

# Practical religion exemplified by Abraham's servant (Quality: Good)

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Date: 17 June 2007

Preacher: Farley, Raymond John (1939-2008)

- [ 0 : 00 ] Dear friends, depending upon the help of the Lord, I invite your prayerful attention to the portion we read this morning. I want to try to look at verse 27 and 31.
- Firstly, verse 27 and then verse 31. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth.
- I, being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren. I find this portion of the word of God so very encouraging and so very instructive.
- We see here that the servant of Abraham, Abraham had been blessed much abundantly with this world's goods.
- He was a very rich man of his day. And yet he had waited long for the fulfillment of the promise in Isaac.
- [ 1 : 16 ] And now clearly, as we open up, as we read the opening up of this word, and Abraham was old and well stricken in age.
- And the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. You see, there was a time here, whereas I believe as we get older, there's a reflection. There is that which we have to reflect upon.
- But, as Moses said, Remember the way the Lord thy God has led thee these 40 years in the wilderness. Now, dear young people, that doesn't mean to say that you can't look back five years, three years, two months.
- Matters not. If the Lord's given you something, the Lord's given you an answer to prayer, you remember it and you take courage in it and you press on praying. For he is a God that hears and answers prayer.
- The scripture throughout gives witness to the fact that God answers prayer. And many of you here can witness that God answers your prayer.
- [ 2 : 21 ] And you can look back in your life and you can find the Lord has answered many prayers. And so we have a God who hears and answers prayer. Now, I think what is so remarkable regarding this case, pardon me, Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh.
- You see, I believe it's the way they swore an oath. He had, as it were, sit on his hand to swear the oath.
- And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell.
- Now, what wisdom, what grace was given here to Abraham in his old age, what faith he shows in his command to his servant.
- He clearly knows his servant fears God. Because an unbeliever may take any oath lightly upon their lips, but a believer takes an oath in such a way that it's before God and it's binding.

[ 3 : 40 ] You see, with so many examples, I don't want to go into that in the world today. Men agree to this and that and do the opposite. And we live in a treacherous day and generation. But here we see a godly Abraham knows his servant is faithful, knows that if he makes him swear before the God of heaven, the thing will be accomplished.

But, and I quite understand the diffidence of the servant, and the servant said unto him, Peradventure, the woman will not be willing to follow me into this land.

Must I need bring my son again to this land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware that thou bring not my son thither again.

He had left his past. He had left his old life. The Lord had brought him out. The Lord had prospered him. And his great fear was that he didn't want his son taken back to the old situation, to the sins of the situation from which he was called.

And so you see, he has this very stern warning to his servants. See thou, doest not. Beware that thou bring not my son thither.

[ 5 : 01 ] Then you see his faith again. How often we see in Abraham the faith which Abraham, God gave Abraham. Let's remember that. God still gives faith in many ways.

We hear up-to-date records of great faith in one and another. The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house. Here you see, he gives God the honour and glory for his own situation fulfilled.

He gives God the honour and glory that he took him from his father's house. My friends, when the Holy Spirit deals with the child of God and calls him by his grace, it's the Holy Spirit's work.

It's God's work. It's not the decision of mental, decision of man's mind. Although the mind is made willing in the day of his power, but there's that calling by grace.

And when the Lord calls out of the situation of unbelief into belief, then that's a sure work. And nothing less will be any good to us, friends, for time and eternity too.

[ 6 : 13 ] But the Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that swear unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee.

And thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. Now, Abraham's faith is sure. It's solid. It's something to be wondered at, in a sense, that before he sent his servant, he knew that God, you see, his faith was not in his servant, faith was in his God.

And friends, that's important for us to remember, isn't it? If we have the faith, our faith is in God, then come what may from men are devils, the Lord will bring us safely to our desired haven, to heaven, and to be with him in glory, in eternal praise.

And so we see this certainty of the faith of Abraham. And then he says, as if to pacify his servant's anxiety, he says, and if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath, only bring not my son again thither.

So he returns, as it were, to emphasize that in no way must Isaac be taken back to Ur of Chaldees. Well, lessons in that for us, isn't there?

[ 7 : 48 ] Especially those, you dear young people, seeking friendships. Make sure right from the beginning that you're of one mind concerning the things of God.

