

Freedom From Anxiety and Worry

Galatians 5:1

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

It might be good loved ones if you'd take that booklet with our church principles and just look at the back page of it. That would be a good beginning for what I think God wants us to talk about this morning. I have my sermon nicely typed but I know I shouldn't preach it this morning. I am going to trust God to speak to us directly Himself.

Look at the back page and then at #5. "We believe that it is the will of God that each believer should be sanctified through identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection and through the agency of the Holy Spirit be separated from the world and sin and fully consecrated to the will of God thereby, receiving power for holy living and effective service."

That's part of our doctrinal statement. We believe that it is the will of God that each believer should be sanctified, made clean through identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection and through the agency of the Holy Spirit be separated from the world and sin and fully consecrated to the will of God thereby, receiving power for holy living and effective service.

Then I just thought that the text should be Galatians 5:1, "For freedom, Christ has set us free. Stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." I remember in the early days, we had a Californian surf rider called Bruce Forney who had an afro-haircut and one of the wildest among us. He kept on teaching us that miserable song that I could never get the tune of and he wasn't any better singer than I am or Jim Raymo but he would sing, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty, therewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." He used to sing that song and as you can hear, I don't know it any better than I did then. But it is interesting that that is the King James translation of Galatians 5:1 "Stand fast therefore in the liberty where with, Christ hath made you free and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage."

Part of what we were talking about last Sunday was that. That's what sanctification is. I really haven't used the term among us because so often it's been overused in denominations that specialize in that message. But really that's what we're talking about. We're talking about sanctification or the victorious life or the power that God can give us through the Holy Spirit to live above sin and above self and what we said you remember last Sunday, is that most of us of course do not live according to God's directions at all from when we were born.

We are brought up by our parents with teachers and with other friends and older people who make it very plain to us by their own actions, (except maybe for an old saint here and there), that the only way to get on in this world is to live by dependence upon this world. It's very earlier on that we begin to depend on what this world can give us for our safety. So all of us here are used to earning a few pennies on our newspaper routes or maybe a little more than that today. And we're used to getting a little bit of sense of importance from the way the others treat us at school and from pleasing our moms and dads and it all seems kind of innocent in the early days.

But I think we're all aware that even in teenage years, you begin to be a little slave to those things and especially to this business of what people think. I think there are many of us here today

who would say, "Brother, I am right, that's where I am at this minute. I am governed by what people think of me. I am very concerned about what people think and very put out if they don't think well of me and I would have to admit that many of my actions are based on pleasing the boss or pleasing my loved ones or pleasing my friends or my relatives or my parents," and probably everyone of us here would testify to the fact that we have become very dependent on the world for our source of income and for our money and for our possessions and the things that we need.

All of us, whether we work on commission or not, probably feel very, very obligated to the school where we work or the company where we work. We would not like to say that we have sold our souls to the company store but we are aware that that exerts tremendous pressure on us and indeed, I think many of us probably would find it being passed on to our children when those things are not coming forth for us. Maybe the job is lost or maybe something happens to the economy and we get uptight. So often the child doesn't understand what the pressure is but we understand that we passed on to them the bit of fretfulness and anxiety that comes upon us.

Of course, that's the truth of it, isn't it? You can't depend on the world for those things or on people for your own sense of value without, of course eventually becoming wrought by anxiety because they don't come through for you, they just don't. People all the time, have other opinions of you. All the time people criticize you, all the time people don't support you, all the time you're failing other people and they're thinking you've failed them and you feel that. All the time you're having situations where the business fails or the company fails or the salary doesn't come through.

So, it becomes a very, very anxious life for many of us. And what we shared was that wasn't what God planned at all. God's own plan was to supply us Himself with those things, maybe through companies, maybe through businesses and maybe directly by His own hand. But He would be faithful to us if we did what He had put us here on earth to do. Of course the tragedy with most of us is we've been so dependent on the world that we have not been able to hear His voice at all. And for years we've never heard His voice.

We maybe hear it very crudely through conscience but we have not heard guidance from Him for years. And to tell the truth, we're not very sure whether what we're doing is what He means us to do or not. Certainly from day to day, we're not very conscious of a day-to-day momentary guidance and on the whole, we speak from the best we have in our heads. We say the best things we can when we face different situations but we're not very aware of guidance from above. And of course we shared that, the answer to that is that there can be given to us a spirit, a Spirit of Jesus, a Spirit of God that will begin to give us that direction from within and that will begin to reveal to you what you are meant to do in this world and will begin to give you detailed day-by-day guidance.

