

Training for Rulership

by R. Edward Miller

God has a purpose in our life, and we are in training for rulership, which involves suffering with God and having an understanding heart.

Duration: 50:56

Scripture: Psalm 105:17-18, Luke 19:15-19, Romans 8:28-30, 2 Timothy 2:11-12

Topics: "Training"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept that all things work together for good. He uses the example of Joseph from the Bible, who is seen as a type of Christ and the glorified Son. The speaker also mentions the importance of pain and how it can teach us valuable lessons. He emphasizes the need for an understanding heart in order to rule over people and cities. The sermon touches on the theme of betrayal, stating that everyone will experience betrayal at some point in their lives. The speaker concludes by expressing a desire to share the lessons God has taught them with the audience.

Transcript

I am very well aware that many of you have come a long way, at much expense. And I'm very well aware that it's quite possible, even probable, that I'll never have the privilege of ministering to you again. And so, because of that, I desire to share with you, as best I can, some of the things that God has taught me through the years, that I trust can be a help, an encouragement, and perhaps even guidance for all of you.

We all start as babies. We all start knowing nothing. And this is only the beginning of our training, really.

We have two more states to go. We've come through two states of life. First in the womb, now the state.

We have the state to go when we die, and the state after that, the resurrection. We're still learning. God has a purpose in our life.

God has a purpose in every life. And in these morning sessions, I want to share with you, perhaps, why we have to go through so many difficult trials, pain, and the temptations of life. It all has a purpose.

I want to start with you with Romans, the eighth chapter, that marvelous 28th verse that is extremely positive, and a verse that we question many times, the veracity of it. Romans 8, 28, 29, and 30, we know, he's not guessing, he's not saying perhaps, we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. To them who are called according to his purpose, there's a calling.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. And moreover, whom he did predestinate to them, he also called. And whom he called, then he also justified.

And whom he justified, then he also glorified. Past tense. As far as God's concerned, it's already done.

Now he's working it out in each individual life through all the generations since the cross. He's working out his purposes, and his purpose is to bring us into the image of his Son, and to bring us into the glorified state. And in that state there's reason for what he's doing, but he's at work all the way along the line.

And the glorified state is extremely high. It'll be in his image, and he is high above all names that are named. He is high above all principalities and powers, and we're made to sit together with him.

But to be able to do that, there's a lot of training that has to come into our lives. God is working towards a purpose. You are called.

You didn't call him. You didn't establish for yourself the purpose of your life, nor the purpose of what God is training and preparing you for. That was done by him.

It's a predestined thing. It's a thing that was done before you ever existed in this life. And God is carrying it out, perhaps I might say this way, whether you like it or not.

He didn't ask you. He had his own purposes. And every one of you who are called, are chosen, and your life is prepared before you, and your life is prepared before you ever existed, the steps of the good man are ordered of the Lord.

Your pathway is already delineated before you. We think things happen, but for the Son of God, nothing happens. It's all planned.

The good things and what we call the bad things. But God doesn't call anything bad things, because all things work together for good and bad. No.

He didn't say that, did he? All things work together for good. We can divide things into good and bad. We divide things into pleasant and unpleasant.

Well, that can stand. We divide things into welcome and unwelcome. Well, that can stand.

But when we divide things into good and bad, that can't stand. All things work together for good. And I want to go into that a little bit.

We're going to look at the life of Joseph. Joseph is a type of Christ, and he's also a type of the glorified Son. And if you want to take a peek into the glorified Son, then look at those four living beings you find in Revelation, the third chapter.

No, the fourth chapter. And you'll find, it speaks of those living beings. And if you'll carefully read the scriptures, you'll find that they are glorified human beings.

And if you'll read another picture of them in Ezekiel chapter 1, of those fire creatures, the creatures that are born out of the fire, you'll find another picture of the glorified Son. We are in training. We're in training for kingship.

