

Fear, bondage and the means of escape (Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] I shall attempt this morning to bring before you the word that is found in the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

The 8th chapter and words that are found in the 15th verse. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

15th verse, the 8th chapter, Romans. The Bible is a book of counsel, vast in the scope that it covers.

There is not a subject that really is important or vital that it does not adequately and perfectly cover so that it never can be said and never will be said that I personally or you personally have come into some experience.

You cannot find any answer in the word of God. It is indeed, as the poet says, all I need for life or pleasure, health or medicine, food or shield or sword is revealed in Jehovah's faithful word.

[2 : 37] And when we say that, we are saying something that is extremely wonderful and profound. Now we have an example here in our text, which is an example of the counseling effect and scope of the word of God.

And we do well to take heed to the counsel the word of God affords us, provides for us. See, Paul is dealing with people here who are true believers.

Some people will say, well, you are talking to believers again today. Yes. Well, it's many a time, I believe, when the minister has addressed his words to believers, that the Holy Spirit has convicted an unbeliever in this way and this manner.

showing to such that what the minister is speaking about and describing as being the condition and the portion of a believer, they are totally ignorant of and are without.

And by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, they begin to seek with all earnestness that they might know what they realize now they totally lack in knowledge and in understanding.

[4 : 42] So I make no apology. If I address myself mainly to believers today, as we take up the counsel of God's Holy Word, I make no apology because if there is an unbeliever here, it may just be this moment, this very time that the Holy Spirit convicts that soul and teaches that soul that they are totally without these most important and precious things that God describes as being the lot and high privilege and portion of his believing people.

It's a wonderful thing to be a believer. And we ought to take real notice of how much God in his Holy Word takes pains to deal with such.

He has, his Holy Word is so full of counsel that it covers every vicissitude that might occur in the life and experience of every true believer.

And none of us are alike. None of us have exactly the same path to tread or the same way to walk or the same experience to enter into and to receive.

And therefore, we have a most profound and wonderful thing when we find that the Word of God fully meets every requirement and every need of the believer.

[6 : 57] Now you see, Paul is dealing with something that is of great importance to believers. Here we have two things in our text.

We have two spirits in our text. We have, first of all, what he calls the spirit of bondage.

Now we want to look into this, where it comes from, what its effects are when it comes. And also we want to recognize what Paul says here very clearly and plainly, that it does not come from God.

We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear. Then you see, on the other hand, there's the Holy Spirit.

Tremendous contrasts are found in our text. And the Holy Spirit brings such a new, wonderful reality to the believer.

[8 : 14] Links that believer up with all the glorious prospects and promises of God. makes that believer to enjoy the privileges and blessings that God has obtained for them through Christ Jesus the Lord and his wonderful redemptive work completed on the cross of Calvary.

Well now, you see, the counsel is this. Paul knew that there would be, in every believer, from time to time, the likelihood of fear arising.

And fear is a very terrible thing. It's very damaging and very distressing. We do not like it.

We know a good deal about it. Right from our earliest memory, we have thoughts and remembrances of being in fear, one way or another.

And it's something to be avoided, if possible. Paul tells us that there is a great possibility of fear having a place in the heart and mind of a believer and robbing that believer of peace and comfort and the enjoyment of the things of the Lord and of the full benefits of those things to which God has called them.

[10 : 16] When he called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, he did not call them to be fearful and distressed, and uncertain and doubtful about the great matters of salvation and of the faith of God's elect.

Now, Paul knows that there is a possibility. People used to say to me at one time, you know, we must have doubts and fears.

Well, if you must have them, have you ever asked yourself where they come from? Where do they come from?

There's no doubt that a believer from time to time has to grapple with these things. They have them sometimes like waves coming over and over again into their hearts and minds and distressing them greatly and causing them to be unclear and uncertain as to their standing in Christ and their real possession of salvation by his grace.

And it's an important thing not to simply accept these things and take them for granted, but to examine them and to inquire earnestly and diligently from whence do they come?

[12 : 06] What is the origin of them? Can we recognize the place from whence these elements or these powers may come into our hearts and into our lives?

Now, you see, this is what Paul is dealing with here. And let me just take you for a moment or two into a few of the earlier verses because he uses this term in our text, Ye, ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have.

Well, it's an important thing to find out a little bit more about who these people are that Paul is speaking about here when he says, Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.

Now, if you look in the, in, say, the 11th verse, it says this, If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you.

Now, that's an important thing. What does it mean? We know, we believe, that there will be a day when God will, at the great day of resurrection, he will raise up the bodies of his people, his saints, and they will receive a glorified body within which they will be forever with the Lord.

[14 : 02] But it doesn't mean that only fully. It does include that. But I think it means also this, that the same spirit that raised up that blessed person, Jesus Christ, who had laid down his life for his people in death, that same spirit that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies.

Now, that means, as I understand it, make that a believer shall not be a dead form, shall not live out a life as if he were but, or she were but, an inanimate creature.

But it means this, as I understand it, that the Holy Spirit that raised Christ from the dead shall so animate the life of his believing people that they shall live and walk and move and have their being in God to his glory and to his praise.

