

Watchman Nee - a Modern Day Vessel (Testimony by Stephen Kaung)

by Watchman Nee

Consecration is the first Christian experience and it is the key to a life of fellowship with God and a life of purpose and fulfillment.

Duration: 1:00:12

Scripture: Psalm 73:25, Matthew 6:33, Acts 20:7, 2 Timothy 2:20-21, Hebrews 12:1-2, Hebrews 13:8, James 1:22

Topics: "Lordship Salvation", "Christian Unity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of breaking bread together as a way to remember the Lord. He shares the story of Lee Lung and his wife, who started breaking bread together and felt the presence of the Lord. The speaker also talks about the obedience of Lee Lung and how he yielded to the Lord's love and accepted Jesus as both his Savior and Lord. The sermon emphasizes the unity of brothers and sisters in consecrating their lives to the Lord and the importance of praying for others before preaching the gospel to them.

Transcript

Well, you may wonder why I'm here. I was asked to come to the Young People's Conference. I'd love to come, but as I said in the past, I'm not a speaker.

I'm a fellowshiper. I love to fellowship. Now, what is fellowship? I think this question has been asked several times in the past.

Well, fellowship is sharing in common. There is something in common. And we share with one another in love that our joy may be full.

Now, you may wonder what is it that you and I have in common. Age-wise, we are far apart. I was born in the beginning of the century.

Last century, I mean. And most of you are born towards the end of last century. I was brought up in the old country.

And you are brought up in new countries. To you, you may feel I'm old-fashioned. And I consider you as modern men and women.

So there is really nothing in common. So how can we in fellowship? Now, thank God there is something we have in common. As a matter of fact, it is someone that we have in common.

You have the Lord Jesus. And thank God, I have Him too. You love Him.

And by the grace of God, I love Him too. And this transcends all our differences. It transcends the difference in our age.

It transcends the difference in our upbringing. It transcends race, language, culture, whatever it may be. Because in Christ Jesus, we are one.

And there is much that we can share with one another. You know, fellowship is sharing Christ. You share with me the Christ that you know.

And I share with you the Christ that I know. And by sharing Christ with one another, our joy will be full. I think there is almost nothing on this earth that will give us great joy as fellowshiping in Christ Jesus.

You know, the agent, John, he wrote in 1 John 1, verse 5. He said, That which we have seen and heard, we report to you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship is indeed with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. John had fellowship with God. He had fellowship with Jesus Christ.

And what he had received, he shared with us, that we may have fellowship with him, and he may have fellowship with us. And in doing that, our joy will be full. Now, our two brothers have shared with us in the past, and also this evening, our four persons, four people in the Old Testament.

Joshua, Samuel, David, and hopefully Daniel tonight. Now, our brothers shared with us these four people, not because they want us to know these people, primarily. I think they share with us these people, that we may see Christ in their lives.

We may see God's purpose in their lives, and we may see God's grace upon them. And at the same time, of course, we also see how they respond to the grace of God. And because of that, God made them vassals of gold and silver, vassals of honor in His hand.

Now, in 2 Timothy chapter 2, our brother mentioned many times, verse 19. Yet the firm foundation of God stands. Having this seal, God knows who are His.

And let those who are the Lord's depart from iniquity. Now, this is a very, very important verse. Because on the one hand, it tells us there is a sure, firm foundation of God.

He knows who are His. In other words, whom He has foreknown, He has called. And whom He has called, He has justified.

And whom He has justified, He has glorified. In other words, God knows who are His. God knows you, even before you were born.

Even before the foundation of the world, God knows you. And because He knows you, He calls you. And after He has called you, He will justify you.

And not only that, but He will glorify you. So God has a purpose upon us. Every one of us.

Or to put it in another way, God wants every one of us to be vassal of honor. Vassal of grace. Vassal of mercy.

That is God's purpose. So dear brothers and sisters, I want to assure you that so far as God is concerned, God knows you. He has called you.