Let me read you a scripture in Luke 12, 32. Fear not, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Well, we all have read that many times, haven't we? You all think that's wonderful, don't we? But you see, princes get trained before their kings.

Did you ever think of that? There are several scriptures. We'll go through them rather quickly. For instance, there is 2 Timothy 2, 11, 12.

It is a faithful saying. For if we be dead with him, we shall live with him. And if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.

This is another scripture. In Luke 19, 15 to 19. It came to pass, when he was returned, having received the kingdom, that he commanded his servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

It came the first saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. He said unto him, Well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in very little, hast thou authority over ten cities. And the second came saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

And he said likewise unto him, Be thou also over five cities. Reigning over cities. You know, it's a great thing and a very difficult thing to reign over people, to reign over others.

We have a saying, power corrupts. And total power is total corruption. We've seen the kings through the centuries and the tyrants and the dictators, how they may start out pretty good, but they don't finish up pretty good.

They finish up so bad that usually they end up either annihilating them, assassinating them, or liquidating them in some other way. We are being trained. That's what God is doing.

Joseph was trained. Before we get to Joseph, though, I want to give us some more generality. First of all, understanding is not knowledge.

You can have a great deal of knowledge and have no understanding. Understanding comes by experience. And experience upon experience gives us training.

We are so made that we cannot learn by words. We can memorize, we can have ideas, but that does not give us any real concept of what those ideas are. A blind man cannot understand light by words.

A deaf man, born deaf, cannot understand sound by any ideas or thoughts you might plant upon his brain. We have to live by experience for us to understand. And that's the only way we can learn.

Human beings have to have experiences. And all those experiences are planned by God. And our life is planned long before we ever enter into it.

With all of its experiences, what we call good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, they are all planned to train us so that we can have understanding. I was reading recently of Judge Joseph Wapner. If any of you have read People's Court or seen it on television, how many of you have seen People's Court on television? A few.

That is Joseph Wapner. He was one of the finest judges in California, one of the finest judges ever. He was very highly respected.

Not only was he honest and a man of integrity, but he was a man that understood how to be a judge. Because he recognized when people came before him in their altercations, one with another, both sides were hurting. He says, when they come before me, I recognize that there's pain.

Somebody's been hurt, and somebody wants recompense for that hurt. But the person that did their hurting is also going to be hurt. And he is hurting.

And he said, I have to be one that understands that hurt. He said, that is why God let me go into the Vietnam War. And he said, I didn't come out unscathed.

He was caught in the fire, the crossfire actually, and was badly wounded. Still limps and still has pain. He says, I understand pain.

I've had a lot of it. I understand pain. I understand that we don't want pain.

But pain teaches us many things. And that is why he's considered one of the finest judges in California. He understood.

He was one of the highest judges also. And people wanted to have their case at his court. And now he retired.

And now they have him on television and still in court. He's very popular. There's an understanding heart.

You see what I mean? There's an understanding heart. To rule over people, there must be an understanding heart. To rule over cities, there must be an understanding heart.

I read that when Christ opened the book, that John wept because no one was worthy. And he opened the book of history. He opened the book of things that were going to happen and perhaps have happened.

Then how you understand what was revealed when the book was opened. But John said, I wept because no one was found worthy. And the angel said, don't weep anymore.

There is one, the lion of the tribe of Judah. And I looked to see who this worthy lion was. And I saw a lamb.

And it had been slain. You see, when that book was opened, judgment. Read the judgment.

Judgment upon judgment upon judgment. But who was worthy to judge but he that had already received the judgment of his father. He had received the pain, exquisite, ultimate, infinite.

He had an understanding. He understood because he'd been there. We cannot understand unless we've been there.

There is a saying, don't judge the Indian until you've walked his path and his moccasins. We're easy. We judge.

We judge greatly. And we're judgmental because we've never sat in his place. We do not have understanding heart.

