

# How can I go? I will show thee what thou shalt do. (Quality: very good)

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Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

- [ 0 : 00 ] In this afternoon in seeking the help of God I venture to draw your prayerful attention to two short clauses found in the first book of Samuel chapter 16 and we take verse 2 and the first clause.
- First book of Samuel chapter 16 and verse 2 and the first clause. And that is Samuel said how can I go?
- And then in verse 3 the word of God speaking to Samuel I will show thee what thou shalt do.
- How can I go? God speaking I will show thee what thou shalt do. So I do not think that I should err if I should make this comment to start with that on this anniversary day as you look back over life's journey that there have been those occasions when your spirit has fainted within you with many fears and you have said now how can I go?
- It may be even at this time some here may be faced with difficulties, perplexities, an unknown future path, things hidden and you say how can I go?
- [ 1 : 58 ] Of this again we may be quite assured that whilst we are on this earthly pilgrimage in the future path we should come afresh into those experiences all very varied when again and again we tremblingly we say how can I go?
- In the first place though I will briefly as God will help me trace out the fear that Samuel had and to do so we will consider very briefly the life of Saul one of the most solemn characters in the word of God.
- And at times when we read of this man, I speak personally, my soul trembles.
- Lord, oh if I'm left just for an outward acknowledgement of God, desire to be seen as it were by others, to pretend that I'm a child of God and yet destitute of God's grace, how unutterably solemn.
- You remember how that the people of old had requested for a king. Oh and how that God had directed them in the answer to their request to a man of Benjamin and his name was Saul and we read this that he was a choice young man, goodly and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he.
- [ 3 : 49 ] From his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people seemed to be a perfect choice to be as it were a king.
- And you remember how that Saul further told him and instructed him in the way before him as they were going down to the end of the city.
- Samuel said to Saul, bid thy servant pass on before us. And he passed on. But stand thou still a while that I may show thee the word of God.
- And then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured upon his head and kissed him, is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance.
- And a little later on as he gathered the people together they couldn't find Saul. He showed an amazing, as it were, spirit of humility as he hid himself among the staff.

[ 4 : 52 ] And when he stood among the people he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders upward. Now also at that time Samuel said to Saul, wait for seven days and then I will come and offer a sacrifice but wait till I come.

And we read there and I need to go through the history too closely it should be known to you how that Saul waited the seventh day and then took matters into his own hand after the sacrifice and then Samuel came.

Oh friend, there's the first sight of a falling away there's a first sight of disobedience unto God.

Then one more step and I've only touched the point very, very briefly. God commanded him to go and destroy the Amalekites. You remember it was Amalek that came up against Israel in the wilderness from behind and God now commanded Saul to destroy them and nothing was to be taken.

Saul went forth victory was given but oh disobedience seen as Samuel meeting Saul said to him what meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear disobedience unto God and God now rejected Saul from being a king.

[ 6 : 39 ] and speaks now to Samuel to go and to take his horn with oil to go to Jesse the Bethlehemite he says among that family I have provided me a king among his sons and Samuel said how can I go?

even such a godly man as Samuel and I love to think of that that you see Samuel was asked of God the king was asked of the people Samuel was if I may say the float or gift of God through the prayer of a dear Hannah who pleaded with God and though in the depth of her trial and provocation how that her lips moved no voice was heard oh what prayer there was there prayer sometimes without a word I believe sometimes that the most violent prayers they are prayers that they hold upon God that they're the groans when a person is under deep distress spiritual or providential and both together and I love that word in the epistle to the Romans the spirit itself helpeth and that we know not what we should pray for as we ought but intercedeth for us with groanings which cannot be uttered oh beloved friend

Lord all my desire is before thee and my groaning is not hid from thee so here is Samuel raised up I must not tarry again on thee background but he's well known and how when he was born he was asked of God given to God and there in the temple speak Lord for thy servant heareth they're raised up as a prophet among the people to direct them and to guide them and yet the people rejected both Samuel and almighty God and I must go to just one more reference bear patiently with me but when Samuel gathered the people together and you remember Lord at the harvest time caused it to thunder and the people trembled in that rain but there how dear Samuel said that he would not he would continue to pray for them and I think of that precious word I'll say why it is so precious in a moment for the Lord will not forsake his people for his great namesake for it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people why say so precious it was the first verse that raised up preached by my late dear pastor on a weeknight service when I was about 15 that raised hope of this poor vile sinner that I was placed among the people of God and so my friend it's very very precious dear Samuel and you think of his courage and his strength and his ability and grace but here he's a man just like us he's afraid you know we're thankful for God thankful that the word of God so it tells us not only the strong points and not only the failings but also the fears of men and women that were in many aspects great in faith valiant for the truth and yet from time to time they came to a situation where we read they needed and God gave them a fear not and just as I name that you may as you think for example

