

Ephesians

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

- [0 : 00] With the Lord's help, I will direct your attention to the Ephesians chapter 4, verse 23.
- The epistle of Paul to the Ephesians chapter 4, verse 23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.
- And be renewed in the spirit of your mind. The epistle to the Ephesians is wonderful.
- Therefore, since it sets before us the glorious doctrines of salvation in the first chapters.
- And describes to us the certainty of the foundation upon which the faith of the Christian church and everyone that is a member of that church.
- [1 : 17] And when I say the Christian church, I mean the church which is in Christ. It shows the grand foundation. According as he has chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy.
- And without blame before him in love. Having predestinated our son to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself.
- According to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace. Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
- A great and glorious foundation. One which the world, which unbelief, which infidelity, yea, which nothing will ever be able to overthrow.
- And if God has ever granted you acceptance in the beloved. Whatever Satan may say subsequently. It will never be able to shift you out of that glorious place.
- [2 : 32] You may be, as it were, mauled about. For he mauled it whom he can't destroy with a malicious joy.
- But nonetheless, you will stand. Indeed, we have the hymn writer expressing such forcefulness.
- In a hymn which is not very often sung. Brethren, would you know your stay? What it is supports you still. Why, though tempted every day, yet you stand.
- And stand you will. Long before our birth, nay, before Jehovah laid the foundation of the earth, we were chosen in our head.
- God's election is the ground of our hope to persevere. On this rock, your building found. And preserve your title clear.
- [3 : 41] Infidels may laugh. Pharisees gain sand rail. Here's your tenor. Keep it safe. God's elect can never fail. Now, you see, some may say, Well, of course, that is wonderful doctrine.
- Well, when you feel it in your soul as a gracious experience, it will be a wonderful doctrine that will far transcend all the criticisms of those that would even criticize the glorious basic truth on which we stand of God's election and God's predestination.
- Now, the apostle, therefore, in the opening chapter writes to the church of Ephesus and to us also of the glorious foundation upon which they stood, upon which the church of God stands in the present day.

And then he goes on to speak in the second chapter of the work of the Spirit in the soul. There was no if and but in the teaching of the apostle.

There is no if and but or maybe in the scriptures at all. And you have been quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins, wherein in time past he walked according to the cause of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others.

[5 : 33] Now, that is very sound teaching, and we need to observe that teaching. I have sometimes wondered how people lay that straight when they say that they have always loved the Lord Jesus Christ and never felt an enmity to him.

Well, it's a wonderful experience. But, does not the word of God here indicate that there is an old maker which, according to the scripture, is enmity against God?

And, the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The apostle, having laid a clear foundation in relation to the true foundation of the Church of God, then, goes on to make clear the Spirit's work in calling, in quickening.

And, that work in the Church of the Episodes was so clear, that, the apostle could say, and you hath he quickened, who were dead, and in trespasses, and in sins.

Now, I believe, that we shall be able to say this, with every person that is truly quickened. And, whatever the, Satan may suggest to you, yet, this will be clear, I believe, and you hath he quickened, who were dead, in trespasses, and sins.

[7 : 24] You see, the work of the Spirit of God is clear, and it is definite. Perhaps you will say, well, if I was like, if I were similar to these people of Ephesus, of course, I should be able to testify, more clearly, that I was quickened.

If I had been, engulfed in the things of the world, in idolatry, if I myself, had been a follower of magic, if I had, been able to put these things away, and burn all my books, then, of course, I would have said, now the matter is clear.

But, it's not that, that is done outwardly, unless it is done inwardly, also. I believe, that the matter, will be as distinctive, and you hath he quickened, who were dead, in trespasses, and sins, if you've never, ceased to attend, the house of God.

If you've never, shall I say, missed a service, you see, some people, have this fear, they say, well, if only I'd gone away, into the world, my calling, would have been so clear.

Well, no, it wouldn't. It would have been, no clearer, than it is. Because, where God quickens the soul, it makes a distinction.