And that is what God is doing in this life of ours when we go through all kinds of trials and temptations. He's building within us an understanding heart so that we can take the place of rulership in time to come. That's why it is written in Timothy, if we suffer with him, we'll reign with him.

We cannot reign without it. Today, the prince that is not trained will certainly be a bad king. And when God trains somebody, we're going to look at the life of Joseph.

We're going to look at the life of Moses or David and then of David, one of the two. Whichever comes first, I don't know at this moment. But the thing is, they were all trained for rulership.

They were all trained for rulership. We are in training. If you want to know the why things happen and you've asked God why, why, why, why until it becomes whining, I'll tell you why.

You're in preparation. You are in preparation. You are to stand glorified but not glorified with a hard, cold, miserable heart.

And if God glorified us now, God have pity on the rest of us. It'll be hard. We already are hard.

Listen to any church and listen to the criticism that flows through the congregation. I don't care what church. You'll find hard hearts.

You'll find judgmental hearts. That's what we're in training for. That's what we're in training for.

God knows what we are. But he's going to change us. But he's not going to change us with a magic wand of one of the angels that touches our hand, our head, and little sparks fly up, and little stars fly up, and lo and behold, we are angels.

It doesn't work that way. Even his son, the captain of our salvation, was made perfect in suffering. You see, he wasn't perfect before.

As God, he was. But as man, the captain of our salvation had to live with us and know us and understand us and be hungry and be thirsty and be hurting with us. And therefore, when we come to one, we're told he's touched with a feeling of our infirmity.

He knows. He walks in our shoes. And we are going to be walking our path that God has chosen for specific training, for specific reasons that will be revealed later.

He has told us, just like he told Joseph, it was just a couple dreams. One confirmed the other. But in his heart, he knew from that day on, he was just a young man, perhaps even in childhood, but he knew from that day on, he was destined for.

He knew that there was a purpose in his life. He knew that Almighty God had chosen him and called him, and he didn't know any idea how it was going to work out. And God didn't tell him anything more.

He just put the dream before him. He just put the purpose of his life before him. He just set before him the fact that he was going to be ruling.

And that's what God has already done for us, and that's what he's done through the scriptures. He told us. He said, and these are ones I've already read, I'll make you rule over ten cities, I'll make you rule over five cities.

He's already said, we shall reign with him. He's already said that we are called and chosen and justified and glorified. We know it's ahead.

And God wants us to know, to realize, and so our faith will hold. And our faith stands true. We know it's all working, but it's working for good.

It's not working for bad. I know life is filled with pain. I know life is filled with suffering.

I know life is filled with all kinds of things. But I know one thing. God is in it.

And he has ordained it. And the steps of the good man are orders of the Lord. Read the book of Psalms.

That's what God is doing. We have to be able to handle, the hardest thing to handle is power. And we all love to have power.

Everyone that's in, every politician is lusting for power. And some are driven by that lust. They want it.

I've had so many people tell me, oh, I've got a promotion. Now I have two people under me. Someone else says, oh, I just got a new promotion.

I have five people under me. And that's the thing that's the highest. Not how much.

I have to ask them if I ask them. Sometimes I do or don't. But I have to ask them, well, is there a raise in wages? And sometimes there isn't.

But I'm in a place now. In fact, there is a saying that give a man a position and you won't have to give him a raise. That is why in some of these big stores and departments and things like that, you'll find the bellboy.

You'll find the porter at the door all with a beautiful uniform. Ask him how much he makes. He'd do it for free.

Power. It's so hard to handle. So hard to handle.

That's why there's very few good kings. And the few that are, they came through some things before they got there. We are in training.

That's what God is doing with your life. I don't care how unimportant it may seem to you. I tell you, a thumb hit with a hammer hurts a carpenter just as much as it does a preacher.

We might have different positions, but we have the same capacity of pain. We have the same capacity of hurt. And in this, in this, is where we have to learn to keep our faith.

