

# Nothing Sunday School Address (Quality Good)

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Preacher: Dawson, Peter (1925-2014)

- [ 0 : 0 0 ] I ask our dear friend, Mr. Peter Dawson, to address you once again. Mr. Dawson.
- Each time this privilege is given to me, I think I become just a little more nervous. Perhaps it's age. But I must acknowledge that I began to think about this address sometime last year.
- I find the necessity to have a time of preparation. And just before your last meeting, sometime in the middle of December, I thought I am glad that it is not my responsibility to speak at Tentraden on the opening meeting of the year, because I've got nothing prepared.
- And the Lord spoke to me. He said, you will find there is plenty to speak of if you take that for a subject, nothing. And so I came along to your meeting in January, and I had a prayer in my heart.
- And the prayer was this, that if that was to be my subject, that one or other of the two dear ministers who were giving you addresses would refer to it.
- [ 1 : 2 5 ] Now, can you remember the addresses that Mr. Mercer and your pastor gave to you? Just one little part of them. When Mr. Mercer came to the end of his address, he said, he used a verse that runs something like this.
- And when nothing in themselves they see, but Christ is all in awe. And I said to myself, Peter, I think the Lord has answered your prayer.
- And then your dear pastor continued, and do you remember the subject of his address? I know this is difficult. You've listened to a lot of sermons since then, and perhaps more addresses.
- And if your minds are like mine, you mix one with the other. But can anybody volunteer it? Well, I'll tell you a secret.
- I was talking to your pastor about it just now, and he said, just remind me what I said. And so he understands, and so do I. But his address gave us that lovely story of the man who was afflicted in mind, but not in spirit.
- [ 2 : 4 6 ] And his testimony was this. I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all. But Jesus Christ is my all in all.
- And now you see, when you get the mouth of two witnesses, the matter is established. I felt that those two men must have encouraged each other, and I hope that other people beside myself felt the blessedness of the accord of spirit that was given.
- And then I thought, no, you've got a responsibility. In the time since, many, many times, the word nothing has been brought to me from the scriptures or from the hymn book.
- So many times that it would be quite impossible for me to bring them all to you. And if you want to just have a few facts, I haven't checked the hymn book, but in the word of God, there are nearly 300 references to nothing.
- And if we think of such a number as that in 20 minutes, the two are not compatible, are they? And so we should only refer to a very few.

- [ 3 : 59 ] Yet, I want to divide them into perhaps three portions. First, I want to speak of the word nothing. How it refers to you and me.
- It refers to God's people. And if we are numbered among them, we shall know something of those nothings which are set forth for us. It is something of a...
- Well, I find it, it needs a balance, you see. When we look at these things, we found that those two references that were made to nothing had a balance, didn't they?
- The young man said, I am nothing at all. But he got a balance, hadn't he? Jesus Christ is my all in all.
- And when nothing in ourselves we see, but Christ is all in all. You see the balance? You see what I mean? This thought of emptiness is not something which is necessarily casting down.
- [ 5 : 08 ] It is purposeful. It is for a reason. One of our hymns begins something like this. Christ empties whom he fills.
- And so we need to keep that in mind while we think of the emptying process. Now let us just look at this rather carefully.
- The first one that came into my thoughts, I wondered whether to bring it in or not. But Paul wrote to Timothy. And he said, we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
- It is a solemn thought, isn't it? We came empty, and we shall need to depart, in that sense, empty. We brought nothing in.
- None of us can dispute it, can we? It is something that is very real, and it needs to be thought about rather solemnly. No, we do not question that we brought nothing into this world.
- [ 6 : 17 ] But we know that we can carry nothing out. Nothing of ourselves. No commendation to God. Nothing that comes from these poor, sinful hearts.
- Nothing of ourselves. All that we carry out of ourselves. Will not be too old. Then, I must be fairly brief on them.
- The second one is this. Paul wrote to the Galatians. And he said, if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.
- Now, let's just look at it very carefully. I looked it up. I have to some of these words. It says, when he is nothing. The word when can mean several things, can't it?
- But looking like this, it doesn't mean, at the time when he was nothing, there aren't times, spiritually, when of ourselves we are something.
- [ 7 : 30 ] There is only one when, which applies to us spiritually, with our emptiness, our nothingness. It is all times. It is not for us to choose a time when we are something, that we can think we are something, because the scripture tells us, categorically, we have no time to choose of ourselves that we are something, because we are nothing.
- And now, I think your knowledge of scripture will bring you to back that up in many scriptures, just by meditating on them, thinking of them. You can look at some.
- You see, the somethingness and the nothingness, which we are thinking of spiritually, is the sense of our righteousness, the sense of our worthiness. And then, what does the scripture say?
- All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. There is none righteous. No, not one. Solemn thought, isn't it?
- But just remember what I said. If we are emptied of self-righteousness, it is the work of the Spirit of God. And there is hope.

