

Marks of True Children of God - Part 3

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald explores the essential role of obedience in the life of a true child of God, emphasizing its connection to love and spiritual growth.

Duration: 46:28

Scripture: Matthew 6:19, Matthew 23:9, John 14:15, John 14:23, 1 John 2:29, 1 John 3:7, 1 John 3:10

Topics: "Children Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of translating the word of God into action. Attending religious meetings and conferences is not enough; we must embody the teachings of the Bible in our daily lives. The speaker gives the example of Jesus, who became flesh and dwelt among us, and encourages listeners to let the word become flesh in their own lives. The sermon also highlights the importance of practicing obedience and righteousness, and being known as someone who can be counted on to do what is right.

Transcript

I'd like to continue with you this afternoon our studies in 1 John. We've been taking up some of the marks of a true believer, as found in this epistle. We found this morning that a true believer confesses the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yesterday we were reminded that he does not practice sin, and that he loves God and the people of God. This afternoon, I'd like to look at a couple more tests of life, and the first one is obedience. Obedience, and you might just turn to 1 John, chapter 2, and we'll read verses 3 through 6. 1 John, chapter 2, verses 3 through 6. And hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments.

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. And John is emphasizing here that when a person is born again by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he obeys the commandments of the Lord. He doesn't become a Christian by obeying the commandments, but because he is a Christian, he obeys them.

I hope that's clear to everyone. We don't become a Christian by living the Christian life, do we? We live the Christian life because we have Christ dwelling within us. And, you know, obedience is very, very important.

Somebody has said that obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge, and that means that the more a person obeys the Lord, the more the Lord opens the word of God to him and reveals its treasures to him. Now, that isn't true of any other book in the world. I could go down and pick out a book from the library, and what I am myself doesn't have anything to do with my comprehension of that book.

My spiritual condition does not affect my understanding of the book. But with the Bible, it really is true that the more I obey the Lord, the more this book is open to me. We emphasize a lot in life today a man's IQ, his intelligent quotient, but I'd like to tell you that God emphasizes a man's OQ, his obedience quotient.

And I've watched people in life, and I find that the people who make the best history for God are people who have a heart to obey the Lord. I like to see that in young people. I like to see the spirit in young people that says, Well, I don't care whether I see anyone else around me obeying the word of God.

That's what it says, and that's what I'm going to do. Now, in the verses that we've read this afternoon, there are three stages in obedience. You have, first of all, keeping his commandments, and that means obeying the teachings of the Lord Jesus as they are found in the New Testament.

That's keeping his commandments, obeying the teachings of the Lord Jesus as they are found in the New Testament, verse 3. Then it says to keep his word. Now, that's an advance on keeping his commandments. To keep his word means to do the things that you know would please the Lord, even if there isn't anything written about it.

Illustration. A friend of ours on the West Coast, when he was a young man, one of his chums urged him to do something, and our friend said, No, I won't do it. And the first one said, Oh, your father told you not to do it.

He said, No, my father never told me not to do it, but I know it wouldn't please him. And that's what you have here in verse 5. Keeping his word means to do what we know would please him. I remember one summer being out at the Yosemite conference, and I remember Stacy Woods of InterVarsity speaking, and he said, We should make it a daily prayer that we will always do the thing that pleases the heart of Christ.

And I wrote that in my notebook, and I've tried to do that ever since. To pray continually that I will do the thing that pleases the heart of Christ, because I think that must be very acceptable to him. And then, of course, to walk as he walked is the third thing that you have here.

It means, that's in verse 6, and it means to live as the Savior lived, as a man here on earth. And so, those verses are just pregnant with meaning, aren't they? They're just filled with meaning and practical instruction for us. And I think it's interesting to read in verse 5 that, Whoso keepeth his word in him verily is the love of God perfected.

And what I understand that to mean is that God's love to me reaches its goal when I keep his word. It really means a lot to him to have people down here that obey him. Well, it does to you as parents.

Isn't it pleasing when you say something to your child, and he doesn't resist, and he doesn't rebel? He just does it because you ask him to do it. He doesn't ask for any explanation of why he should do it. He just does it.