I'm going to mourn that in another message. That's what God is doing. He set before us.

He told us what's going to be. But he told us we have to get there. And he's got to work it out.

Let me put it this way. Our training is inescapable. No amen.

You are in it. Sorry, honey. You are in it.

You didn't ask for it. And God didn't ask you. Sorry about that.

If he had, he already knew the answer. But it's inescapable. That's where you are.

Let's look a little bit at the life of Joseph. He had the dreams. He had the certainty.

He had the knowledge. He had the understanding that someday, but as a result of those dreams, that he perhaps foolishly, perhaps not, perhaps ordained of God, he shared them with his family. And what for? Suddenly, his family were enemies, rejected.

And it got worse. And the more he tried to live and tried to prepare himself for his dream as a good little boy, tapping on his brothers, made it worse. The better he was, the worse they were.

The more good he was, the more bad they were. Can't win. And it's not a case if you can't win, join them.

And so there came complete rejection by his brothers, by his own family. But isn't that what Jesus said? He came unto his own, his own. Received him not.

And one of the biggest reasons, the same with Joseph, he was too good. He was too good. He didn't do anything bad.

And that makes people angry. We don't like people when they're too good. We like them to be a little bit worse than we are.

And then they can be good friends. He was rejected. No one likes rejection.

All of us want to be well liked. All of us like to be well thought of. Rejection can cause depression in people.

Does cause depression. Rejection can ruin people's lives. God sets before us a dream.

God sets before us a reality. But there has to be a path from here to there. And God sets that dream before us.

God sets that reality and confirms it before us. So that we will have the faith, so we'll hang on to what we have to do to get there. Because we know it's true.

We know it, we know it, we know it. As I said, we'll get into the faith part of it later. Then, three times he was betrayed.

By his brothers. By the owner's wife when he was in slavery. And by the cup bearer of the king when he was in jail.

Three times he was betrayed. They say that a man before he finishes life will have to be betrayed at least three times. Jesus was betrayed twice.

Once by the man he healed at the pool of Bethesda. He went and told the Jews who it was that healed him. And from that day on they sought to kill him.

And again he was betrayed by Judas. And again, once more, by Peter. Betrayal.

If you haven't been, you will be. And if you have been, it won't be the last time. And the first time, by his brothers.

If you haven't been, you will be. My brothers, they're the ones who have to love and help us. Yeah, I know.

And they'll be the ones who betray you too. Because human beings just happen to be human beings. Some of you heard me say, and I'll say it for those who haven't heard me say it, and I'll say it more than once.

Don't trust anybody and love everybody. Don't trust anybody and love everybody. Just realize that the every other person is just exactly as human as you are.

And you know you can't trust yourself. So why trust anybody else? Any parent knows that he loves his children and can't trust them. And that way, if and when you are betrayed, you won't be amazed.

And you won't be absolutely astounded and feel that life has come to an end. All you need to do is say, well, I'm glad that one of them's passed. Hopefully it'll be the last one.

Not sure. He was betrayed. He was betrayed by the wife of the owner.

Because he refused to walk the path of unrighteousness. And instead of applauding that integrity and that honesty and that willingness to reject one of the most subtle temptations of life, she betrayed him. And he found himself incarcerated.

Speaking of that incarceration, there's an interesting scripture in the Psalms. Psalms 105, verse 17, 18. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, whose feet they hurt with fetters.

He was laid in irons. The Revised Standard Version said, his neck was put in a collar of iron. Another version, the iron entered into his soul.

The iron entered into his soul because of betrayal. And yet, and yet, all things worked. We know that.

We all know how the story of Joseph turned out. There's just one problem. Joseph didn't have the manuscript of the last chapter.

We do. So we read it comfortably in our armchair and say, oh, poor Joseph. Just wait till you get there.

Many, many, many of God's children today have got necks in collars of iron in jails over this world. Yet all things work together for good. Joseph had severe training.