[ 8 : 43 ] There is a hope. Because Christ empties whom he fills. We need to come a little further, quickly. And, let us come to the highest authority.

All the scripture is the highest authority, but when the Lord Jesus speaks, it is then something which I feel has an even greater impact.

It should do when we read it. It is all the word of God. But Paul said, God hath spoken unto us in these last days by his Son.

And the Lord said, oh, how we need to understand it. Without me, ye can do nothing. Nothing spiritual.

Nothing good. Only by the help of God. The help of the Lord Jesus. We find that we live our lives in such a spirit as that.

[ 9 : 47 ] Without me, ye can do nothing. Now I expect you can all put it in its place. the Lord is speaking to the disciples in the upper room.

He has just given them a sort of parable. I am the vine, ye are the branches. Think of it. And then look up those words. Then, both of our friends, the last of your meetings, this sort, used words which were, yes, not strictly scriptural, although the content was abundantly in accord with scripture.

And I've got one or two that came out of the hymn book, the Gatsby's hymn book. And I had a rather lovely confirmation of one of them last Tuesday evening.

that was chosen by our deacon at Babon for the last hymn of our prayer meeting. And when I thought about it, it was hymn 143, nothing in my hand I bring.

Simply to thy cross I cling. Naked come to thee for dress, helpless, look to thee for grace, foul I to the fountain fly, wash me savior, or I die.

[ 11 : 11 ] Do you see the balance? The emptiness felt, but the fullness sought, looked for. And then one which we probably can't quote quite so well, and I've written it down for myself, nothing but thy blood, O Jesus, can release us from our smart, nothing else from guilt release us, nothing else can melt the heart.

How do we see what helpless creatures we are unless this grace is given to us to seek the help, to seek the fullness which is in Christ Jesus.

us. And then, my father used to quote one hymn, it is a fairly long preamble, but he used to shorten it, and he often quoted it to us, and I tend to think of it in the way of his quotation, I have to look into the book to get the rest of it, but he put it like this, nothing else can satisfy, give me Christ, Christ, or else I die.

Now, this is a state of spirit which we have to be led into. We look for much satisfaction in the things of time.

We do not misunderstand me. There are many things of time that we have to rightly enter into. Do not think it is wrong to have those ambitions, and to have those plans for life.

[ 12 : 50 ] no, this is all in the purposes of God. We can trace them in the word of God, and yet, we can find too, that even the most successful things which are given to us, which are temporal, careers, success, examinations, all proper things to strive for, but they will not satisfy.

Oh, we should be thankful that we have been helped through them, but we shall see there is something more that we need, something deeper, something that enters into the soul rather than into the mind, into the life, something which is not passing and perishing, as careers and things of time must be, but something which is eternally satisfying.

Nothing else can satisfy. Give me Christ, or else I die. And now, I'm sorry, there is something told, which shows to us that in the sense of our nothingness, we shall have a blessing that comes with it.

Paul put it very wonderfully, and when you think of where he wrote it from, it was even more wonderful. Paul, he said, having nothing, yet possessing all things.

I like to think of Paul, he was a wonderful man, but oh, the grace that was given to him. And we tried to, many years ago, we tried to read together his life, and we thought much about him.

[ 14 : 37 ] I can tell you, it was just over 50 years ago, it was just before my first son was born. He called Paul. And we felt then very deeply how wonderfully he was taught of God, and wonderfully he was used of God.

And yet, if we look at his temporal circumstance, none of us would envy it, would we? You read the list of things that happened to him, and then think of where he finished his life, in a prison cell.

And yet, even from there, he wrote some wonderful things, and fancy seeing a complete contentment in the circumstances, as having nothing, yet possessing all things.

You see, the balance emptied of self, I fame, would be the world and all but thee. Paul knew it. and then we find something else, the cell mist, 119th cell.

Most of you could tell me the subject of it. The cell mist was looking at the word of God. He called it many names, statutes, testimonies, laws, commandments.

[ 15 : 59 ] We're no stop to think what the cell mist had. He had perhaps some history, otherwise it was the laws of Moses.

And he said, great peace of they that love thy law and nothing shall offend them. They shall find there is that given to them in the word of God which will enable them to overcome.

Now, when you think what we have in the word of God, more than the cell mist had, for one thing we have his words, the words that God inspired him to write, and then we have the gospels, and more of the prophets.