I've heard of various cases, and sometimes they're very sad, where there is not that beginning. On the other hand, there's a situation where perhaps neither of you were believers, and then the Lord deals with one.

But that's a different situation. But my friends, when you're young, and you've got the opportunity to seek friendships, seek them among the Lord's people. Now, I can talk with a little experience on this.

I had 47 years of happily married life with my dear wife, lately departed. And the very first thing that we did was to seek the Lord in our friendship.

Though very, very young, and though many sins have passed since then, but the Lord has blessed and kept us together, and something I often say at weddings, you dear young people, remember this, that the couples that pray together and continue to pray together, stay together.

[ 9 : 09 ] And it's true. And so, remember, if you've got problems, pray together, because you're both sinners before a holy God. And when we come there, then the differences melt away.

And so, that's just something that seems to have dropped into my mind at this moment, with this thought in mind. Now, the servant was, well, a trusted servant.

He was in charge of all that his master had. And the servant took 10 camels and departed. And all the goods of his master were in his hand.

And so, you know, he came on the journey. I must move fairly quickly. And now, another thing. You see, here, the servant begins to pray himself.

And here it is recorded. And he said, O Lord God, of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham.

[ 10 : 12 ] Now, here this servant, he was clearly a godly man. He was clearly a praying man. And yet, he was humble. He realized that he couldn't pray to God, can I put it this way, in his own mind, in the same power, in his own name, as he could in the name of his master Abraham.

Well, my friends, there's a beautiful gospel similarity here I want to just bring out. Because we care, cannot, and we dare not, come to God in prayer, in our own name.

Because we're fallen, wretched sinners. There is one name, and one name only, that the Father will hear. And it's the name of Jesus. And so we pray, and ask all, in Jesus' precious name.

And Jesus' name is precious, to those who know him, to those who know, some sweet converse with heaven, in prayer. What do I mean by that?

Let me, for the young people, stop a moment there. There's been several times in my life's journey, where I've been in the midst of a problem. It might have been a business problem. It may have been another problem.

[ 11 : 23 ] And you're churned up by it all. And you, it might be affliction of your own, or affliction of a loved one. And you come into the house of the Lord. And you, you bow your head. And as the prayers are offered, you feel, that prayer made yours.

And as you, your unspoken prayer from your heart, rises up, and mingles, as it were, with the prayer from the pulpit, or brethren in the prayer meeting, there is that sweet relief, which the world knows nothing of, which, as though you're still in deep water, will enable you to continue on, in the pathway of life, which the Lord has placed you in, at this given time.

And it's, it's sweet communion, and it's strength into faith, and it's enabling to us, even physically. I've often come to Saturday night, and feeling that, especially when I was in business, the end of my tether, with strength, and patience, and mental ability, and everything.

But on the Monday morning, after the day in the Lord's earthly courts, you're strengthened, and given seven days more strength, to go on in the pathway.

And so, we know what we speak of, because we've tasted, handled, and felt, of the good things of God. Now, he prays. What a good way to start a journey, friends, to pray.

[ 12 : 51 ] I had a godly minister, who used to work for me, in the office, and he said to me, once he was formally, before he worked for me, he was a commercial traveller, on the road every day of the week. That is, except Sundays.

And he said, I never go out in the morning, without asking the Lord's protection, on me. And he had many years, on the road. So he got witness, friends, to the goodness, and preserving hand of God.

But here, this servant, he, bless him, he's faithful to his conscience, he's faithful to the need, to fulfil, fulfil, fulfil, the bidding of his master, so he starts, with prayer.

And what a good prayer it was. O Lord God, of my master, Abraham, I pray thee, send me, good speed, this day, and show kindness, unto my master, Abraham.

And friends, when we bear our head, and we seek, in the name of Jesus, to do that, which is right in God's sight, we ask it, in the name, of the Lord Jesus Christ, the beloved son, the mediator, as I spoke in prayer, as I prayed in prayer.

[ 14 : 03 ] And so, we must pass on, fairly quickly, he's, he is successful, that prayer, which he offers, he lays before God, those things, which might be, in the pathway, which would lead him, clearly, to the right one, of the Lord's choosing.

And, and so, we see, it work out, and, the servant, ran to meet her, and said, let me, I pray thee, drink a little, of thy water.