But there was reason for that severe training. He was going to be in a very severe place. He was sent ahead to make a way for the family of Jacob and the whole tribe of Israel.

He was sent away to bring them into safety, to save them from the famine, to bring them life, and bring them into Egypt where they would develop into a nation. And if God hadn't worked out, and it took all those years to work out the resentment and the anger and the hurt that came by the betrayal of his brothers and the betrayal of, I think it was part of his wife. It took all those years to work that hurt out until he could say and one day look his brothers in the face and not curse them and kill them and destroy them.

Yes, he was hurt. Yes, he was sold into slavery. Yes, he was treated as a slave.

Yes, he had no reason. There was no reason for them to do it. Yes, it was all unjust.

Yes, he had to suffer. Yes, he had the lash on his back. Yes, he had to work like a slave, and he was a slave.

And yet God didn't leave him. God didn't leave him. I was reading in, I've forgotten the name of the book, of the Chinese people, William Mung Thorns, I think it is.

I was reading of that man that, I think he fasted 74 days. God was with him, had some wonderful things happen. But then he got sick, very sick, with a plague that wiped out half the prison.

About 1,200 people were wiped out by that plague. And he got it, and he got it so bad, it went so bad that they took him and put him with the other bodies that were already dead, or almost dead, because they knew he would not and could not recover. And then, almost dead, an angel came, dressed as a doctor, with a stethoscope.

I didn't know they had those things in heaven. Maybe he borrowed it from some doctor on earth, I don't know. And worked him over like a doctor.

And then he took a plastic tube, or it looked like plastic, put it in his nose and breathed. And as that breath entered into him, all the fever went out, the life entered into him, and he was totally well. Then the angel took him by the hand, led him through the locked door, led him up to the chief doctor's office, and left him there.

And when he sat there before the doctor, he told the doctor what had happened, and the doctor became a Christian. But the angel didn't take him out of prison. God was in it.

And before he was through, over half the prison was converted. No, God puts us in there, and he'll leave us there until it's done. And he left Joseph there until all the hurt, the iron had entered into his soul, and the hurt and the bitterness and the reaction and the resentment were gone.

And then, and only then, did he lift him up and set him up and bring his brothers before him, and he would save them. And one of the last statements in the book of Genesis is he said to his brothers when they were scared to death now that their father Jacob died, that Joseph would really take vengeance. And he said, look, you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.

All things work together for good. Oh, if we could only understand it. If we could only see that God is in it.

If we could only understand that God is training, and we have to go through the training. It's inescapable, or we could never be in a place to depend for us. There's no other way.

We have to understand. We have to have an understanding heart. We have to have a heart that can rule and rule wisely and rule in understanding.

We can't develop otherwise. Now, everybody's not going to reign over a nation. Everybody's not going to reign over a people.

Everybody, those people God leads through other lives, but especially those that he's going to glorify, that he's predestined for the glorification and predestined to be those under him the ruling, they're going to go through it. That's a calling. That's what God is doing.

God wants us to understand it. I don't care what pains. I don't care what you've suffered.

I don't care how many betrayals. I don't care how you've been hurt. All I care is God's in it.

All is well. All is well. Lift up your head.

Rejoice. Praise God. Glorify him because he has taken your life in his hand, and he said, I will form it.

I will train it. I will produce it. I will make it into my image.

I will let it stand through the ages glorified and in my image. This is one of my own. This is one of my own sons.

Paul said, I take pleasure in permitting. I take pleasure in these things because I know what is happening. I know what God is doing.

I know that God is preparing us. You say, well, I don't want to be prepared. He didn't ask you.

You say, I vote to get out. Yeah, but there's one other party, and he's not voting your side. He's the one that put you in.

We're predestined. God does his own choosing. And if we are going to be in his kingdom, and we're going to have a place in his kingdom, then you're going to be prepared for it.