And I think that's what you have here in this verse. In him verily the love of God is perfected when we keep his word. Now, obeying the commandments of the Lord is closely linked in the Scriptures with loving the Lord.

Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandments. That's the motive of our obedience, our love to the Savior. I don't want to obey the Lord because of fear of punishment.

I don't live in dread of punishment by God. But I live with a consciousness of the great love he bestowed upon me, and in return, I want to obey him. And in that connection, I think it's very interesting for us to remind ourselves that all of God's commandments are for our good, not for his.

Did you ever think of that? What does it mean to the great God whether I do these things? It's for my good. And that's true with all the commandments that you have in the Old Testament that he gave to Israel, true to all the commandments in the New Testament that he gives to us. And then we read in chapter 5, verse 3 of this epistle that God's commandments are not grievous.

I like that. God's commandments are not grievous. We think sometimes of the commands of the Lord as being unacceptable and burdensome, and we think, well, what he wants me to do is always the very worst thing, the thing that I don't want to do.

We think of the will of God and all we can think of is scorpions and serpents and the like. But no, the Bible says his commandments are not grievous, and that's true. The things that God commands me to do in the New Testament are the things that my renewed nature loves to do.

It's like if I were to tell, here's a mother with a two-month-old baby in her arms, and I go up to her and I say, now, I want you to take good care of that baby. And she says, well, thanks very much. That's exactly what I love to do.

And that's true of the commandments of the Lord. The commandments of the Lord are the things that we as redeemed children of God love to do. His commands are not grievous.

The Lord Jesus said that. He said, my yoke is easy and my burden is light. And it's true.

I found it so. Somebody has said that if Jesus had an advertising sign over his carpenter shop in Nazareth, it probably would have said, my yokes fit well. Well, I don't know whether he would have had that sign, but it's true anyway, isn't it? His yokes fit well, and his commandments are not grievous.

And the Lord Jesus, in delivering the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain, also in Luke chapter 6, said that the wise man is the man who comes to him and hears his words and does them. He's the one who builds his life on a firm foundation, on a rock foundation. The foolish man is the man who hears the words of the Lord and says, no, I just don't choose to go that route.

I have my own ideas as to what I should do with my life and how I should plan my life. And Jesus says that man is building his house on sand. He's a foolish man.

The wise man and the foolish man. The happy man is the man who obeys the Lord. Most of our problems in life today are self-made problems.

We create our own problems in departing from the living God and from the word of God. Jesus said, if you do these things, happy are ye, blessed are ye. And James reminds us it's not enough just to hear the word of God.

We have to do it as well. Sometimes the illusion sweeps across the human mind that if I just attend enough meetings, and if I go to this seminar, and if I go to this workshop, and if I go to this conference, I'm performing religious duties and everything will be well. But Jesus says, no, it's not enough.

It's not just enough to go and hear the word of God. You have to translate it into action. It was said of the Lord Jesus, the word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Now, in another sense, God wants that to happen in your life and mine. He wants the word to become flesh so that people can look at us and see the word translated into human life. Somebody wants to ask another person, what is your favorite gospel? He says, the gospel according to my mother.

That was it. The word became flesh. And I think it was John Wesley that said he learned more theology from his mother than from all the theologians of Europe.

And I can believe it if you've read the story of Susanna Wesley. It's good, isn't it? He learned more about God from his mother than he learned from all the theologians of Europe. God wants the word of God to be translated into action in our lives.

We're reminded in the Old Testament in 1 Samuel that to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fad of rant. In other words, God would rather have me just simply obey his word than come to him with the most expensive gift that I could possibly offer to him. God is not a ritualist.

God is not pleased by people going through ceremonies without any heart interest. People think if they can just do so many cartwheels down the main aisle of the church that somehow or other they'll find favor with God. God is not a ritualist.

And to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fad of rant. And we're reminded that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry. The Lord told us the parable of two sons, and the father said to one, Go and do this, and he said, I won't, but he went and did it.