Abraham how God gave him a fear not fear not Abraham I am thy shield and exceeding great reward now think of another great man in the New Testament think of Paul when the angel came a message from heaven in that great boat in the storm fear not Paul he was filled with fear so this is encouragement to us now to the words then of our text as we may be held and Samuel said how can I go I see I pray the Lord will help me I pray that it makes profitable both in providence and in the spiritual meditation of this word to look at these words from one or two angles first of all when at times in life we are presented with difficulty and discerning what step to take which path to tread where to go the world the world the world the world

I would even venture to say a Christian without the exercise of grace will just concern themselves with what is the easiest path what will bring them the most money and pleasure and so forth we are not our own we are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are his beloved friend if we are tender in the fear of God we shall be frightened to take the wrong step what did dear Moses say if thy presence go not with me carry us not up hence whereby shall it be known that I and thy people know up with us that

[ 12 : 45 ] I can't quote exactly but where it comes in there is it not in that thou goest with us oh when the great how can I go oh you pray for divine God now you may say it's so difficult to know what is the right way you may say this is the very longing of my heart to know what is the right way but how can I tell that God is speaking to me I feel first of all continue in prayer continue waiting upon God continue to await for the moving of the Holy Spirit in your soul to guide and direct you to also read and prayerfully meditate upon the word of God and pray that God may speak a word or pray and watch very closely the hand of God remember the hand of God both not only opens a door but closes a door and I experienced that once in the most vital decisions of my life and that was concerning the pastorate where in 48 hours a door was closed and a door was opened no pastor chooses his own path or chooses his own people it's the most solemn step a man can take

I think on this earth together with the ministry but as I say watch the hand of God I have used the illustration that where there is a harbour and boats to go into that harbour there were rocks and dangerous dangerous currents but there was just one safe line into that harbour and set in a straight line were three of those floating boys you know what I mean by that in the water and that has been likened a little bit as I have said the waiting upon God waiting for the moving of the spirit the indication that you will feel a sweet sense yes I feel that is right or you have a warning there's something there I don't like I can't ask God to bless it that be a warning then the other is the word of God and the third as I've just said the hand of

God in providence opening or closing the door my friend it's what we need it's utter in the sight of God submission to the will of God and so how can I go and so as the Lord says I will show thee what thou wilt do if we bring this matter to our God unreservedly begging and praying him to appear for us then indeed as I remember reading concerning my call to the ministry it was an old gospel standard I've never found it since but if we make the matter of prayer unreservedly before God though the way may not even be so clear the Lord will not suffer you to err I believe that friend how can I go I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go

I will guide thee with mine eye oh how we do pray for guidance now we are another aspect trouble man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward the old hymn says trouble like a gloomy cloud has gathered thick and thundered loud I watched recently the sky certainly started to come over a bit cloudy but how amazing how quickly the storm came how quickly the lightning flashed how quickly the thunder roared and how quickly the whole sky was covered how quickly the torrent of rain poured how quickly you were plunged into some trouble into some trial you've not walked that way heretofore and how can I go and you're in the midst of it I can't go on I don't know what will become of me but what a bash it is the God is the

God that keeps and helps us in our troubles and in our trials you know in the 91st Psalm it is the Lord says he will give his angel charge over there to keep thee in all thy ways and so forth who's going to be with you in trouble I'll be with him in trouble look at that remember my dear pastor used to say angels to keep you yes blessed be God for that we firmly believe in the ministry of angels but when he's in trouble God says I'll be there I'll be there I'll be there in that den of blinds I'll be there in that furnace heated seven times I'll be there in the valley of the shadow of death I'm not speaking like things I'm not some of you may say I'm in the trouble but I don't feel God there I feel very much alone but my friend he won't fail there's sometimes the hiding of his face sometimes the trial of your faith and we come to that in a moment more in detail I have a friend of ours that was diagnosed very recently which means a operation a breast operation what a shock same with my wife in 1966 unexpected