And if this love to the word of God is given to us, what a promise it is to our lives, nothing shall offend you. Now I'm finished with what comes into us, and there's some more nothings we've got to look at.

Nothings concerning God. Almost impossible to think of, isn't it? The fullness of the Godhead, and then we dare to use the word nothing, but the scripture does, and so I dare to.

[ 17 : 18 ] Follow this, when a special message was sent by the angel Gabriel, God sent the angel Gabriel to speak to Mary, and a word was given to her.

Do you remember the occasion? The angel told Mary what was to happen, they shall have a son, and there was a question in her heart, how can this be?

And the angel said to her, with God nothing shall be impossible. That's a rather lovely thought, isn't it? We look upon a power which is beyond dispute, nothing shall be impossible.

Abraham had one or two words rather differently, but to the same effect. When we begin to look at how many times we see God, the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of God, overcoming that which would seem to be an impossible barrier to those that looked upon it, it is something which comes as a great comfort to us.

if, as you are taught of God, you were brought to see with the light of heaven what you are by nature, you will feel like Paul.

[ 18 : 56 ] Go into the seventh of Romans for a minute, it's a favorite chapter of mine, and when Paul looked into his heart, he saw that which horrified him, and then he lifted his thoughts.

I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord, there is deliverance, I can look into the appalling nature that is mine, and then I can see that even this doesn't go beyond the possibilities of God, for with God nothing shall be impossible.

Jeremiah, and again, look at Jeremiah's circumstance, you know the times, don't you? You think of him, the prophet, in those dreadful times when Jerusalem was taken, and when Judah was taken into captivity, and yet, in his prayer, the dear man was brought to plead with God, and he said, our Lord God, there is nothing too hard for thee.

It is not quite impossible, is it? But nothing too hard, it's exactly the same sense. When we look upon it, it gives us encouragement, doesn't it? We think of God, nothing too hard, nothing impossible, and it brings us into one place.

peace. We look into our hearts, and although we look into our hearts, we find that we become almost hopeless, we lift our eyes, we look unto God, and we cannot help but hope, can we?

[ 20 : 51 ] Because we can see in the power of God a reason for hope. hope. And now, I must be very brief. The Lord Jesus, when he had accomplished his work of salvation, he was brought into that place, all power is given unto me.

God gave all power to the Lord Jesus.

He left nothing that is not put under him. He left nothing that is not put under him.

Oh, what a blessed thing it is to see everything within without subject to the power of Christ. Now, a testimony, very brief.

Can you go to the time of the Lord's suffering? And there was a testimony regarding him. This man hath done nothing amiss. Now, it may not seem to be quite direct, but it is always worth keeping in mind.

[ 22 : 13 ] Because he who had done nothing amiss by the testimony of one who was taught by the Spirit of God in those terrible moments, is still the same.

We may look at the Godhead completely, and we may never see a mistake. We may never see anything that is done in the purposes of God, with the power of God, of which we can put that word on it, amiss.

It is always in the perfection of the deity. Now, we need just to bring this to a conclusion very briefly.

It is two texts that I want to speak to you, not to comment on them. both of them come from Paul, and when he wrote to the Corinthians, he said, I determined not to know anything, let us rephrase it, to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And I think if you analyze the ministry of Lordeo Pastor and other ministers that come here, you will find that although we have to go from many parts of the word of God, that it will be of that nature.

[ 23 : 46 ] I determine not to give you any other hope, not to give you any other expectation, not to give you any other guidance, save this one thing, Jesus Christ and him crucified.

We come back to where nothing else can satisfy, give me Christ crucified. It is a blessed thought. And then one more preamble is quite long, but I will just again make it brief.

Paul said I am persuaded, the last two verses in Romans 8, I am persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I am persuaded that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Is this nothing that you can rest upon when you feel the need of the love of Christ to know that there is no power on earth or anywhere else that can separate if once we have tasted that love having loved his own he loved them unto the end.

One hymn writer puts it beautifully who once he loves he never leaves but loves them to the end. Now just a closing thought.

[ 25 : 27 ] It is good to be taught the absolute contrast isn't it? We look at the nothingness and then look at this to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge listen that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God all the fullness of Christ in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Oh what a contrast we see and emptied to be filled. One of the paraphrases of the 23rd Psalm has a beautiful beginning and it's beautiful to go through but I'll only refer to the beginning and then I'll sit down.

It is this the king of love my shepherd is whose goodness faileth never I nothing lack if I am his and he is mine forever.

May this blessing be yours and mine. Amen.