When you hear of that, and you begin to see the things in your life that are wrong and not according to God's will, and you repent of those and ask God to give you that Spirit, that Spirit of Jesus sweetly comes in to you. You're born of God and you become a Christian and become a child of God.

The amazing thing is that it is true what we said last day that it is a bit like honeymoon. It's a bit like honeymoon but not the little cynical idea of honeymoon, "Oh the honeymoon is over, now get down to the real thing." No, honeymoon was given to us in marriage to show us the way marriage should always be. It's an overwhelming surge of God's dynamic creative life, to give us the feel of what life it should always be like.

See, if you think of it for a little baby to come out of the dear mother's body, there's a

tremendous source of power and urge and creative life needed to bring that about-- much more than after it's born into the outer world. Everything and every time anything is created, it requires a tremendous explosion of power and that's what God gives us in the new birth. That's what He gives us on a honeymoon time. He says this is what life is always meant to be like but now you must get down after the honeymoon to expressing this in deliberate willing day-by-day to your loved one. This that has come through so spontaneously to you, you're meant to do day-by-day by your own will and commitment and it's the same with the new birth.

God at that time gives us a tremendous sense that He is supplying all things and that we can depend on Him utterly so much so that most of us that have been born of God would testify to the fact, those were glorious days, they were wonderful days, they were just great days. I felt there was nothing to worry about, there was nothing to be anxious about, I found no difficulty obeying Him and witnessing for Him. I found no difficulty in praying. My heart seems filled with God and I had a life that was magical. I had been transformed out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

The truth we often miss is that God gives us that gracious lifting power to reveal to us how we're meant to be throughout our relationship with Him and throughout our lives. But the actual truth is that there are many parts of the world that we have not actually cut ourselves off from. We're still involved in our businesses and in our company and we're still involved in what people think of us. It's just that God gives us a tremendous burst of power that raises us above all that for awhile. But actually it's sheer grace. And we ourselves have not actually dealt with those things in our hearts and that's what begins to be revealed to us loved ones, after we start to have troubles in the Christian life. That's why we begin to cry, "The good that I would, I cannot do and the evil I hate is the very thing I do."

It's when that begins to happen to us; when we begin to go into that switch back life that we've so often talked about where you have great mountain top experiences, and then great valleys where you disobey God and you hurt people and then a mountain top experience with God and then down again. When that begins, that is God graciously saying to you, "Now there is a lot of My Son's death that you have not entered into. There is a miracle that I have done in My Son that is greater than simply relating you to Me. There is something that I have done for you in Jesus that you have not yet experienced," and the truth is loved ones, that even after the new birth, most of us here are still strangely dependent on the world. We still have all kinds of entanglements with it, all kinds of ways in which we're bound to it by chains.

Do you realize how powerful is the influence of a person on you on whose opinion you depend? You realize the power that that man has over you, or that woman has over you? If they just appear not to approve of you, your heart just goes down. It's as if you're a little marionette or puppet, tied to their feelings by strings. I don't need to tell all of you about the power of the banking world or the power of our businesses over us, or the power of our sources of security. If it just wavers, if it just misses a beat, a heartbeat, if we ever think the person is going to take a wrong turn, it's amazing how it enslaves us and controls us.

The truth is that in a thousand ways, you and I are bound to this world on which we have been dependent from when we were little children and I know many of you, tie it to our parents, but dear ones our parents are just part of the whole thing you know. Our parents are only a part of it. We were taught to be dependent upon them and to please them and they didn't wish to enslave us in any way. But it is part of the supernatural elemental spirits of the universe that tie us and slave us

in a wrong way to moms and dads, to older people, to coaches, to teachers, then to our bosses then to our peers then to our friends. It is dumb, but then it's to the TV commercials. Then to the guys that are famous and popular. We become enslaved in a thousand million different ways to all these things and then you know, we wonder why it is that the good I would I cannot do and the evil I hate is what I do.