And He has purposed you to be a vassal of honor in His house. It is not God's will that He wants you to be a vassal of dishonor. Just a vassal of wood and earth.

That is not God's purpose for you. God's purpose for you in knowing you, in calling you, in justifying you is to glorify you. That you may be all vassals of honor in His house.

Now that is on God's side. But on our side, He said, that those who know, who are the Lord's, depart from evil, from iniquity. In other words, on our part we have a responsibility.

God has chosen you to be vassals of honor. Every one of you. But on our part, we have a responsibility.

That is, how do we respond to His purpose? How do we respond to His call? How do we respond to His grace? His grace is sufficient to make us all vassals of honor in His house. There is no question about it. But the problem is our attitude towards His call.

Our attitude towards His grace. Whether we will accept His grace and allow Him to work in our lives. Whether we are willing to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in departing from iniquity.

And purify ourselves, separate ourselves for God. Now that is up to each one of us. So dear brothers and sisters, we do have a responsibility.

And I do thank the Lord. Because I believe most of you, if not all. I hope it's all.

I pray that it may be all. That we do respond to His call. We do accept His grace.

And be vassals of honor in His house. Now our two brothers, they use these four people to illustrate. On God's side, what is God's purpose? And on our side, if we respond to His grace.

What He can do out of us. But probably some of you will feel well. These are people in the Old Testament time.

These are people who lived thousands of years ago. Joshua probably lived fifteen hundred years before Christ. And David and Samuel, they probably lived around a thousand years before Christ.

And even Daniel, probably six hundred years before Christ. So they are thousands of years apart from us. Now maybe God can do in those days.

But can God do something now? Will He do the same thing today? Well probably, well these people are Jews. They are chosen people of God. Therefore you'll find such things happen to their lives.

But we are Gentiles. Chinese, Canadians, Brazilians, French. Now whether God will do the same thing to us.

Even to us. So this afternoon I feel I would like to illustrate God's purpose and His grace in a more modern person. A person that we can relate to.

Now of course I cannot illustrate one of the 21st century. Because she will be only one year old. So I have to illustrate where we all begin in the past century.

He is a Chinese. And he was born at the beginning of this century. And his name is Watchman Lee.

Now I wonder whether you have heard of Watchman Lee. Now who has heard of Watchman Lee? Ah quite a few of you. Now because I personally know him.

So I feel that I would like to use his life to illustrate what our two brothers have been telling us. To show that God is able to do just the same thing. And make us vessels of honor in his house.

Now Watchman Lee was born in 1903. He was born to a nominal Christian family. Now do you know what nominal Christian family means? In other words, they are called Christians.

They are members of a Christian church. But it's only a name. In other words, they really do not have any relationship, living relationship with God.

No living relationship with Jesus Christ. And yet they call themselves Christians. So when our brother was born, he was born to a nominal Christian home.

And his mother, in the past when he or she was in school, she had some contact, real contact with real Christians. But it was just a fleeting thing to her. Now her mother gave birth to two girls.

And you know in China in the old days, they want boys. And after the mother gave birth to two girls. Now actually in their family, they have a relative that gave birth to I think seven girls.

So the mother was rather alarmed. She was afraid that she too will continue to give birth to girls and no boys. Now because she has some idea of Christianity, so she prayed.

She asked God to give her a boy. And she even promised God, if you give him, give me a boy, I will give it back to you. Just like Hannah, you know, with Samuel.

And sure enough, God answered her prayer. You know sometimes God answers prayer with people who are not the Lord's. Because our God is so great.

So a boy was born. And that was our brother. It was Manu.

But he was brought up not in a real Christian way. Well, they went to church on Sunday. But other than that, there was almost nothing in the family.

So our brother, even though he had so-called Christian connection, and yet he was just like other people, non-Christian people. He was educated in a Christian school, Trinity College in Fuchao. And it was a college run by the Episcopalian Church from Dublin, Ireland.