[ 18 : 58 ] I may just venture to never forget visiting my dear wife just prior to it and she turned to me was she been so full of fears she said I can't understand I am not afraid my friend God was with her you see that's the secret how can I do but the Lord won't fail you he tell you what to do he will do for you too he says he will be with you he will help you he will strengthen you he will tell you he will remind you again that underneath are the everlasting arms won't he they tell you my grace is sufficient but they tell you again he too wise to be mistaken too good to be unkind I'm not speaking easy things sometimes you have to sing so very very low you you see that's a precious word underneath of the everlasting arms but oh beloved this is this you have to go right down right down and you say

I've never been so low in my life but you've never sunk beneath them and you never will how can I go and then come to another straight from this is the trial of your faith God has bid you to walk in a certain path has there been a test of your faith you say oh my little faith I fear oh I fear this will go now I fear oh I don't know where my faith is oh but my friend I tell you this I assure you this if you're a born again sinner pray God that you're clear on that point then you're the possessor of faith you cannot have that new birth and spiritual life without faith and that faith as I so often say is indestructible though as the mercury and the thermometer as like Philpott says it shrinks or enlarges the causes but it doesn't disappear it's there now how can

I go and the Lord may bid you to take a path that you perhaps it seems quite straightforward let me name it in this way keep to the scripture the Lord on two occasions did his disciples get in the boat to go to the other side they obeyed they did just what he said and the first time he was with them the second time he wasn't he was on the mount but what happened a great storm arose how can I go why one would have thought with the Lord Jesus in the boat with the Lord Jesus praying on that mount there won't be a ripple on the water exactly the opposite you might say how can I continue I should sink I should perish and those and take the second illustration when he saw them toiling and rowing the fourth watch of the night my friend they didn't turn the boat round they kept struggling and so you will and he will come you may have to wait the fourth watch of the night you may have to be stripped of all hope of self you may have to almost give up all hope and just be led to say well Lord if anything could help me now it must be thou no one else on all the world and all the riches of the world can deliver me from this trial my friend praise God to help you strengthen you comfort you and support you and what how can

I go the testings of God's faith and just one more comes to the mind Abraham says take now God said to him take now at once thy son thy only son Isaac whom thou lovest look at the description there can be no mistake my friend do not tremble at times if God should say to you take now and you wonder what it is and what it would be if it's something so dear to you now remember this if God says this it's going to be well it's going to be well but it's going to be a trial and look at the obedience of faith look early in the morning didn't hesitate and on the third day sees the place afar off and dear Isaac says father here's the wood here's the fire but where's the lamp of the burnt offering my son God that's a way to talk to young people too sometimes isn't it and this way that when the

Lord brings you into troubles or when the Lord answers your prayers when the Lord helps you when there's been providential need and your need has been wonderfully surprised tell it to the generation following I remember my dear parents telling me answers to their prayers and it's been a great comfort to me and a help to me in my life and so he went forth and yet how can I go and there he is standing with a knife that God speaks there's no mistake there's a blessing in it here's that faith that is honoured and here is another blessing in it and that is what I see and that is the substitution because Isaac expected to be slain on the altar no it's not Isaac it's the ram that's the blood I know to ceremonially there but oh friend you have in your troubles and in your trials a sight of Christ of Calvary and to see him in your room and place oh what a sacred experience that is so marvel not if your faith is right marvel not if Satan attacks it marvel not if the world despises it and wherein says Peter ye greatly rejoice that thou ne'er for a season if need be ye are in heaviness that's a very powerful word you feel everything's on top of you in heaviness through manifold all around you within you and outside you manifold temptations that is the trials and testings of your faith wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season in

[ 25 : 36 ] God's time if need be God's purpose and love ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations what for that the trial of your faith be much more precious than of gold that perisheth may be found unto praise and honor and glory and the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ friend I shall never forget that I referred and will you bear with me if I tell you this I referred to my wife when she had that operation of the breads that very day as the operation was to be in the morning I was due to preach at Clapham for Thanksgiving services that was in the days of Mr. Jesse Doles of course and I phoned but no the operation was the afternoon and I had to go forth to preach but my friend that was the text and I proved the power of the prayers of the people my own dear people and those dear friends that dear Mr. Jesse Doles and this poor sinner and it brought me to this