No wonder, because you and I are attached to all kinds of umbilical cords. We're attached by all kinds of cords and strings and bondages to the outside world and the world around us. And of course, there is only one way to become free of that and that is through the work that God has done on Calvary. Loved ones, there are entanglements that you cannot free yourself from. There are reasons for your anxiety and worry that you cannot even discern. You cannot trace them.

The psychiatrist, and the psychologist can go as far as 'makes no difference' because the truth is that this whole dependency situation has begot in you a mind of the flesh and the Bible says the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, enmity, because it depends on the world and you have to depend either on the world or on God. The mind of a flesh is enmity against God. It is not subject to God's law neither indeed can it be.

Of course the tragedy with so many of us in our churches is that we have tried to continue a Christian life while allowing that mind of the flesh to remain within us. We have continued to try to carry on the Christian life even though we were still actually being governed by the external stimuli. We were being governed by the outside things, by the circumstances around us, by the things around us, by the people around us even though we were still being governed by those things, even though we hardly knew it. All we did know was, "Boy, it's harder to obey Jesus then it used to be, it's harder to obey God, in fact I can't obey Him. There are things that I don't seem able to obey Him on."

Loved ones, the reason is, that we're still entangled and attached to those things by a million different cords and chains and there is no way in which we can free ourselves from those and of course, the whole dear world of Christendom is built on that. It is built on that. Our churches are filled with loved ones who have never come free of those things but who continue somehow to try.

I remember my own agony. I would read in this book, I can do all things through Christ that strengthen me, and as a young man I said, "No, I can't, that isn't true." I would read what these great Psalmists said about the wonderful times they had before God and about the victory over sin. "Whosoever is born of God, does not commit sin." And I thought, "No, that isn't true of me. I do sin. I cannot do all things through Christ that strengthened me." So our dear world of Christendom is faced with a Bible that it has to continually disbelieve in order to keep itself believing it is in the kingdom of God. And so we have a church that limps along with all kinds of crutches with psychiatrists, with psychologists, with books on renewing our minds and changing our temperaments with all kinds of tricks and aids and helps and thoughts that are suppose to help us live the way God meant us to live.

Loved ones, the truth all the time is on that dear Cross you know, that we have in front of us in many of our churches. God has done in Jesus a work that will deliver you from that. That's the meaning of Calvary. The meaning of Calvary is not simply that He has born our sins so that God will not have to condemn us. The truth of Calvary is He has borne our sin, this thing within us which is so independent and so dependent on the world, which is so independent of God's opinion and so dependent on man's opinion, which is so independent of God's provision and so dependent on man's

provision, that is so independent of God's joy and so dependent on the world's happiness.

God has wrought a work on Calvary that has destroyed the connection that you have to the world and that's the meaning of that great verse where Paul said, "I glory in only one thing, the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world." That's the meaning of Calvary. On the Cross, in Jesus, God crucified the world to you. That is He crucified the world's connection with you and He crucified you to the world.

He crucified your connection to the world. He destroyed those thousand million umbilical cords that tie you to the world and that tie you to what you've been up to this moment. When we talk about sanctification, we talk about those moments - for some of us they're gradual moments, for some of us they're one great moment. Those moments or that moment, when you accept that by faith, deeply in your heart and as a result, the Holy Spirit of God sanctifies you and manifests the victory of Calvary in your own life and separates you from the world inside so that you're freed.

Now, why I am hitting this, this morning is, I would point you to a verse that a dear man used to talk about. I never knew it or looked it up before in detail but it is Daniel 4:33, "Immediately the world was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair grew as long as eagle's feathers and his nails were like bird's claws."

The dear man who first told me about the victorious life used to say that, "Yeah if you don't go into that brother, your body will be wet of the dew of heaven and your hair will grow as long as eagle's feathers and your nails will be like bird's claws." Obviously what he was referring to was that Nebuchadnezzar was a man who prospered mightily by God and had a mighty kingdom. But he did not stay under God's trust and under God's dependence and this is how he ended up.

Now, could I testify to you from my own experience? That's what you'll end up like, if you don't go on. If you don't go on into the deliverance that God has wrought in Jesus, low and behold loved ones you'll end up with Satan making a clown of you. You really will. He will make a mockery of you. He will, he'll bring you to a place that is humiliating and that is pitiful. He will. I think many of us you see think, "Well no, Satan is not that bad and he won't take us right to the end." He will. He is ruthless. He has no love of you or me whatever. He will destroy you and then re-destroy you and then re-destroy you after that.