He's already prayed, that this would be the case. And he said, drink my Lord, and she said, drink my Lord, and she hastened, and let down a pitcher, upon her hand, and gave him to drink. And when she had done, given him to drink, she said, I will draw, for thy camels also, until they, have done drinking.

Now, in thinking about this, we see a beautiful parallel, you remember, the Lord Jesus, said to his disciples, regarding, and take it, preparing for the feast, of the Passover, they find, the animal tied up, and, and the disciples went, and everything was exactly, as the Lord had described, I won't go into that, at the moment, for time, but you know, the circumstance, you just meditate, on that, a little, of how God works, both in Old Testament, and New Testament, records, of the preciseness, of the things, which, are given, and so here, this dear servant, he's taking courage, but still, he's a wise man, he will wait a little, and, and the man, wondering, at her, held his peace, to whether the Lord, had made his journey, prosperous or not, and it came to pass, as the camels, had done drinking, that the man, took a golden earring, of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets, for her hands, of ten shekel weights, of gold, and said, whose daughter art thou, tell me,

I pray thee, is there room, in thy father's house, for us to lodge in, and she said unto him, I am the daughter, of Bethuel, the son of Milca, which she bare unto Nail, his heart must have done, pardon the expression, but a double somersault, of joy, because the Lord, had brought him, right straight, to the place, where he prayed, to be brought to, and so he's encouraged, and, and then she says, and moreover, to him, we have both straw, and provident are enough, and room to lodge in, have the Lord, makes providential, need, fulfills, providential need, for his people, when the Lord's people, have need, his goodness, will find out a way, and many of us, older ones here, at least, can prove, can say, we've proved it, over and over again, through the journey of life, one door closes, another door opens, so it is, that the Lord, brings, his purposes to pass, and so, coming nearer, to our text now, and the man, bowed his head, this is the servant of course, bowed his head, and worshipped the Lord, now that was true worship,

[ 17 : 20 ] I put to you, that was, a true heartfelt, praise, of thanksgiving, do you know anything about it, do you know anything about it, sometimes friends, we have, a circumstance, we have, a word for our souls, and we are, filled, with a little of the joy, of the Lord, and it brings us, to truly praise him, and that is, true praise, heart praise, and the man, bowed down his head, no, he bowed down his head, he realized, the holiness of God, there was nothing, flippant or, superficial in this, and he worshipped the Lord, it was true worship friends, and that's what we need, if ever there was a day, for counsel for you, dear young people, don't be carried away, with the superficialities, of so called religion today, it's the religion of the heart, that you need, it's that which,

God is the author, and if you realize, by the enlightening, of the Holy Spirit, of your sin, and your need, and then you know, just a little, from time to time, in the mercy of God, of pardon and love, that will bring you, to worship him, in spirit, and in truth, and in reverential fear, and so it should be, and so it is, with the true, people of God, and he said, blessed be the Lord, God of my master, Abraham, blessed, yes, it is a word, that is, a little used today, in society, and he said, blessed be, the Lord God, of my master, Abraham, the apostles, through the epistles, often says, blessed be the God, and father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, doesn't he, and so it is, so we see Abraham here, we see the,

Abraham's name, used here, and it's, for Abraham's, sake he prays, who would, listen, who hath not, left destitute, my master, what of, not a money, of his mercy, and his truth, what a mercy, that is my friends, not to be left, destitute, of the mercy of God, and the truth of God, then he recounts, the thing, and he said, I, being in the way, the Lord led me, to the house, of my master's, brethren, well I seem to remember, the first time, I ever came to you here, I was given instructions, I didn't know, the error at all, but I remember thinking, when I, got to our friend, David's house, that I thought, I'm thankful, to be found, in the house, of my master's, brethren, and I've often thought, it's since, various places, when we make, our long journeys, and sometimes, we don't know the town, we can get to the town, fairly easily, but then it's finding, the place, and yet, you see, so often, the Lord, leads us, to the house, of his master's, brethren,