So all these teachers actually were missionaries. And he was educated in Trinity College. Trinity College is according to the English system, you know, it's like a community college in America.

And our brother despised preachers. Because, you know, in the old days, the Chinese preachers, they were engaged by the missionaries. And the missionaries, you know, gave them just bare living.

And they had to listen to the missionaries give all things. So most Chinese at that time, they looked down upon preachers. Because they thought that they were just, you know, for a bare living.

And do such work. And Brother Lee's mother, even though she was a nominal Christian, actually there was nothing in her. And she was quite a woman, you know, very strong woman.

I know her very well, because she treated me as her child. And very strict with me. But as a matter of fact, you know, she joined in the Chinese Revolution.

And her husband got his position because of her. So you see what a strong character she was. And, of course, like the other women in the old days, she liked to play Mahjong, you know.

And sometimes the pastor would come to her home asking for money. And she would just take off from the Mahjong table and give to the pastor. You know, so that's the background.

Now our brother was very brilliant. And he had lots and lots of plans. He already had his future planned out, what he wanted to do.

But then in 1920, when our brother was 17 years old, a lady evangelist came to that city. And that lady's name was Doro Yu. She was a medical doctor.

And she devoted her life to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, Mother Yu, when she was studying in Shanghai, she heard Doro Yu. And she was greatly impressed by her.

So when Doro Yu came to her town, now Mother Yu felt that she had a responsibility, knowing her in the past, that she should go and hear her. So she even invited her Mahjong friends to go and hear Doro Yu. And she went there, and she was convicted.

So one day when she was playing Mahjong with her friends, she said, I couldn't do it anymore. I had to go and hear Doro Yu. And she got soundly saved.

And after she was saved, she felt she should start a family devotion. So one day she gathered the family together, and tried to start a family devotion, you know. And she went to the piano, trying to play a theme, you know, to start the devotion.

But as she sat down to play, she was deeply convicted within her that she must ask her son's forgiveness. She couldn't play. The Holy Spirit just convicted her.

Why? Because, you know, Brother Lee being the oldest son, when he was born, you know, two sisters were ahead of him. So, of course, boys are probably more naughty than girls. And so in the family, you know, he was the one disciplined most.

And sometimes the two sisters had pity on him, and tried to take the blame upon themselves to keep him from being disciplined. But one time, a very precious vest was broken. And, of course, Mother Lee thought it must be washed away.

So she disciplined him very severely. And because of that, Watchman hated his mother. So, when the Holy Spirit convicted Mother Lee, you cannot start the family devotion unless you first ask your son's forgiveness.

You know, in China, this was never done. We were brought up with the concept that our parents were always right. Our parents never apologized to us.

Even if they did seriously wrong, they never apologized because they have every right to do it. So in China, this was never done. But the Holy Spirit convicted Mother Lee.

So she got up. She went over to her son and embraced him and asked his forgiveness. And that deeply touched Watchman's heart.

Because this was never done in China. So when he was invited to hear Doro Lee, he felt he should go. Whoever can change my mother is worth hearing.

So he went. And the first time he heard the gospel, he knew he must believe. There is no question.

This is the truth. But he couldn't. Why? Because he had all his plans in the future planned out.

To him, he felt, he just couldn't accept Jesus only as his Savior. At the same time, he felt he had to surrender his life to Jesus as his Lord. And he couldn't do it.

He knew he was a sinner. He knew he needed a Savior. He knew Jesus was ready to save him.

But he couldn't accept him. Because to him, he felt, at the same time, he had to yield his life to this Jesus and take him as his Lord. He couldn't do it.

He struggled over this for days. Until one day, he was in his own room praying. And he told us himself, the Lord showed him the blackness of his sins.

And at the same time, the redness of the blood of Jesus. He was so touched by the love of Christ that he yielded to the Lord. So on the day that he was saved, he was seventeen, he not only accepted the Lord Jesus as his Savior, he also received Jesus as his Lord.