And the other one said, I go, but he didn't go. Which of those did the will of his father? Well, of course, the one who said, I won't go, but he did go. The Lord wants that willing obedience.

He doesn't want us even to say, I won't. Just do it. It's an amazing thing how we can take the word of God, and by our traditions we can make it void.

The Lord Jesus taught us this through an example of the Jewish people of his day. They had devised a clever little scheme whereby if a father and mother were destitute, didn't have any money, maybe they went to their oldest son and they'd say, Look, Jack, we don't have any money, and we really need your help. All he had to say was, all he had to do was utter a single word, Korban, and that relieved him of any responsibility to honor his father and mother.

Korban meant, anything that you might be profited from me has been dedicated to God. Very religious, very pious, but very hateful, too, to God. And he said, You make void the commandments of God through your traditions.

I understand they still do things like that in Israel. You know, they're supposed to let the land lie fallow every seven years, but you can't make any money on fallow land, can you? And so that seventh year, the Jews take the land and they transfer it into the name of an Arab nominee. Just a legal device.

That year, the land is owned by an Arab. I mean, don't let him try to get his hands on it. It'd be trouble.

It'd be civil war. But in the meantime, legally, it's the Arabs, and the Jew can kill it because it's not his. And God hates that.

God hates these ways of getting around his precious word. And, you know, I'd like to remind our hearts, too, that it's possible for me to believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures and be willing to fight for that truth and yet not obey the word myself. Did you ever think of that? We can do that.

We can really be very steadfast in our adherence to the truth of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, and yet we ourselves might be constantly disobeying the word of God. And we have devised 60 theological reasons why the word of God often doesn't mean what it says. Let me give you some of those excuses we use to rationalize our disobedience.

Excuses we use to rationalize our disobedience. It can't mean that literally. It's only a general principle.

Ever hear that? It can't mean that literally. Jesus said, Whosoever it be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Jesus said that.

Luke 14, 33. I didn't say it. Jesus said it.

I've heard this over and over again. Jesus didn't mean that we have to forsake all. All he meant is that we have to be willing to do it.

So, here are the British troops down on the Falkland Islands. They're all entrenched there waiting for the command. And the command comes over the top, and I sit there polishing my rifle, and I say, You didn't mean that we have to go.

It's just that we have to be willing to go. You know, you'll never win a war that way, will you? Maybe that's why the chariot wheels of God are dragging heavily these days. Um, excuse number two.

You have to use common sense, don't you? You have to be prudent. Matthew 6, verse 19. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

Jesus said, Don't lay up treasures on earth. Laying up treasures on earth is as contrary to the word of God as adultery or murder. Jesus said, Don't do it.

Now, what do we say? We say, Well, you have to use prudence. You have to use common sense, don't you? The Bible doesn't say you have to use prudence and common sense. It says you have to obey what Jesus said, and leave the consequences to him.

You can hear the wheels going in your minds now. Oftentimes, in the things of God, common sense is no better than rat poison. Really.

No better than rat poison. If God tells me to do a thing, that's what he wants me to do. And it's not for me to reason why for me to do or die.

Another objection to the commandments of the Lord. The Lord knows I have to live, doesn't he? Somebody said that to Spurgeon once. Spurgeon was pressing the claims of Christ on men, and somebody came up to him and said, Well, the Lord knows that I have to live, doesn't he? And Spurgeon says, I don't grant that.

We have to obey God. We don't have to. Who said we had to live? Well, we do have to obey the word of God.

Another excuse we use. That was a cultural matter. That was only for Paul's day.

There's nothing to say to us today. Ever hear that one? Very common nowadays. We explain away plain commandments of the scripture by saying they were cultural matters for the day in which the Apostle Paul lived.

That's a very dangerous argument to use. You know what? You could do away with baptism that way. You could do away with the Lord's Supper that way.

You could do away with anything in the New Testament that way. Just pick what you want to do away with, and you can get rid of it that way. God never intended us to use that argument to dull the sharp edge of the scripture.

Another excuse we use to excuse our disobedience. We've never done it that way. We've never done it that way.