I remember, earlier on, I was trying to, find the chapel, at Braintree, and I'd never been, to Braintree, before in my life, and I, the dear old, gentleman, who's in glory now, he'd sent me, a little map, but he forgot, to add the little roundabout, which he didn't show, had been added, since he, wrote the, showed me the map, and so, I came to this, first roundabout, and I went wrong, as, took his instructions, but sadly, they were wrong, well I didn't know, what to do, and time was running short, and I lifted up my heart, to the Lord, and I came back out, and took a left turn, and I saw, a lady, wearing a hat, and I said, ah, there's a lady, wearing a hat, she may be going, to the place of worship, so I pressed the button, the passenger, window went down, I said, could you tell me, where Salem Chapel is, oh yes, she said, they're Baptists, aren't they, straight over, straight over, and on your left, words of that effect, and directed me, straight to it, and I drove in, and had just time, to go into the vestry, before the, sermon, before the service started, and so you see, the Lord still does, appear for his, his servants, and his people, in direction, but, he led me, to the house, of my master's brethren, well above all, this means, the church, to the gatherings, of his people, do you, you've gathered, this morning friends, did you feel, led to come, for the good of your soul, this morning, did you feel, led to come, to seek, mercies, of the God of heaven, for your soul, did you come, with a little thankful heart, to praise him, for his mercies, to you, in the past week, for your loved ones, your families, your job, your homes, my friends, we much, thank him for, but it's good, that we gather, together, as a manner, as some is, we read, forsake not, the gathering of yourself, together, as a manner, as some is, now,

I'm not going to, as it were, lecture you on that, because you're all here, it would be, those that are not here, would need the, admonition, on that subject, but, there's blessing, in obedience, in these things, as I've already indicated, and, so, when the Lord, leads us to the, house, of my master's brethren, when we're led, into the earthly courts, of the Lord, sometimes, we're, may have a job change, or an education reason, for being somewhere else, in the country, and then, the Lord leads you, to a place, where, the master's brethren, meet in prayer, and in praise, and there you feel, straight way, there's a unity of spirit there, and, that's good, and that's profitable, and that's right, and keep it up, if that's the case, with you today, I don't know, your circumstances, but you do, and the Lord does, and so, the servant is led, to the house, of his master's brethren, and the damsel ran, and told them, of her mother's house, these things, and Rebecca had a brother, and his name, was Laban, and Laban ran out, unto the man, unto the well, and it came to pass, when he saw the earring, and the bracelets, upon his sister's hands, and when he heard, the words of Rebecca, his sister, saying, thus spake the man, unto me, that he, that he came, unto the man, and behold, he stood, by the camels, at the well, you see, here's something else, the servant, hadn't been, in any way, forward, in going, he'd still remained, until properly, invited, to come, that was much, the case, in ancient days, manners have depreciated, much,

[ 24 : 38 ] I fear, in many circles, in our land, in these days, but he waited, to be properly, invited, and he knew, that if it was so, he would be, if it was the Lord's work, it would be, a further confirmation, to him, but here came, these wonderful words, of Laban, and he said, come in, thou blessed, of the Lord, wherefore, standest thou without, and friends, these words, have been used, much down through, the ages, to the good, and the instruction, of the people, of the Lord, have you been, journeying, onward, in your soul's experience, have you been, praying, your way along, have you, had those, tokens, of good, answers to prayer, have you, known some sweetness, in your soul, from time to time, well my friends, this is, is the words, of the church, to believers, to believers, simple as that, and he said, come in, thou blessed, of the Lord, it is, for believers, the church, for those, who know, and love the Lord, to those, who desire, to follow him, in obedience, and he said, come in, thou blessed, of the Lord, now we see, that, that, the Lord, had shown him, by those signs, which,

Rebecca, had shown, by the gifts, that the servant, had given her, that this, was of the Lord, this was, clearly, a mark, to him, to show, that this man, was a godly man, he had prayed, and obviously, there was that, recognition, in Laban, that this was, of God, we read further down, and maybe, we read that, portion tonight, where they said, this is of the Lord, and, he said, come in, thou blessed, of the Lord, my friends, we find, that union, with one, we may never, have seen before, and yet, the moment, we see them, and they say, two words, we realise, that they are, the Lord's people, they stand out, so very, differently, from the world, around them, here, I believe, this was a similar, case, in fact, and yet, the message here is, come in, thou blessed, of the Lord, wherefore, stand is, there without, the servant, has taken, the journey, he's been, many years, we could have been, many years, in the pathway, of, as a seeker, the Lord, doesn't always, lead his people, to this point, in one easy step, in fact, seldom, if ever, but, there is that, which, the Lord, brings his people, through, and they, find this, a blessedness, of, finding, that they're, at home, in the house, of the master's, brethren, and this, is, in my opinion, a representation, of the church, of God, here below, the church, of God, that is,