Lord of his life. Now, dear brothers and sisters, thank God you have decided to consecrate your lives to the Lord. This is the right thing to do.

But do not think that it is something great. This is the minimum you should do. This is the basic you should do.

This is the first thing you should do. Receiving the Lord as our Savior and accepting him as your Lord should go together. A believer and a disciple are one.

You cannot just be a believer and not a disciple to the Lord. Thank God, consecration is the first Christian experience. If you have not consecrated your life to the Lord, who loved you, gave his life to you, you may be saved.

But you haven't started your Christian life. Consecration is the first Christian experience. Thank God you have done it.

And you should. Consecration is giving yourself totally to the one who loved you and gave himself to you totally. Consecration is accepting him as your Lord.

Instead of being master of your own life, you give up your right to him. And take him as your master, as your Lord. And let him lead you in the life ahead.

Consecration is allowing him to work out his purpose in your life. Allowing his grace to make you vessel of honor. That's consecration.

And consecration is not something that you did once in your lifetime. No. What you did last night is the beginning.

It is like entering into a door. Now there is a way of consecration ahead of you. A whole life, consecrated life ahead of you.

It is a life. A life dedicated to God. A life given over to God.

Allow the Lord to work out his salvation. Full salvation in life. To make you vessels of gold and of silver.

Fit for the Master's use. So dear brothers and sisters, a life is ahead of you. A new life.

A consecrated life. A life separated from everything unto God. How we need to renew our consecration day by day.

It is like a daily burn offering. In the morning, one lamp. In the evening, another lamp.

The fire on the altar of the burn offering never goes out. It is there day and night. Continuously burning.

That's consecration. Especially when we come to our life crisis. Whenever there is a crisis come in your life.

Rededicate yourself. Reconsecrate yourself to the Lord. Deepen your consecration.

You know, consecration when the Lord opens new territory, new area, new understanding you consecrate more. More and more. Consecration is the first Christian experience and it is the last one too.

It is the most basic one and it is the highest one. So dear brothers and sisters, thank God you have now begun. Now there is a way ahead of you.

Just look up unto Jesus. The author and finisher of faith and he will lead you all the way. Now that is our brother.

So after he has consecrated himself to the Lord, accepting Jesus as his Savior and Lord, then a change began to come upon his life. He wanted to know the Lord more. To know the Bible more.

Oh, he loved the Bible. After he was saved, he began to read the Bible. And he brought his Bible to school.

And there is something I don't advise you to copy him. Even in classes, he read the Bible. Now don't do that.

So within a very short time, he had read the Bible. I mean the New Testament. All the New Testament.

He just devoured the Word of God. And he had such a memory. You know.

And it was during that time, there was some political turmoil in China. So the school was closed. So he went to Shanghai.

To Dalu. You know, Dalu had a kind of a informal Bible school. People could go there.

Live there. And study the Bible. You know.

So Watchman went there. He went to Dalu. He wanted to know more of the Bible.

But after a short time, Dalu told him that it's not convenient for him to stay there. And asked him to go home. Now the reason was our brother, he loved to eat.

He loved to sleep late. He loved to dress good. So when he was with Dalu, he was not a disciplined person.

And Dalu, he thought, this young man was hopeless. Sent him home. But brother Lee told us, he said, even so, he was not hopeless in himself.

So he went back home. And the school reopened. So he went back to school.

And he continued to read the Word of God. And became very zealous. He tackled Dalu's students.

And preached the Gospel to them. And until when his fellow students saw he's coming, the preacher's coming. So they go the other way.

And after a few times, after some time, he met a missionary, Miss Groves. I knew her. And the missionary asked her, asked him, since you believe in the Lord Jesus, how many people have you led to the Lord? Washington said, none.

But he said, I have preached. I have done my duty. But they just don't believe.