Well, I think we should start doing it the way the New Testament says. Let me give you an example. In the New Testament, if you go through the book of Acts, you'll find that the early church practiced instant baptism.

When a person was saved, they immediately confessed that salvation in the waters of baptism. There was no delay. He didn't wait 20 years to prove the reality of his salvation.

They practiced instant baptism. Their baptism wasn't a guarantee that they were actually saved. The baptism says that they had professed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But we've never done it that way. Maybe it'd be good if we got back to the New Testament, and maybe it would help to weed out a lot of false professions. Something to think about anyway.

I know what ... Here's another one. I know what the Lord says, but in my case, he wants to make an exception. And this is especially in the realm of love courtship and marriage.

Because a lot of people know that it says in 2 Corinthians 6, Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. That's a plain command of Christ. Don't be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

And so, she says to me, Now, I know that's what the Scripture says, but in my case, God wants me to marry that unbeliever so I can lead him to Christ. It sounds very plausible, doesn't it? But it's very disobedient, and God does not like it. God is not pleased with it at all.

Could I share with you some verses that ... I've already shared some verses that are in the New Testament that we get around by these rationalizations. I already shared Matthew 6, 19 with you. Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth.

What about Matthew 23, verse 9? Matthew 23, verse 9. And I'm doing this so that you, in studying the Word of God, and you come across these verses and say, We don't obey that. Well, good thing to ask yourself, Why don't we obey it? Verse 8. Verse 8 of Matthew chapter 23, But be not ye called rabbis, for one is your master or teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth, for one is your father which is in heaven.

Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, even Christ. Now, the Lord teaches here that in the things of God, we are not to use honorific titles. And when we look at other churches, we say, Yeah, that's right.

It's wrong to be called the Reverend so-and-so, or the Right Reverend so-and-so, or the Holy Father. We've jumped those hurdles. But, you know, it's very easy for us to get into the pattern of saying, Now, our speaker next week is Dr. so-and-so.

Dr. so-and-so. Now, Dr. so-and-so happened to get his doctorate from the University of Illinois, let's say. And the University of Illinois is a test pool of infidelity.

The University of Illinois wouldn't give a Ph.D. to you, I don't think, if they knew you believed in the virgin birth. But we're going to be privileged to have Dr. so-and-so. And he's an evangelical Christian, and we give him that title of doctor.

And when we say doctor, we mean that there's something about a man like that that you better come and you better pay special attention to. And Jesus said, Don't do it. Don't you.

That word teacher there, Rabbi teacher, that's what doctor means. You ever think of that? Go home and look up the word doctor in the dictionary, and you'll find the meaning of the word teacher. Don't call any man your teacher.

Now, I don't mean that we shouldn't, when we go to the medical doctor, that we shouldn't call him doctor or the dentist. It's okay to call him. That's okay.

But in the church, God has formed one equal brotherhood, and we're not to use these distinctive titles. Okay, well, another one is Romans, chapter 14 and 21. Romans, chapter 14 and 21.

This chapter has to do with matters of moral indifference, things that are not right or wrong in themselves, but they're only right or wrong on the basis of whether they would stumble somebody else. Romans 14, 21. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

Now, there's a scripture that tells me that I mustn't do anything that would stumble or offend another brother in Christ. And I go, well, don't I have my rights? And God says, yes, you have your rights, but

there's a greater right than having your rights, and that's to forgo those rights for the benefit of somebody else. I know fellowships of God's people, and they will only use wine at the Lord's Supper.

And if you suggest using grape juice, I get very, very huffy. We've never done it that way. But there are people that have been turned away from that fellowship, because perhaps their father was an alcoholic, and they've seen, or perhaps they themselves were alcoholics before they were saved.

And just the very taste of wine might be a special temptation to them. 1 Corinthians 6, verse 1. I often think of this. How do people get around these verses? 1 Corinthians 6, verse 1. Did any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saint? The whole passage teaches that a Christian should not go to law against another Christian.