[8 : 54] You know, if you have always, attended the house of God, and if you have, you've much to bless God for, then, remember this, and call to mind, the times, when you did sit in the pew.

I can call to mind, when the times, when I sat in the pew, but there was no worship, in my heart. I can vividly recall, the times, I sat in the pew, and no doubt, the minister thought, I was listening, on the Sunday morning, but what was my heart, engaged in?

Well, it was engaged in, and thinking upon, the foolish pursuits, of the Saturday evening. Well, is it like that today?

Do you come into the house of God? Have you spent, the Saturday evening, in foolishness, in trifling, in the things of life, this life?

Have you enjoyed yourself, in the company of the world? Well, if God has quickened your soul, he will have put a difference, between you, and the Egyptians.

[10 : 03] Now, God will have put the difference. Now, it is not reformation, but regeneration, about which we speak, at the present moment. This was distinctive, in the case of Ephesus, and I believe, it will be distinctive, in your case, if you are called, until taught, by the same spirit.

And if you are not, if you cannot see, that distinctiveness, then if you are taught, by the same spirit, I'm persuaded of this, that you won't be satisfied, until you see, that clear distinctiveness.

that you see, that God has quickened, your soul, and that he has done that, which has delivered you, from loving this present, evil world.

I know sometimes, we are tempted to think, that, we have, many, thoughts, toward this world.

I believe, the matter could be decided, in our favor, if we were suddenly plunged, into the midst, of ungodly company.

[11 : 14] Well, if you love the world, as Satan says, you love the world, then of course, you'd be quite comfortable, in the company, of the ungodly, wouldn't you? And if you heard, their light chatter, and their light talk, you'd be quite happy, because Satan says, that you love the world.

And you don't love, Jesus Christ. Well now, you know how you feel. You know how you feel, if you get on the, even on the fringe, of an ungodly crowd, sometimes.

You know how you feel, when you have to do, with ungodly people, in the course of your, daily business. That's a distinction. Who's put you, played a difference?

God. And then, as the apostle proceeds, as having established, a good foundation, he presents, before them, some very important, precepts, of the gospel.

Not laws to regulate. We can never be regulated, in our religion. Apart from that regulation, which love will give.

[12 : 30] And that, regulation of love, is a love, to the Lord Jesus Christ. And that love, is, brought about, and maintained, and, by God, and it produces, the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord, the word of God, says, is, to, is the beginning of wisdom, and, understanding, is to depart, from evil.

And so, we come to, a part of the word, this evening, wherein, the precepts, of the gospel, are set before us.

And as God may help us, it is, before us, such a word, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind.

the precepts, of the gospel, have never, been, highlighted, shall we say, as they should, in any age.

[13 : 48] We can read, of those, eminent ministers, of the past, who, admitted, such a sad feature, of Christian, experience.

And yet, if there is no, preceptual, walking, where is the evidence, that God has quickened us? Where is the evidence, so that, there's been a change, brought?

The quickening, of God's spirit, will make us, strangers, will make us, pilgrims, and strangers, in the earth. You won't look, any different, perhaps, on the outside, but you'll, feel different.

Have you, sat in a train, sometimes, walked down, a street, been on a bus, and you felt, isolated? Why? It's because, God, has put a difference.

If people, could have looked, at you, they may not, have seen, any difference. On the other hand, they may have done. because it is visible, may not be visible, to you. It is astonishing, sometimes, that, people, should come, to us, and, and say, you're a Christian, in the tears, their language, you're, a religious man, aren't you?

[15 : 20] You've never said a word. How do they know? Well, I'm quite sure, although we wouldn't decry this, I'm not decrying it at all, when I say this, it was not discovered, because, a Bible, was prominently, prominently, displayed, upon our person.

But, where Christ, is in the heart, there's bound to be, some reflection of Christ, in our spirit. And the word of God, is very solemn, when it says, if ye have not, the spirit of Christ, ye are none of his.