That's not my responsibility. Ah, Miss Groves said. Did you pray for them before you preached to them? Never.

Well, Miss Groves said, you better pray for them. You should pray for them before you preach to them. So Washington began to pray for his fellow students.

He put their names in his notebook. And he prayed for them. Every day.

In the class. At home. He began to pray for them.

And sure enough, gradually, one after another, God said, the Lord began to work. And it was during those days that the Lord began to work. And it started in 1923, in January.

You know, a few students, fellow students, they invited a lady. Dorothy couldn't come. So they invited Ruth Lee to come.

Now, Ruth Lee, I knew her very well. She was a very learned woman. And she was an atheist.

But then she turned to Christ. And at that time she was editor of a very famous Christian magazine in China. So they invited her to come to their school to preach to the students.

So she came just a few days. And the revival broke out. And they couldn't stop.

You know, they continued the meeting. And it was in such a way that they had to tell people, if you want to come to hear the gospel, you have to bring your own chairs. Because they don't have chairs.

And the revival broke out at school. All the best students of every class and all the worst students of every class got saved. So you can see the impression.

And at school, when you go to school in the morning, early morning, you will find in the yard, under the tree, students there reading the Bible. Praying. And they went out to the street, put posters upon their back and front, and preached the gospel to the people.

A real revival broke out in that city. And it was during that time when our brother, he was reading the Bible. And he discovered something.

He discovered there was something in the Word of God that was not practiced among Christians. At least among those whom he was with. And there were many things, not in the Bible, but were being practiced in Christianity.

And he struggled over this matter. Now the first thing, he practiced sprinkling. When I was a baby, I would sprinkle, you know.

But when our brother was reading the Bible, and to him it's serious, you know, he felt that he must follow whatever the Word of God says. If it is in the Bible, he would do it. If it's not in the Bible, he wouldn't do it.

So when he was reading the Bible, the Lord began to convict him that he needs to be immersed. Because he felt that is the only way mentioned in the Word of God. Being dead with Christ, buried with Christ, and risen with Christ, that can only be acted out by immersion.

So this thing began to trouble him. He began to feel this is something he must obey. In other words, he felt that as a believer, as one who accepts Jesus as his Lord, he has to follow the Lord strictly, all the way.

So one day he talked to his friend, and he discovered that his friend was also baptized by immersion before. So one day he told his mother he was going to a certain place, and there was an English lady there, Miss Barber, Margaret Barber. Well, that's too long a story.

And Miss Barber, you know, she knew the Lord very well, and when there was a revival breaking out among these young people, she was the one who really helped him spiritually. They went to her for help. And so one day Brother Nee said he was going to Miss Barber's place.

And Mother said, well, this is not a weekend. Why do you want to go there? So he said, I want to be baptized. And Mother said, I want too.

So they all go there, and they were baptized. And after they were baptized, one day Brother Nee, again, talked with his friend Lee Leung Wong. You know, Lee Leung Wong was a little older than Brother Nee, a navy man.

Brother Nee was talking to him. He said, well, he said, from the Word of God, we who love the Lord, we shall remember the Lord. Breaking the bread, remember the Lord.

But this is something not being done. You know, in some church, once a month, in other places, maybe twice a year, or something like that. And he said, according to the Word of God, it should be very simple.

You should come together and just break the bread, remember the Lord, you know. And so Lee Leung and his wife and watchman, the first time I think there were three of them, they began to break bread together. And as they break bread, they will really feel the presence of the Lord and touch by the Lord.

So, that's how it all began in the old days. Well, I have 15 minutes more, so I'll try to finish it. I just want to tell you something more.

There's a lot to tell about his early life. His obedience to the Lord. One day he was going to preach.

And he chose a verse. In Psalm 73, verse 25. Whom do I have in heaven? Whom do I on earth desire except Thee? And he was going to preach on this verse.