Do you know any Christians that go to law against other Christians? It's amazing how, when matters of money come into consideration, we drop all our spirituality and all our powers of rational thought, and we rush to the nearest lawyer. And this passage, Scripture says, it would be better to suffer wrong, supposing he has, supposing he's cheated you, supposing he has taken from you that which rightly belongs to you. Get it? Be willing to suffer that loss, rather than go to law before the unjust.

These are hard words for us to accept, aren't they? 1 Timothy, chapter 6. Just this one more in this connection. 1 Timothy, chapter 6, verse 8. 1 Timothy, chapter 6, verse 8. Well, let's go back to verse 6. It says, "...but godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing up.

And having food and raiment, let us be there with contentment." That's a marvelous verse. And let me just explain that that word for raiment, the word really means covering. Covering.

That raiment, according to the original of the New Testament, that roof over our head, that would be raiment, and the clothes we wear. If you translate it, covering, that's good. Having food and covering.

It means having food to eat, a roof over your head, and clothes to wear, therewith to be content. Question. How many Christians do you know who are satisfied with food and raiment? I'll tell you, if you're content with those things, you've got something money can't buy.

The happiest people in the world today are born-again believers in the Lord Jesus who take a verse like that, and they say, if the Bible doesn't mean what it says, we ought to throw it away. And because it means what it says, we're going to live that kind of a life. And they're happy.

You say, oh, I'd have a nervous breakdown. No, you'd be more apt to have a nervous breakdown having all the accoutrements and gadgets and hot and cold folding doors and things that don't work. Really? Really? God's way is that.

But before we close this, just let me say this. And it's something for you to think about and carry away with you. Generally speaking, people obey the things they want to obey and disobey the things they don't want to obey.

We're like Saul of the Old Testament. When Saul came to power in the kingdom, he purged the kingdom of witches. Remember? Oh, and a burst of piety.

No more witches in the land. But when he consulted one, he made a beeline to Endor and consulted the witch of Endor. Right? Let's not get caught in the trap that Saul got caught in.

Choosing the things we like and obeying them and disobeying the things that we don't like. Now, there's another test of life I'd like to go over with you this afternoon, and that is the true believer practices righteousness. He practices righteousness.

And I'd like to read some verses in that connection. 1 John 2, verse 29. 1 John 2, verse 29.

It says, If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of him. Chapter 3, verse 7. Little children, let no man deceive you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

Verse 10. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever doeth not, practices not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

Okay, another test of life. The true child of God practices righteousness. Yesterday, we had the true child of God does not practice sin.

That's the negative side of it. Now, the positive side of it, he does practice righteousness. Now, I don't know what goes through your mind when you think of righteousness.

It's kind of one of those vague words that we can just lie down beside and be comfortable because it's been extracted of all true meaning. When I think of righteousness, I take that first part of it right. And a righteous man is a man that does what is right.

He is right, and he does right. His heart is pure, and his life is straight. That's a righteous man.

His life is pure, his heart is pure, and his life is straight. A righteous man is one who acts in accord with God's laws, with moral laws, and he acts justly in his dealings with his fellow men. And it's a great thing to be righteous, and it's a wonderful testimony in the world because there are a lot of people in the world who aren't righteous.

I got a shocking letter the other day from another country. I won't tell you where, but it was written by a servant of the Lord. Let me read it to you.

He said, Most of the brethren here are in business, and that means, I am told, that they engage in corrupt practices. One brother told me that's why he will not minister the word in the assembly. He says they can't survive in business if they're straight.

That's a terrible thing, isn't it? That a man's business practices seal his lips as far as testimony of God is concerned. This is an unabridged letter. I'm reading it exactly the way it came.

Let me read that sentence again. One brother told me that's why he will not minister the word in the assembly. He says they can't survive in business if they're straight.

This was in response to some messages I gave. Yesterday, a young lady came to me about changing her job because of tension causing backache in her presence. A few moments questioning revealed the problem is corruption.

She's an accountant working for a Christian brother. She's under conviction, and I believe is willing to yield to the Lord. She seems so weak and small.

Why should it be a sister who has to be the first to challenge the system? There are elders who are just as guilty. All I can do is pray for her, but how my heart aches. What it really comes down to is that the world about it is a monstrous system of unrighteousness, and it has a way of creeping into the Christian church, and it has a way of creeping into the activities of Christian men and women.