This is that, which will distinguish, you, as a Christian, or otherwise. you see, in the verses, preceding, the, our text, we read this, that ye have not, so, learned Christ.

What kind of people, were these? This I say, therefore, and testifying the law, that ye henceforth walk, not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity, of their mind, having the understanding, darkened, being alienated, from the life of God, through the ignorance, that is in them, because of the blindness, of their heart, who being past feeling, have given themselves, over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness, and greediness.

How many people, shall we find, in the realm of religion today, who would have to be classified, I mean, we wouldn't do it deliberately, but it's so clear, it absolutely describes, them to a team.

[17 : 14] But, if you have learned Christ, in a different way, if Christ has been made, precious to your soul, if you want to keep, the Sabbath holy, and these other people, they will attend the services, morning and night, but what happens in between?

Well, it will, forbid inspection, it will fill you, with, horror, if you could inspect, the life of some, Christian people, in between the services.

But we're not concerned, with them this evening. We are concerned, with this, but ye, have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind.

In that very instructive chapter, in the Romans, the seventh chapter, where Paul, tells us so much, about his inward conflicts, and some of us, bless God, that this is recorded, in the canon of scripture.

Otherwise, we should have been very, near to despair, if not, despairing completely. But coming to the last verse, in that chapter, he says, I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[19 : 00] So then, with the mind, I myself, serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin. And so, when we read this word, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind, it is through this end, that, that, that, that with which we serve God, may be renewed.

We are, exalted, in the word of God, to, be not weary, in well doing.

sometimes, sometimes, our bodies, are wearied.

When they are, it certainly, impairs, that ability, to do, the things, with a proper propriety, that we would wish to do.

And, sometimes, we find, a very similar experience, in spiritual things. And, with this thought in mind, I would venture, to approach this word, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind.

[20 : 42] Sleep, has, the, great benefit, of renewing, our body, and our strength.

Rest, shall we say, not necessarily sleep, deep sleep, but rest. How beneficial, it is, to the renewing, of the body.

What has caused, us to be weary. Well, anxieties, pressures, much work, to be done, many duties, to be accomplished.

And, so, we can, sometimes, even naturally, understand, the, the poet's words, the few, that we can call, our friends, are like ourselves, in fetish bound, and weariness, our steps attend.

It may seem, strange, to think of a person, being in fetish. It may seem, strange, that, the people of God, should be weary.

[22 : 11] Well, there's a consolation, here, and, the Lord, being weary, sat thus, on the well. So, weariness, is nothing, for us, to be ashamed of.

Often, it is the outcome, of, the, right, and, proper use, of strength. I know, it isn't always, with the ungodly, but it's a good thing, if, we have been engaged, in those things, wherein, we can look back, and say, that we have, honestly, used our strength, to the best ability, and we trust, for the glory of God.

But, what about the mind? That, with which, we serve God. Have our exertions, affected it?

And, be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind. Have we become weary, in well doing? We do.

Sometimes, we feel weary, in well doing. How shall we interpret, such a scripture, as that? Of course, many, would take, a, very, natural view, of the whole matter, and, regard well doing, as, putting themselves, about, for the poor, and, for the aged, and, for all sorts of, exercises, which, will probably, bring upon them, a certain amount, of glory, for themselves.

[24 : 03] others. And so, those, that, in the scripture, will, at some time, come to the Lord, and say, we have done many wonderful works, in thy name, and we have cast out devils, and so on, the Lord says, I will never, I never knew you.

What are we there for, to understand, by this word, be not weary, in well doing? What is well doing, in God's sight? I believe, well doing, in God's sight, may be, found, in, the exercise, of such activity, as, have faith, in God, hope, in God, and there's a lot, of activity, along those lines, but it's well doing, it's well doing, because, it's doing, what God says, is well.

Men, put all sorts, of, meanings, to words, which are purely, natural, but we've got to come, and understand, the scriptures, according to the mind, of God.

So, we have faith, in God. This is, the law of exaltation. Hope, in God, this was, the work of the spirit, in David's heart.

