the heart problem.

Sodom lurks in our heart and only the grace of God can deliver us from it. The old life is Sodom. The new life is being filled with Jesus.

What do you want this morning? Let's pray. Father, thank you for your marvelous love and grace. Thank you for being the God of all mercy, the God of all love, who offers through Jesus Christ forgiveness of sin.

But thank you, Lord, that not only do you offer forgiveness of sin, but you invite the believer to take up his cross daily and to follow you. So that once we are delivered from the spiritual Sodom and Gomorrah, which is the world, we can then experience being delivered from the world within us. Father, I'm asking your Holy Spirit search every heart here, including my own, and help us to hear your call to forsake the old life and to cling to you, asking that you would fill us with thyself.

By your power, we pray. Now I want to do two things. As the Holy Spirit is moving, everyone continuing to pray, I want to make two invitations.

You may respond at your seat or you may come forward. Some people like special prayer. Number one, you feel like you've never accepted Jesus Christ and you want to know Him.

You want to know the cleansing power of the blood. You may respond. Number two, you are a Christian.

You know you've trusted Jesus, but you realize that now that you've been delivered from the world, the world is yet in you and you want to find deliverance from that world and you want to make a consecration to Jesus where you give Him your hands, your feet, your eyes, and your ears and say, Lord, I am thine. Now as Colette sings this song or plays it, we want to give you a minute or so just to respond. If someone wants prayer, come forward and we'll pray with you and let's let the Holy Spirit speak to us before we close.

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