But John reminds us that the child of God practices righteousness. He's willing to pay the price. He files honest income tax returns.

So you could have talked all week without mentioning that. Well, in filing his income taxes, it means that he has no unrecorded transactions, and it means that there are no inflated expenses. Isn't it a temptation, or are you different? What a temptation when you sit down and you think of Uncle Sam getting all that booty, you know, and you think, well, if I just increase expenses and... he wouldn't get so much, right? It's really terrible, the pressures that are on people today.

The Christian does not engage in under-the-table deals, bribes, payoffs, kickbacks, and how common they are in life today. I could go on for 15 minutes telling you of things that happen in this regard, but I don't want to put any ideas in your head. The Christian practices righteousness.

He does not go back on his word, even if it costs him dearly. In Psalm 15, you read about the man who walks with God. He sweareth to his own hurt, it says, and he changeth not.

He gives a man his word of promise. Two weeks go by, and he finds out if he hadn't given that word of promise, he could have made \$10,000 more on the deal. He sticks with his word of promise and loses the \$10,000, because his word is his bond.

A true child of God practices righteousness. He does not cheat on exams. Somebody has said that if all the diplomas in this country that were earned dishonestly were returned to the schools, they'd have to build sheds to house them.

I'd rather think that's true. What a temptation it is to see others having access to the keys and the answers to the exam, and you can get them, too, by greasing their palm with silver. A child of God does not pad his expense account, and that's a very common practice, as you know, in business today.

He obeys the traffic rules. I'm preaching to myself, especially because Don is here. A young friend of mine from the Navy had been there, and he came out for a visit, and I went and picked him up at the airport, and we were driving back, and he said, he was very gracious the way he said it, he said, I guess I forgot what it was like driving with you.

And the next time we stopped, he took over the wheel and he drove the rest of the time. However, that wasn't just disobeying traffic rules. That was just poor driving.

I even get nervous when I see a car behind me with a ski rack on it. It looks so much like something else. A child of God obeys government regulations.

For instance, when there's permits to be obtained, he gets the permits honestly, tells what it's for, and he gets it honestly. He deals honestly with the inspectors when they come around. Every time I think of that, I

think of days when we were in Chicago at Emmaus Bible School, and we had a three-story building, and down on the first floor there was a little restaurant with some poor man there trying to eke out an existence.

And he wasn't a Christian, but this is what can happen to you. And the Chicago inspector would come into the restaurant, and he'd go around with his pencil and pad, and he'd be looking over the restaurant, and then he'd finish, and he'd say, Now, let's see, you need a new meat block for cutting your meat, and you need a new hood over your stove, and the upholstery in some of your stools need to be fixed. And he goes through an enormous list of things, and this poor restaurant owner, \$3,000, \$5,000, \$10,000.

\$10,000. And the inspector prepares to leave and says, Is it worth \$10 for you? What do you do? You pay the \$10. You don't have to do the work.

The \$10 goes into his pocket. If you say, No, it isn't worth \$10. I'm a Christian, and I want to do the thing that's right.

He'd say, Have the work done in two weeks, or close the store. That business that I want to tell you this afternoon, American business is built on the big lie and on corruption and graft and rotteness. It's better to go to heaven with a good conscience than to stay on earth with a bad one.

It's better to go out of business than violate the word of God, as he thinks. Righteousness means that a man's honest on the phone, and she's honest on the phone, too. The secretary.

She doesn't say he isn't in when he's right in the next room. He doesn't kite check, and he doesn't underpay his employees, either. This is unrighteousness.

We don't think of that sometimes, but it really is unrighteousness to underpay employees. He doesn't advertise falsely or use false weights and measures, and so forth. Let me give you some examples of righteousness.

Years ago in England, a young man worked for a silk merchant, and the owner said to this young Christian, Adam, when you measure the silk, stretch it. And Adam said, Sir, your silk may stretch, but my conscience won't. That man became the writer of a commentary in the Bible known as Adam Park Commentary.