And then again, is it not, I think, in the, the epistle, to the, the Thessalonians, that the apostle, refers to, the patience, of hope, and the work, of faith, and, the labor, of love.

[26 : 08] So, all these things, are exertions, but, they may all be classified, as well doing. Now, what about, the patience, of hope, and, what about, the work, of faith, and the labor, of love?

These are, activities, of the spiritual, mind. They are, the works, which God, works in, and which are, worked out.

It is, the pathway, of the people, of God. I know, the word of God, declares, and it is true, it is, through much, tribulation, that we must, enter into the kingdom.

But, you know, friends, we should never, get to the kingdom, if that was all, the pathway, consisted in. Because, tribulation, will absolutely, overwhelm us, and bring us, down to destruction.

But, what is, really, in the Christian, life? Well, just these, three things, if we may repeat them.

[27 : 28] There is, the patience, of hope, in the pathway, of tribulation. And, there is, the labor, of love. And, there is, the work, of faith.

Now, one of our, hymn writers, puts it like this, concerning faith, it lives, and labors, under load, though damp, it never dies. We are called upon, evidently, to carry burdens.

Otherwise, the word of God, would be pointless, where it says, cast thy burden, upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.

And, the people of God, are, called upon, to carry weights, and also impediments. Otherwise, we should not see, any point, in that blessed word, being recorded, in Hebrews 12.

Seeing, therefore, ye are compassed about, with so great, a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside, every weight, and the sin, which doth so easily, beset us, and let us, run with patience, the grace, that is set before us, looking unto Jesus.

[28 : 51] Now, what is that, but the exercise, of the patience, of hope? Which hope, we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure, and steadfast, which anchoreth, within the veil, whither, the forerunner, is for us, entered, even Jesus.

Now, that is where, the hope, of the people of God, is, in Jesus Christ. Now, if your pathway, is a pathway, of tribulation, as it will be, if you are, amongst, the chosen of the Lord, then, you will need, this exercise, of the mind, in the patience, of hope.

But there will be times, when, as that good work, is being performed, that you will become, weary. Hope, as it were, will be, belabored.

We read, sometimes, perhaps we felt, a little, not nearest, to their spirits, when, we have read, of those, that were very concerned, about their hope.

Why? Why were they concerned, about their hope? Well, you see, there, in the fires, and in the deep waters, their hope, had been, so fairly tried.

[30 : 23] if we go, to the pilgrim's progress, we shall find, that wonderful, and outstanding, man of God, described, by, Christian, as his name, oh, how many battles, he fought, and won, well, as told, what the truth, he was, and then we find, him coming, to the, the river, Jordan, the Jordan, of death, and he sunk there, as he had never, sunk before, in his life.

He was in fear there, as he had never felt, to be in fear, before in his life. But he wasn't alone.

He was hopeful, that was with him. What did hopeful say? Dear brother, I can feel the bottom, and it is good, the very force of things, the force of fears, the force of temptation, that was coming upon, Christian at that time, as it were, was having his strength.

Perhaps a similar situation, not a death door, in your case, or it might have been, because God, bring it down, to the grave's mouth, and he bring it up.

But there was hopeful, by his side. There was this word, being spoken, into his soul, hope thou in God. I cheer up, brother, I fear the bottom, and it is good.

[32 : 32] What was the bottom? The, the foundation of God, is found in this, the Lord, knoweth them, that are his, and it is a foundation, which standeth sure.

That's what the Christian wanted to feel. He wanted to feel his feet, on this sure foundation, on Jesus Christ. Do you see, when we come to the end of our lives, or when we get to an extremity, all that we have done, all the long profession, that we have made, it will be nothing at all.

This seems to be, very clearly, made over to us, in the, 30th chapter of Isaiah, where we read of Hezekiah's, case.

There was Hezekiah, God came to him. Oh, what a difference, when God comes to us. It's very different, to all the flimsiness, of natural religion, isn't it?