I thought my faith had gone no God says it's there it's there my friends yes it's not destroyed it's not gone neither is your God either he's not gone he's there and ever will be with you to uphold you then walking in the fear of the Lord how can I go because you know to walk in the fear of the Lord it means that you've got to stand you've got to make a stand must be very difficult in business today I talked to a friend as a chartered accountant I felt how God was helping him long way away so I'm not giving any hint where how he refused to do some because there's something shady in it it means something to stand out doesn't it I like that what I read many years ago of a young

Christian in America and in time when of course there was no provision for unemployment and anybody to be sacked at once and he worked for an employer and he said this employer had a big boat coming in he said all got to be there right through Sunday so he felt it's not an essential work they said to the employer they said could he come in and work late Saturday and early early hours of Monday morning if you're not there it's instant dismissal my dear friend that young man stood firm he was out of work did God fail him what does the second part of the text here he says the Lord says I will show thee what thou shall do or what I will do if I may use it about a few days later this employer was walking and his bank manager met him oh he says I'm in deep this bank manager somebody I can trust and implicitly trust somebody

I most really love a position in my bank so I know it's just the man you want name the one he sang them that honour me I will how can I go how can I be bold enough how can I stand my friend I have not stood as I should have done I say with shame how I as it were been afraid of man but there are times blessed be God when we have been enabled to speak and had to ask God to forgive us when we fail but my friend the most important thing even then is not so much our speaking it is a vital point but it is our life which has been the voice to speak of our faith in our God so to walk in the fear of the Lord look how dear Nehemiah from time to time how they chanted him come and meet us in the plane and say

I'm not coming I could see wrong desire I'm doing a great work I'm not going to come down my friend the fear of the Lord is an unctuous light to all that's right and a bar to all that's wrong and may grace be given us to walk most tenderly in the fear of the Lord and again as I look at this I think too that here do that and that command that tells you forgiving one another doesn't mean condoning sin but does mean forgiving friend we do ourselves terrible damage if we fail in this how can we go to the throne of grace it's not my word it's God's word you know watch that be very very careful I know we've got a natural heart that will rise up in anger and bitterness and hatred and so forth my friend

[ 31 : 03 ] God help us to be go to the cross and hear the dear saviour cry father forgive them they know not what they do how can I go how can I go and say I'm sorry not easy is it I was wrong how can I go may God give us grace to do it and then as I look at this too in further ways too and say how can I go yes when a person is going to correct you I don't want to go oh you say yes that one with his loving correction is a blessing to your soul not harsh not unkind may we ever receive the word of correction and it may be putting it the other way round you may be the one and that's the way

I should have taken it perhaps but it also comes the other way you feel there's someone doing something wrong how can I go shall be silent and not speak at all let it go and yet the Lord lays it on you and you feel I must pray God to give you the grace give you the word to speak the love to manifest and pray that it may be faithful the wounds of the friend and a blessing may thereby spring and fall out of it how can I go it means to go unto him without the camp it means bearing a cross don't you think Simon of Cyrene was so favored what honor is placed on that dear man my friend it's an honor to follow the

Lord Jesus in that way of the cross to go unto him you won't find him in the gaudy places of the world will you in the pleasure houses and so forth but oh find him outside and sometimes we do don't we but I say how can I go how can I go I'm so afraid and yet Lord thou said this cross is for me it's a bitter cup how can I drink it how can I take it seek grace to follow your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ follow that example father if it be possible let this cup pass from me nevertheless not my will but thine be done my friend what grace is needed to be submissive and yet to prove that that cup so bitter and yet in our cup something secret something you see how can

I go because the Lord makes no mistake and in these paths of various trials and difficulties things has stored up at times such a blessing in it that you have to praise God for it you may have suffered I don't want to bring myself again but I just have to say when my dear wife was taken I mean the grief that I've had in it I can't describe it but my friend as I look back I have to thank him for it I do I know what loneliness is and I know what God's care is too I know what it is when God answers my prayers in some of the smallest details of my life and my little fears as well as my big fears but I say how can I go yes he says I'll not fail you I'll be with you I'll take care of you I'll bless you I'll strengthen you