Them that honor me, I will honor. Never fail. Write that down in your book.

Never fail. You honor God, he honors you. When we were at Emmaus, and I'm sure Ben and Gene will remember some of these people that I'm going to tell you about, Harold Green.

Harold Green was there at Emmaus, and most of the fellows had part-time jobs. Now, he went to get a part-time job, and he applied at a potato chip company. And they said, Now, your job is to go into the supermarkets, and you put our potato chips on these racks.

But they said, Always carry a sharp pencil with you. And when you're putting the potato chips on the rack, just puncture the bags of our competitors. And what that means is, let some of that nice, moist Chicago air get into those potato chips so they're like a wet noodle.

What would you do? Harold said, Look, I'm sorry. If my job depends on that, I won't be able to take the job. And I think some of you know Harold Green, and God has blessed him.

He's carrying, he was down in Nashville, Tennessee for a number of years, now in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Another fellow there at a Nance, and he got a job with Pitney Bowes, and he was sent down to the Loop to train. And the Chicago Loop was a man, and this man just walked around and the customers all in the Loop there.

At the end of the week, the trainer said to Dick, He said, Now, I'm going to fill out my expense account. Of course, you have to fill yours out the way I fill mine out, because we've been together all week. And so he filled a bus fare.

They hadn't been on a bus all week. They walked wherever they went. And he had a padded expense account, and he said to Dick, Now, you do it.

And Dick said, I can't do that. I'm a Christian. And the man exploded, furious.

But Dick stood by his guns. End of the second week, the same thing. The man filled out his expense account, padded it, and said to Dick, Now, you do the same.

And Dick said, Look, sir, if this is my job, if my job depends on doing this, I'm through. And tears bubbled in the man's eyes, and he said, Well, you do what you think is right. And, you know, Dick is down broadcasting on HDJV in Quito, Ecuador today.

Dick Farstead, he has learned seven different dialects, and is broadcasting the gospel in seven different dialects today. I often think of Dick down there in Quito, and how God has honored him. I think of that incident back in the Chicago Loop.

And somehow or other, I think they're related. We had another fellow there at school. He worked for a clothing store.

You'll get very disillusioned when I tell you all this. Most of the practices that go on, you might as well know what life is like. They used to have a clothing sale, men's suits clothing sale.

And they'd say to Bob, Take these \$55 suits upstairs, mark them up to \$75, slash through the \$75, and mark them down to \$65. They're going to go on sale. \$55 suits going on sale at \$65.

And then a man would come in and get fitted for a suit, and they'd put chalk marks here and chalk marks here, and they'd send it upstairs and tell him to come back in a week. And he'd come back in a week, and they'd say to Bob, Bob, it isn't done. Go up and erase the chalk marks and press the suit and bring it down.

What would you do? What would you do if you were working there? Bob said to his employer, he said, Mr. Bossman, he said, You'd be happier out on the sidewalk selling peanuts than you are doing what you're doing in here. And Bob left. Yeah.

One of the tests of divine life is a man, a Christian, is righteous. He does the thing that's right. Someone said to, trying to get a person to cheat, Go ahead.

Your boss isn't looking. As a Christian said, My boss is always looking. It really pays.

It really pays to live in the presence of a boss who is always looking. When I think of that, I think of an extreme example of unrighteousness not committed by a Christian, but some of you remember this. Years

ago they built this bridge over the Tacoma Narrows and this insurance agent had the insurance policy for it and he was so sure that that bridge would never collapse that he pocketed all the premiums.

He never turned them into the company. What do you think happened? I'll tell you. God controls the winds over the Tacoma Narrows and one day those winds hit the bridge in such a way that it started to vibrate and vibrate and vibrate and went right down into the water.

Be sure that your sin will find you out. That man's sin found him out. Well, here are two more tests of divine life.

The child of God practices obedience. It's habitual in his life and he practices righteousness as well. He always wants to be known as a man, a woman, a young man or a young woman that can be counted on to do the thing that is right, knowing that God will always vindicate him if he does.

May the Lord collect his word to our hearts.

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