When God came to Hezekiah, by his prophet Isaiah, he said, set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live. Then Hezekiah turned his face, toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord.

[33 : 58] Are we astonished, at what he prayed? And said, remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked, before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that, which is good in thy sight.

It may be, we're not told, in the pilgrim's progress, but it may be, this was the reflection, of poor old Christian. And it might be, your reflection too.

And we would bless God, and we would thank God, for an upright profession. What did Hezekiah do now? He wept sore. Hezekiah wept sore, after being able, to bear such a testimony.

Oh yes. And you will weep sore, and I shall weep sore, if all we've got to bring, before God, when God says, thou shalt die, is what we have done.

The fact that we've had our name, on the church book, for so many years, the fact that we've been preserved, in going into outward sin, the fact that we have, always sat under the truth, the fact that we've been preserved, from outward backsliding, since we made it to profession, this will be nothing at all, there will be no commendation, we can bless God for it, but it is so, because it will be of His mercy.

[35 : 27] But when we come to die, you know friends, they'll need it, we shall begin to sink. Why? Well, we shall begin to sink, because, as Christian needed, he wanted his hope revived.

In other words, he wanted to be renewed, in the spirit of his mind, in relation to, this hope. He wanted God, to assure it, cheer up brother, I can feel the bottom, and it is good.

Yes, Christ is a sure foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, and, whosoever believeth, on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.

But then, be not weary in well-doing, relating it to this word, and be renewed, in the spirit of your mind, we come to, the, the, the, the work of faith.

Now, as, patience, may, well exhaust us at times, so, work may also, have, its exhausting moments.

[36 : 46] Faith. Well, do we know anything, about our faith, being weak? David's faith, was weak, wasn't it, when he said, I shall one day, perish by the hand of Saul.

Earlier this year, as I was reading through, I was greatly struck, by that. it was after, the Lord, had brought, a remarkable deliverance, for David.

I'm not sure, whether it was the time, when, David, cut off, a piece of Saul's, coat, in the, cave, or whether it was, on the occasion, when, he took the spear, and the water crews, from the bolster, of a sweeping, saw.

It was after, one or perhaps, both of these occasions, when, this outburst, came from David. I shall one day, perish by the hand of Saul. But David, have you forgotten, the remarkable deliverances, that God has brought, to you already, how he has preserved you, yea, not only how he, has preserved you, but how he has given, your enemy, right into your hands.

And, not only whilst he has given, your enemy, into your hands, but how he has, demonstrated his grace, in, that you would not, put your, for, your hand forward, to touch the Lord's anointed, even though, you were, under, some great strain, and stress to do so, and encouraged, by those who were with you.

[38 : 34] The work of faith, well, it was put to an extremity, he said, I shall one day perish, by the hand of Saul. We may take, another well known instance, and that is, of poor old Jacob.

Well, things didn't go, at all right, according to his view. Things may not be going, right according to your view. The Lord said to Peter, what I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know, hereafter, Jacob was to know, hereafter, Jacob was greatly, disgust, when his sons, brought that coat, to him, of many colors, and he said, it is my son's coat, oh, there's no doubt, about that.

Without doubt, he is torn in pieces, by a wild beast. All these things, are against me, the work of faith, how weary he was, in his mind, in relation to faith, upon God.

And so, we have this exhortation, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind. How could he be renewed? Only God could renew it.

Only God could bring strength, into it. And yet, you see, hope couldn't give up, and faith couldn't give up, either.

[40 : 12] And Jacob had to wait, some little time, before, he saw the, saw God's working out, but when he did, then his soul, fainted within him.

And they went up, out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan, unto Jacob their father, and told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive. that crowning gold, that which came, into Jacob's life, which seemed to, stretch his faith, to the utmost, overwhelmed his faith.

Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor, over all the land of Egypt, and Jacob's heart, painted, for he believed them not.

Well now, here was another case, where he need to be renewed, in the spirit of his mind. where he is ■ with dementia.

Thank you. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Thank you.