I'll uphold you and so Samuel said how can I go again I've got my purpose now and time is going on rather rapidly but when a call to the ministry and what about a when you say call to the ministry first just briefly when God calls a person to the ministry if that is a real call the nearer the person or man is brought to that point to the ministry the more unworthy and unfit you feel to be my friend our utter dependence upon our God and here we pray Lord how can I go for the Lord gives the word but again when you call to the ministry then you see a minister he's got a next engagement in front of him how can

[ 36 : 50 ] I go oh says people you open your Bible and you can preach and so forth my friend you don't know much what a minister goes through but many of you do I know that we've known and my brethren here I'm sure have known times when we've been hardly know we had to wait for a text you say well surely you can pick out a text surely you can if you preach it somewhere and then take that again my friend unless God opens that word you can't touch it I remember on occasion I won't go into the detail but I made a dreadful mistake in the sense of it that I thought going to a certain place I hadn't been before it would be easier and God dealt with that I thought well I've no text tea time and left afterwards on my own no text go back to what you preach on

Sunday no more preach a sermon on that at all the Lord had mercy upon me the last minute it was because the chasing hand of God is to teach me but God's love in it is the middle hymn I got to that very point and no touch whatsoever and the deacon said hymn 1036 I knew they'd only got four verses I thought I'm finished seek and the Lord for the word in I know that fear not ye I know that ye see Jesus was crucified oh the goodness of God and the most amazing thing was this that sometime after I heard of a blessing through that ministry the Lord overroaring for the furtherance of the gospel I might mention my own late pastor he in the early days that Satan said look you needn't worry too much about preaching and poor pastor said

I fell for it you say well silly man my friend you've done some funny things silly things too sometimes you know but that and he said how he got through that day he didn't know and yet four came before the church years ago further that doesn't give any license whatsoever for us to be slack no but God overruling our weakness our folly but I mustn't carry on this point any longer or whatsoever no it might be just a word I don't know how many have not been baptized here how many I might say exercise about being baptized how can I go my friend is a good way to come not well oh I can go I'll start things right in that church no no yet with longing you love Jesus Jesus is so precious to you he's done great things for you when I say great things

I don't say miracles or anything like that but they're all great things what God has done for us made himself precious you're drawn to the saviour you have a sweet hope in his mercy that it reach your heart that the blood of Christ is your prayer that mercy that you've been seen you could say that's just right for me that's just right for me and you could tell too of how that you come and the Lord has met you in the ministry you could tell too and in reading the word of God the Lord has blessed you in your meditation you could tell perhaps in the night watches you've woken up and a word has dropped in and so forth you could tell of the trouble and the Lord's promise and you could tell of being drawn in love to the dear saviour but you fear I'm so unworthy friend you'll ever will be you want to be kept you ever want to be kept and you say now my last barrier was the communion service how can I such a sinner take that communion cup but oh blessed be

God the Lord appeared for me my pastor knew nothing of this at all and named the case that you've been often named probably in Scotland where a most godly woman in that church she took the bread and she was in deep depression and when the elder held her the cup she shook her head but the minister knowing the case very well went to the elder took the cup put it in the hand of the woman said woman it's for sinners and my friend I could go in how can I come but now I must come to a close I see the time has gone how can I go you know we've got to come to one more step the last step death how can I go is it well with me I say my soul trembles as I think of Saul a cloak of religion even asked someone to go with him that he might be seen among the people my friend

[ 42 : 05 ]    God looks in the heart oh to be made a real Christian washed of the Redeemer's blood and there and blessed be God we know that where that work of grace has been begun we can be a rest fully assured of this that the Lord will not fail us in death oh death where is thy sting oh grave where is thy victory how solemn to die in unpardoned sin and that awful sting and everlasting banter from God and to think my friend that oh sinner as I am how could I bear being with those people how could I bear being separated from those that love Jesus how could I bear being separated from the Lord Jesus that is so dear to my soul oh my friend if such the sweetness of the streams there'd be little sips what must the fountain be where saints and angels draw their bliss immediately from the how can I go ah blessed be

God he'll bring you safely through now I must close Lord bless the few rather rambling thoughts and forgive all of theirs amen