He will keep on burrowing in until there's nothing left of you. And some of us say, "Well, we don't like the idea of dying with Jesus," but you either die with Jesus or you'll die under this guy's hands. You will either die with Jesus or you will eventually come to a place where your Christianity is a laughing stock for you. And where your Christianity is laid on the ground and you find yourself in this position.

Why? Because if you're really born of God, you're spoiled for the world, You're spoiled for the world. You're really spoiled for the world. You have known something of God. You know there is a better way and there's no going back. You can never go back. So if you go back like Nebuchadnezzar, you end up in this spot. You can't feel your way through again to the kind of ignorant, independent sin that you were involved in before. So if you don't go the whole way with God, you'll end up like this.

Now the reason I testify to it this morning is that the death must be complete. That is, I don't

know if you can really catch it but it really does mean Bob Scott, Bob Fehling, Bob Cook, Clyde Anderson, Dan Fowler, John Spaulding, Jim Raymo, Ernest O'Neill, it means us being crucified and ended as to what we have been up to this time. That's what it means and that's what God, I remember showed me 20 years ago. It means the ending of us men and women for what we have been in our life.

It means the dying of what we have been known as. It means a dying of us. It means that all that we have been up to this moment is crucified and destroyed by God in Jesus. It has already been done and we're saying that we accept that. If you say "Does that mean from now on, you're nobody?" Yes, that's right, you're a nobody. Thank God you don't end up a nobody. He gloriously fulfills His promise of filling you with the Holy Spirit and moving you on and moving you into that victorious life that Jesus is living at the right hand of God. But that's what you become.

You become a vessel in whom the Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, lives His victorious life. Actually you, yourself don't get anymore of that selfish satisfaction out of it. You regard your own life as finished and dead from that moment. And that has to be a complete worth loved ones. That's what the Holy Spirit witnesses to when He fills you. He witnesses to the completeness of that work.

Now I would testify to the fact that if you don't walk in the completeness of that work, you'll be back in this mess. You'll be back in all the old anxiety and all the old worry and all the old trouble. I see it of course very clearly because I can see how it has even worked to some extent here in our own dear family. God has continued to just bless this dear body (our church) and you continue to be just the dearest and most faithful loved ones Sunday by Sunday. And the businesses have to a certain extent been that. But I can look back to a time when I remember God showing me, "Now listen, you operate the businesses by a different way. You operate them by faith in Me and when it comes to loans from the bank and that kind of thing, you steer clear." and I was innocent enough thank God at that time, I knew little enough about business to believe Him.

Then I sensed that the only way the businesses would work of course for the glory of Jesus is if we had loved ones in, who were fully committed and fully surrendered, who were sanctified, who were dead to self and alive to God and Christ Jesus. Then you probably remember how we started in all kinds of situations. Some of us were into drugs. We were in those young days around 1970 when the world was chaos and America was even more chaotic than the world and nobody knew what was what. And so we had all kinds of people coming into the businesses and not everybody was at that point a full surrender. I remember wondering, "Should a loved one be in a business like this for the glory of Jesus if they haven't settled these things?" But we went on with them thinking, "Well, maybe they'll be drawn into it."

But the amazing thing is, if you in your own life go on without settling this sooner or later, every move that you make in that unsettled way will begin to build what Nebuchadnezzar had. It'll begin to build a mixed kingdom in your life. You'll begin to build things and make commitments yourself in your own personal life that aren't God's will for you and gradually that will develop a whole tenuous network that is the mixture that so often is Christendom today, that mixture of God's power and man's power.

As I look back, I can see how our businesses began to develop that way in so many ways. And then of course, the pressure is, "well, how do I keep the businesses going?" and then you begin to ease into man's ways. Certainly God has made it very clear to me that that must end and whether it ends in our business or not, it must end in me, and it must be finished in me. So, I won't tell you details but certainly the nails like bird's claws or the hair, that's very real for me now.

You'll go that way if you don't keep clean and you'll wear yourself out and be burdened by anxiety and be destroyed by the whole mess either personally or communally, if you don't walk in it absolute cleanness and death to what you are yourself and to anything you can do. But let me tell you this, that if you will enter into that, (and here's why I testify so joyfully today), there is complete liberty, complete freedom from every anxiety, complete freedom from worry about where your own life is going or what you're doing, complete freedom and liberty.