Or you can go round the churches, you can look at people today, and what is the impression you get?

They are scarcely alive. You can see nothing, no evidence, really, of being filled with the Spirit or having the grace of God.

[15 : 51] They just go along their easy run of things. They fall into a very comfortable habit and formula.

but as for movement, as for animation, as for demonstration of the reality of God's grace, there's scarcely an evidence or a semblance of proof of proof that they have been quickened, raised up by the Holy Spirit.

Now, our bodies are what they always will be. They are death and flesh and blood and will be nothing more, but it's an important thing when we recognize this, that if God has called us, if he's put his grace into our hearts, then he calls us to a life of activity and of vigor, energy and service to the praise and glory of his name.

And blessed is that man and that woman that in some measure fulfills that wonderful purpose. You know, I read this morning a word that is a very great word of importance indeed.

You remember what John was saying. He said this, out of his fullness have all we received and grace for grace.

[17 : 42] What does that mean? It means this, that if we've got grace, we need grace to develop that grace, to use that grace.

We need grace, the grace of God, that the grace we have might be, have its greatest fulfillment in our lives and in our hearts.

And God provides that grace. grace. You see, if he did not provide that grace, what would happen? Well, a person would have grace and that would lift them right up and make them feel so good and so proud and so different from other people, they would look down upon their fellow creatures with contempt and disdain and in other words, they would become more ugly and more unlike their Lord and their Master than they ever were before.

But God gives grace to keep a person humble while at the same time he bestows upon that person the highest favor and the greatest blessing.

that's what it means, grace upon grace. And we ought to be abundantly thankful for that wonderful provision that will keep us under the mighty influences of God's grace in a right place, with a right attitude, with a right spirit, and with a right purpose of heart.

[19 : 34] Now, let us look at this counsel then. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.

It means this, of course, that once you were under a spirit of bondage, every believer was once under a spirit of bondage.

bondage. Where did that bondage come from? It comes from two great sources.

First of all, it is the spirit of bondage. It comes from Satan himself. Satan binds, captivates the souls of men.

as Paul says in the second chapter in the Ephesians, speaking about those who were once quickened, who are now quickened, and yet who once were children of disobedience.

[20 : 43] They were under the prince of the power of the air. That is how God describes Satan in that particular scripture, the prince of the power of the air.

And he says this, it is the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. You see, it's a spirit of bondage, and it's bringing about disobedience in everyone that comes under the influence of it.

And it comes from Satan, that terrible monster, that adversary, that awful fiend of hell, who captivates and binds men's arms to their slavery, to his dominion and power.

Now that's the first thing. then secondly, sin is the great binding influence in men's hearts and lives.

Sin, oh thou hideous monster, sin, what a curse hast thou brought in. All creation groans with the pregnant cause of misery.

[22 : 14] bondage. Yes, these are the causes of bondage. Now, Paul says, ye have not received the spirit of bondage again.

You have received it once, but by God's grace you've been liberated from the causes of that bondage, and ye will not and shall not receive it again.

therefore, if you are laboring today under any fear, if you are fearful in your poor heart, and sometimes Satan comes along and says to you, you're not one of God's children, you're not one of the liberated people of the Lord, if you were, you would never have this fear, you'd never be in this state of darkness and uncertainty, wondering where and what would happen to you, you would have all those things dismissed.

You see, our text very clearly demonstrates the reality of the fact that even the people of God, even the real believing people of God, are troubled from time to time and plagued with this spirit of bondage again to fear.

Well then, what is the effect of this? What do we fear? Let me just give one or two things, perhaps it will touch upon some point in your own experience and be a help.

[24 : 04] one great fear is the fear of death. Oh yes, that's a real fear to the poor believer. It's a strange thing, you know, that the people that are in the greatest danger never fear.

People who are really delivered from the terrible fact and force of that awful monster death, they're the people that so often fear it more than anyone else.

They fear death. And it's a very real fear, is this. And there's only one remedy for it, and that is Christ.

The great high priest who knows the feelings of our infirmities so perfectly because he himself was tempted at all points like we are yet without sin.

And that means to say he was tempted with the fear of death. You say, is that possible? Well, the word of God tells us very clearly that the dear son of God was tempted at all points.

[25 : 26] there was not a semblance of sin in him, but he was tempted nevertheless with all kinds of evils, powers, and among them there's no doubt, there's evidence of it, in the garden of Gethsemane that the dear Redeemer was tempted with a fear of death.

death. Then, another fear is this, and this is a very real fear, the fear of man. The word of God tells us the fear of man bringeth a snare.

Oh, and how many people are fearful about man. What they will think or say, they hide themselves very often because of the fear of man.

man. They do not come forth to tell people what the Lord has done for them because they fear man. That fear is a terrible thing.

It looms up sometimes on the horizon like a mighty cloud and threatens to exterminate and extinguish all our hopes and comforts and our joys is the fear of man.

[26 : 45] man. Oh, how many people will do this and that because of the fear of man. How they will withhold this and that which should have been done with all sincerity because of the fear of man.