I'm not talking about, as formed, by man, I am talking about, a gathering, of living souls, and there's a difference, and I find myself, today, having to say that, very often, because, the true church, of God, is those, who have faith, who seek Jesus, who love one another, in the Lord, whose, whose love, one to another, in things divine, are encompassed, in God's love, and that's, the right, way, of a church, now sometimes, sadly, churches get in a dry, and a dead state, and they, make decisions, of man, rather than, decisions, which are of the Lord, according to scripture, but, when is that, true, love, in Christ Jesus, one to another, in unity, continuing together, as the apostles did, when Jesus ascended, up into heaven, there is this, desire, to those, who come to seek, in the midst, that they recognize, and,

I've, several times, in my life's experience, one has come, and they've been, very diffident, and they felt, that they were, that, well I've heard it, at least five times, in the last, as many years, they felt, felt they were, so unworthy, they were the worst, person, that ever stood, in the chapel, and, I, have, have been enabled, to say, and you'd have, great agreement, there amongst, the other church members, because, there is that, which when the Holy Spirit, deals, we feel, our unworthiness, and our sin, and yet, they're surprised, that the church, has been watching, prayerfully for them, now, I say this to the church, lovingly, it may be the last time, I speak here, I don't know, but, I say this to the church, lovingly, if we, labor, if we, travail, in prayer, we need to, travail in prayer, wrestle in prayer, for the church, for the church, to be, built up, and it's a good desire, and it's, it's, a right lament, when, there's not been, those additions, and I know, what I speak of, and yet, we need, to wrestle in prayer, for the dear, people of God, to be made manifest, to be brought, and established, in things divine, and so, the church's attitude, should be, the living church, should be, toward those, who venture in faith, in humility, pleading, that their sins, are forgiven, in and through, the precious name of Jesus, that that is, the church's desire, come in, thou blessed of Lord, wherefore, standest thou without, and dear friends,

I say it lovingly, but I believe, that it's a neglected, subject in the pulpit, in our day, and generation, and, if, there's not the understanding, of it, many, are so fearful, of, being, presumptuous, which is a right fear, in the sense, we mustn't be presumptuous, but sometimes, Satan uses it, in such a way, as to prevent, the child of God, relating, what the Lord, has done for his soul, now, I might stand alone, on that, but I feel, it's right before God, to say so, because, you see, Satan, takes the best things, and uses them, as levers, to his own ends, and to hinder, the church of God, and so, any who exercised, I know, I've heard, on several occasions, that they've been exercised, for some years, and fearful, to venture, well, it may be, that a word like this, may be applied, to your soul, and if it is, my old pastor, you say, don't disobey it, because if the Lord, appears in mercy, to your soul, and you reject him, he may be many years, before he returns, though you'll be, a chosen vessel of mercy, and I fear, he was right about that, and so,

[ 32 : 15 ] I leave those thoughts, with you, here, we see this, wonderful outworking, of the answer, of prayer, to Abraham's servant, and so we see, and I, just, so I'm not trying, to flatter you, in any way, but I am very encouraged, because I remember, when I first came here, that was 1990, if I remember right, the church, the people, the numbers, gathering here, have increased, much, and as, I'm, sure, there's been some additions, in that time, but, we must be, graciously, I'm talking to church, members now, we must be, graciously dissatisfied, notice what I say, there, graciously dissatisfied, brought to wrestling prayer, for the Lord's blessing, upon us, and so, as, as, as, Abraham, had, that desire, of his, by his servant, answered, and so, the Lord still answers prayer, and friends, once in him, in him forever, thus, the eternal covenant, stands, stands, not one, will come short, of the covenant, of the mercies, of the covenant, of God, the covenant,

David's word, ordered in all things, and sure, it will be fulfilled, the Lord's, purposes, are ripening fast, and unfolding, every hour, and some of you, in trouble, here, the bud, may have a bitter taste, but sweet, will be the flower, go on to prove it, prove him, pray to him, prove him, go on, looking unto Jesus, and may you prove, that he is the author, and finisher, of your faith, amen.