Now, God didn't prepare Joseph like he prepared Moses. He didn't prepare Moses like he prepared David. We'll go through those.

But he prepares each one for their place. And that's why things, quote, happen. Nothing happens.

It's all preordained. The steps of the righteous man and the good man are ordered of the Lord. Some steps are ordered and very difficult.

Some are in jail for years. Paul was in jail. There's Joan Eareckson.

You've all heard of her. Locked up and worse than a jail. Locked up in total paralysis.

And yet, willing to say all things work together for good to them that love God. Miss Fannie Cosby wrote so many beautiful hymns. Blind from birth.

When the understanding of healing came into the world, and they asked her, she didn't want to have people pray for her. She said, no. She was well along in years then.

She said, no. I don't want healing. I want to stay blind.

She said, because the first face I want to see is the face of Jesus. I don't want to see any face first before that. All the resentment's gone.

All the anger's gone. All the desire for vengeance is gone. It's all worked out.

The iron entered into his soul. And God had a Joseph that could save his people and protect them until they became a nation. The type of Jesus, the savior of his people.

For he shall save his people from their sin. Yes. Yes, my brothers.

Yes, I know what you did. You don't know what I went through. But I want to tell you something.

Don't be afraid. You meant it for evil. God meant it for good.

God wants to bring you to that place. Until all the resentments and hurts, all the bitterness is all gone. And you look back over the things of the life of the past or even over the things that may come.

And say, it's all right. It's all right. It's good.

Holy Spirit, you led the son to betrayal. You led your son to rejections. You led your son to beatings.

You led your son to the cross. You let Peter fall miserably and betray you and deny you. But when you came back, you said, go tell my disciples and tell Peter.

I got to meet with Peter. There is no resentment, no anger. There is only a spirit that could rule in love.

You walked our path. You wore our shoes. You have the understanding heart.

And therefore, God has highly exalted you and lifted you high above all names. King of kings and Lord of lords. For God has made this same Jesus Lord and Christ.

I thank you. And if it made the captain of our salvation perfect through suffering, then we can't complain. Even though we do.

But you are so faithful. And you will keep us in training until the iron enters into our soul. Till the fetters of iron bind us.

And we no longer are free to enjoy ourselves in vengeance and anger and retaliation. But we learn love. We learn to love.

We learn to love you and know that everything is going to be right. To trust you. And walk with you even through the hurt and the pain and the rejections.

And love you more than ever. And not depend on others. Because they're just as human as I am.

They have good days and bad days like I do. And they make mistakes like I do. But I can love them because you love me.

Father, I pray that you build into us the spirit of Joseph. We can look into the face of those that have most betrayed us and hurt us. And say, I love you.

It's all right. Maybe you meant it for evil. But God didn't.

He meant it for good. Maybe you'd like to come up and talk to God about it. Until you can say, it is well.

It is well. It is well with my soul. All things work together for good.

To them who love the Lord. Lord, you put us in training. Don't stop.

Whatever, Lord, don't stop. Keep on. Do your intention.

Do what you intended from the beginning. Just keep me. Just bind my feet with fetters.

Don't let me escape. If you have to, put an iron collar around my neck and tie it to a wall. But don't let me escape.

But bring me through to the place you planned. To accomplish in my life what you intended to do. Oh, wonderful Christ.

Until I can praise you. And honor you. And glorify you.

Instead of be angry with you. And hate you. And blame you.

And if not blame you directly, indirectly. Because I blame your children that are my brothers, my sisters. Blame them.

Let my heart be so broken that there will be no pointing finger, Lord. No pointing finger at all. Let your work be done.

Let your will be accomplished. Bring in me a surrender, a true surrender. Bring in me a yielding.

That will not fight you, kick against the bricks. That will not fight you every step of the way. But will bow before you.

And say, I'm yours. Do what you want to with me. I'm yours.

I trust you. Your way is better than my way. Your way is higher than my way.

Fulfill your purpose. Work your will.

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