How many a believer, real believer, tender in heart and conscience, has held back from a public profession of true godliness because of the fear of man.

Oh, you know in your own heart and in your own conscience what a real fear this is and how it has a effect of binding and being a curse to the true believer.

fear. Then, there's the fear of consternation. Often we fear where no fear really is.

We cross our bridges before we come to them. We say, oh, look, what is this that seems to be ahead of me now?

[28 : 01] what will happen to me if this and that and the other thing takes place in my life? I should never be able to stand. And you look at things, they seem to be looming up in front of your face, you say, I can't face that trouble.

It's too great for me. And when you come to actually enter into the time, when you can visualize as being a time of trouble, the whole thing has gone, it's evaporated, never was really there at all.

Somehow the wonderful hand of God has removed the whole thing from your pathway, and you've gone on, and you've thought, what a fool I am, ever to have feared this trouble.

It's never really been there. It's all been in the imagination of my own poor feeble heart and mind. We fear where no fear is.

Now that's a real fear, isn't it? Fear of consternation and difficulty. You see, Gideon, we read about him, and what happened to him.

[29 : 24] Where was he? There he was, by a wine press. Now a wine press is always very low down in the earth.

People do not want to climb up a mountain to go and tread wine, the grapes. They like to bring the grapes down to a low place, and there they're trodden.

But what was he doing? He wasn't treading wine, he wasn't treading grapes. It was not the season for it. He was thrashing wheat at a wine press, the most unlikely place.

And why was he doing it? Because he feared the Midianites. He said to himself, they will come, if I go up on the hill to the threshing floor, the Midianites will see me, they will come and take all my grain and leave me with none.

I will get right down where they will not expect me to be thrashing any wheat at all. I'll go down into the wine press and hide my little grain, my harvest grain, from the hands of the Midianites.

[30 : 48] So, dear poor Gideon was fearful, more fearful of the Midianites at that point than he was of God or believing in God in his mighty power.

And you know, we've got no stones that we can really throw at these people. We've been in the same position. I have and you have. You've said I shall die like David did.

I shall die one day by the hand of Saul. All God's promises had no meaning at that moment. In David's heart and mind, he thought, no, providence will overtake me, Saul will capture me, I shall die one day by the hand of Saul and all my hopes will have been dashed in pieces.

But what happened? It wasn't David that died, it was Saul that died. David rose to the throne and to the great heights of preeminence by God's wonderful provision and his grace.

fear of profession, profession of religion.

[32 : 20] People say to themselves, now if I put on a profession of religion, I shall have to stand to it. I shall have to abide by it.

True. And you fear that you will not be able to do it. That's a dishonoring fear, isn't it?

When the board says, say unto them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not. You go through all those wonderful fear notes in the Bible and ponder each one and then when you've pondered them and prayed over them, ask yourself this question, can I possibly fear in making a profession of my love for the Lord Jesus?

Isn't he worthy of the best? can he be denied anything from my poor heart that he deserves?

Oh, the fear of profession is a very real one. It holds many back from walking in a path of delight and pleasure and honor, fear of profession.

[33 : 58] profession. Who are you to fear then if you make a profession? You to fear man? That's a very unworthy fear, is the fear of man.

You fear yourself? You fear that lest you should be without sufficient strength to endure and to continue?

You fear that the world might come in and have a greater influence upon you in the future than it has now and then you would make a sorry and a pitiful sight in your profession.

My dear friends, let me guide you and this is the counsel of the word of God. Paul says, ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.

You haven't received it from God and therefore if this fear does exist in your heart and mind, it doesn't come from God.

[35 : 11] It's come from your own poor sinful heart. It's come from your own unbelief. It's come from outside, from the influences of the devil.

It's come from the undue influences of man. All these things should be eliminated by prayer and humble dependence upon God.

They should be eliminated and then there would be no fear. Fear hath torment. And as the word of God says, there is no fear in love.

And this is the great cure really. This is the remedy that I want us to fasten upon this morning. And this is really the counsel of the word of God.

That there is no fear in love. Where there is love there cannot be fear. And if you've got love for Christ, you will not know what these fears really mean.

[36 : 26] They'll be distant things. They'll vanish like the smoke before the rising sun. Everything will be put in the right place if the love of Christ is found in the heart.

love all defects, supplies. Love conquers everything, changes everything, surmounts every difficulty, overcomes every obstacle.

Love, love of Christ. So if there's any here that have that fear, and those fears bring torment to their hearts and minds, doggy them every day and almost every hour, I say this is the remedy, love.

The love of Christ, shed abroad in your heart, will cast out every fear, and bring you sweetly to realize what is the evidence of your justification, peace, blessed, perfect, abiding, peace, the peace of God that passes all understanding.

Amen. Amen.

[38 : 33] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Dear Lord, help us to dismiss all fear and to trust thee for thy grace.

[43 : 20] Be with us and help us, Lord, to overcome all that is dark and unbelieving and help us to lean on thy beloved arm and trust thee for all things, for life, for health, for strength and for peace.

And may the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us now. Amen.

unde Thank you.