In other words, it is possible to stand therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. So I share it with you as a living testimony now and I have some hard things to build up and you all can see it plainly but I can't build them up, it has to be God through all of us. If He builds it good, if He doesn't build it, that's good.

But certainly this beginning of it all for every one of us is settling that place of full sanctification in Jesus and not giving in until God has brought us right through there to clarity. I feel for everyone of you here who still have trouble obeying the commandments because I'll tell you I have experienced some of that in recent months and as I can, you read that verse, "Have no anxiety, have no anxiety", and you say, "Yeah, I have no anxiety." You do a little bit of self analysis and psychology stuff and you keep saying "I am having no anxiety, I am having....." It's utterly different from that. It's utterly different.

When you settle things in Jesus, the Spirit of God just brings you a life that is free from worry. It's just different. It's just completely different. It's just plain again to me how absolutely different it is. I want to share it with you because for years, I have out of love for many of you and for many of the young men and women, bent over backwards and said, "Yeah well, that's right you do have some difficulty", and yet when I first came into it there were no difficulties.

There is freedom and liberty in Jesus death on Calvary. There is complete deliverance from self and complete deliverance from fear and worry and anxiety. It's just as different as day is from night. That's why God says things like "He transferred us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son."

It is an utterly different life. And if you say, "What is the key brother?" the key is: yielding to Jesus everything that God destroyed of you in His Son's death. Everything is all your past life. I'm not going to tone that down to make a better defense to the psychologists who say, "Well, then you lose your personality." Okay you lose your personality, but you don't. It seems to me it's complete and absolute and you can't tone it down without losing everything and ending up back in Nebuchadnezzar.

So, I'd like to warn you, I am going to blast at this as long as there is a congregation to listen to me and if you don't like it, then I'll go to England and I'll blast it there. But I am going to keep doing it and I pray that God will honor and bless the truth that He has used to liberate me and I pray that He'll bless it to your hearts and that He'll liberate you. And if you say to me, "What about all the things that have to be fixed?"

Well, we'd better get started and start fixing them. That's what we'll do. If we are faithful, God will honor our faithfulness and He'll do what He wants to do with us. But it seems to me, He wants for us a great ease and peace in Himself, a great rest in Himself and then a great ease and peace and rest as a body. And if we entered into that, and enter into peace there, God is able to do some

things through us that might bring Him glory.

I pray especially for each of you who have some of the dregs left and some of the uncertainties left. Those of you who were borne of God and not quite clear on those things. Let me just say, "Okay if this creature here can come through to it, well, you can come through it." God has done it for all of us.

Dear Father, we thank You for Jesus' death on Calvary. We thank You Lord for the completeness of that work. We thank You Father that it did not leave out any bit of us and Lord, unless we get everything onto the altar, we will not experience the deliverance from self that that wrought for us. So Lord, we ourselves would not leave a hand hanging off the altar or a leg hanging off the altar or a little bit of our bank account hanging off the altar or a little bit of our future hopes hanging off the altar. Lord, we would put everything on the altar this day. We are amazed that the altar does in a way, sanctify the gift. That the Holy Spirit of God falls upon the sacrifice and it does something that the sacrificing itself does not do. Lord, we thank You for that.

We thank You that there is a sense in which we sanctify ourselves. We set ourselves apart from other things to You, but there's a sense in which You alone can sanctify us by the fire of the Holy Spirit falling upon us and bringing us that life and that liberty that exist in Jesus. So, Lord, we thank You, thank You that You have all this for us.

We pray for each other here in this gathering this morning, pray for loved ones here to whom You have spoken and help them Lord to see that it's done in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, the moment they surrender everything and put it all in Your hands and say, "Lord, I regard my life is now finished, all that I have built up, all that I have become over these years from when I was born, I regard all that as crucified with You and ended. I no longer exist in this world. Lord, I give this body and this mind and this emotion and spirit to You".

Now, Lord, thank You that You will accept such a gift. And You will fill that loved one with your Holy Spirit and they will not want for direction in their life. They will not want for power to live this life pleasing to You, a glory to You, and fulfilling for them also. Thank You Lord that if we lose our lives for Your sake, we find them. Thank You Father. Amen.