But then he was convicted. He said, yes, I can say whom do I have in heaven but Thee? I can say that. But to say whom do I desire on earth except Thee? He said, I cannot honestly say that.

Why? Because at that time he loved a girl. There was a girl whose name was Charity. And they grew up together.

They were neighbors. Grew up together. And they loved each other.

And verily after he was saved, he tried to approach Charity. Tried to preach Christ, the gospel to her. But he can talk anything with her except the gospel.

She wouldn't listen. He just wouldn't believe. And this bothered, of course, verily very much.

So when he was going to preach this verse, he said, I just cannot say that. Because in his heart he really loved Charity. And he struggled over this verse.

God will not let her go. Let him go. He promised.

He said, Lord, if you just allow me to have her, I will serve you more. But the Lord wouldn't listen. He even said to the Lord, if you allow me to have her, just allow me to have her.

I'm willing to go to a far country, far place, to preach the gospel. No. You know, the Lord would not bargain with us.

So one day, as he was in Israel, praying, again he was constrained by the love of Christ. He gave up Charity. He told us after he had done that, he changed his clothes.

You know, he liked to wear good clothes. He changed his clothes, wear a whole cloth. He went out to the street, put in gospel posters.

That was his way to say goodbye to Charity. Now thank God, many years later, God gave her back. But anyway, you'll find that this young man, his obedience to the Lord was absolute.

So dear brothers and sisters, you have consecrated your life to the Lord. And along your life away, you will be challenged. You will be tested.

God will test you. There may be something, some people, some relationship that needs to be dealt with. That the Lord will truly be Lord.

And when such things happen, may the grace of God bring you through. And finally, I would just like to mention something. You know, after he graduated, he felt the Lord called him.

So he began to serve the Lord. And he served the Lord so diligently, overly zealous. So he hurt himself physically.

He developed tuberculosis. And it was so bad. He was in bed hundreds of days.

Couldn't get out of bed. The doctor gave him up. And the nurse, a sister in the Lord, said she had never seen such a case.

He was dying. And, well, as a matter of fact, I mean, before that he met his professor on the street. His professor looked him all over and sighed.

And said, we have great expectation over you. But look at yourself now. What a pity.

But he was sick. Body was damaged. Poor.

Destitute. And, of course, being human, he he felt it deeply. But immediately the Spirit of God touched him and said, it's worth it.

It's worth it. So when he was dying, the brothers and sisters, they were praying for him. One day, while he was in bed, he prepared.

He was praying, asking the Lord. And the Word of God came to him. Live by faith.

And immediately he felt the power of that Word. Live by faith. So he believed that he will live.

He will not die. And then he felt within himself stand up. He said, Lord, I haven't got out of bed hundreds of days.

I couldn't do it. But the Word was powerful in him. Stand by faith.

So he put on his dress. Tried to stand up. And he told us himself.

When he stood up, he felt he was standing on cotton. He was perspiring all over. But he stood.

And then he felt in his heart, another Word came. Walk by faith. He said, Lord, I couldn't walk.

But walk by faith. So he walked. He was on the second floor.

And in China, you know, the stairway was very steep. He looked down the stairway. How could I go down the stairway? I couldn't do it.

But the Word within himself walked by faith. So he walked. He walked down the stairway.

He crossed the lane. Knocked the door of the sister. Brothers and sisters were there praying for him.

He knocked the door. They opened up. He went in.

For an hour, nobody talked. Then he related to them what the Lord had done for him. And he was instantaneously healed of tuberculosis.

Never in his life afterwards tuberculosis was a problem to him. Brothers and sisters, God is faithful. If God is able to do something like that to a countryman, to many of you, in our modern days, surely he is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

He is able to do with every one of us, even though differently, but all gloriously. Vessels of honor, of gold and silver. So, brothers and sisters, we have many witnesses as clouds around us.

They have already gone before us. They are cheering us to go on. Press on towards the goal.

Looking up unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith. And may the Lord bless you.

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