

Commit Your Way to the Lord – Altar Call

Psalm 37

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

I just sensed loved ones that God didn't want me to preach the sermon that I have prepared and so I will preach it next Sunday -- and that I should ask you to take part with me in doing something this morning so that there would be an opportunity for everyone of you to do something, instead of just me speaking. So to that end, would you open the Bible at Psalm 37:5?

It's God's word I believe to many of you here and certainly to me this morning. "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will act." I just thought that if you go into the car park this morning, or you walk up and down the sidewalks and you try to make out what kind of people we all are, I am sure if you looked at some of our cars and some of our clothes and some of the jokes maybe that we crack as we come up the stairs, we maybe all look at each other and almost think, "Oh, I just wish I was like them", or "They seem to really have got it together. They seem to have it together financially and professionally and personally and every way."

I think it's very easy in a body like ours where God has shown us that it is possible to live victoriously and joyously, for many of us to look at each other and think, "Well, I certainly wish I was like them", and yet, do you know loved ones, that it doesn't matter what clothes each one of us have here. It doesn't matter what job we have. Actually, it doesn't matter even how we appear to be on the outside on a Sunday morning but all of us here in this room have some burden or some burdens that God has allowed us to carry for our good and so, there probably is not one person sitting next to you at this moment who has not something that is lying heavier on their dear hearts than it's God's will for that to lie.

I think many of us may be lying under the business of the final exams and that's exactly what we are doing, we're lying under it, we're not on top of it. As brother prayed, we have not taken that attitude. We have not given it over to God, we're carrying it. We're carrying not only the burden of the study we have to do but we're carrying the burden of the results of the examination and indeed you might say we're worrying about it. And there are many of us here who, when we read that piece from Jesus' words, "Do not be anxious about tomorrow", we want to be that way but we are not that way and we are worrying about our job situation although we haven't a job or the job we have is not going well.

We are worried about some relationship that we've got tangled up in a mess and we've been trying to sort that out for a long time and we can't do anything with it and it's a burden not that we're carrying joyously, not a burden that we've joyously handed over to the Father so that we can walk free, but it's a burden that we're bearing on our own shoulders, and we know we're bearing it. We tend to be preoccupied with it.

You know the easiest example of it is what we have all experienced - money. That's the easiest thing. There isn't one of us here that doesn't know what it's like to have a financial worry in your life and you know you try to push it away, but that thing grips you and grips you and wakens you up at night and worries you and makes you anxious and it's something that possesses you it seems, instead of something that you possess or control, and that's what I mean loved ones.

You all, I bet, look at each other. We all look at each other and we think 'Oh, I wish I was as free as that person is', and loved ones, the key to being free is not to have no burdens, because there is not one of us, thank God there is not one of us in this room that has not been given something to carry. If we ever had nothing to carry, we would sink into passivity and we would lose all touch with God, and there is not one of us in this room that hasn't been given something to carry except that we've been given it to hand over to the Lord and that's the distinction. Some of us have handed it over to the Lord and have left it with Him and some of us worry and fret and are anxious and we give it over and then we take it back and we trust Him and then we stop trusting Him, and that's what I want to speak to you about.

Do you not think there are some burdens in your life? Maybe with some of us they're just downright sins, maybe with some of us here the burden is we've never given ourselves to God at all, but whatever it is you know, whether it is a job situation or a marriage situation or a relationship or a financial worry or a business or a school crisis, whatever it is, do you not think you should take a stand this morning and commit it to the Lord? Do you not think you should stop just reading this word again and again and this morning you should do it? You should commit your way to the Lord. That's what this verse says, "Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him and He will act".

Really, what came home to me was a number of you know you should do that, but you've never actually taken the step and you've, maybe during prior times here, just kind of half done it. Maybe if it's the business of committing yourself to Jesus you know and trusting Him to regenerate you and make you a Christian. You have often half done it when I prayed at the ends of services but you've never really done it -- or maybe some of you are here and you know it's wrong to worry, it's wrong to worry for one moment, it's wrong in this beautiful world that the dear Father has given us to spend a moment in anxiety. It's wrong to spoil a moment in a cloud across the horizon and yet, you've often tried to give it and to pray about it and you have never really committed it to the Lord.

Now what I am asking you to do this morning is, will you take part together with me in committing whatever it is in your life that is a burden and is preoccupying you and is making you tight and tense? Will you commit it to the Lord this morning? I am going to explain a very definite way to do it, really.

Now I point out to you that there are dear brothers here who are attorneys and if I go to some of the other brothers here who are in the legal profession and I say to them I have a problem and I explained it all to them and I committed to them, then they expect me to keep my hands off it. They will soon tell me where to go over if I keep coming in and trying to advise them what to do with it. They will say "No, this is our case, you committed it to us, you're trusting us with it, you leave it in our hands, you keep your hands off it." That's what it means loved ones to commit your way to the Lord. Whatever it is that is niggling away or causing you unrest and anxiety in your life at this moment.

I am going to ask John to play a little and during the 10 or 15 minutes that are left to us of his service, I'm going to have an altar call. We're not very churchy here, so this stage is as near to an altar as we'll get here. And I am asking you to come up to just kneel, that's what I am going to do with something that I have to give to Him. Just kneel and commit it to Him. Now, I'll tell you how to commit it to Him.

Commit your way to the Lord. That means let Him control whatever it is that you're committing to Him. So if you're concerned about marriage, all that about the marriage that you have that is not

right or the marriage that you would like to enter into, then take your hands off that, you see, commit your way to the Lord. That's the way to do it. Stop trying to control it yourself. The same if you have never committed yourself to God as His child. It means coming up here and saying "Lord I take my hands off my life. You run it whatever way You want".

Same with finances, if it's a financial situation, you come up and you say "Lord, I am taking my hands off my finances. Lord if You want me to be absolutely bereft of money, if You want to take it all, if You want me to fail or succeed-whatever -- I now exercise my will", and loved ones that's it. The symbolism of coming up here does nothing. Only if while you are kneeling here you get that out of the control of your will and you say, "Lord, these final exams, I take my hands off them. Lord, whatever You want to do with them, that's up to You and I let them go out of my control now and I commit them to You." That's the first step in committing.

The second step is when you get up from your knees and walk back to your place. Leave those things here. Leave them here, leave them on this kind of a stage, this altar here, leave them with God. Now if you say, "How do I do that?" I'll tell you. It's a very simple thing. Tomorrow or today on the way home in the car or bus, when the thought comes into your mind, "What about this bank account", "What I am going to do about this exam", at that moment take your eyes off the thing because that's just Satan's temptation to get your mind wound up in it again. Take your eyes off the thing, turn them up to God and say, "Lord I thank You that You are controlling this thing and that it is in Your hands and I thank You for the way You are controlling it." That's the way to leave it with God, loved ones.

For next Wednesday, when the whole thing comes up before your very eyes and you see the results or you see what's happening to the office situation, you see it's as bad as ever it was, at that moment, instead of allowing your little old mind to get wrapped up in the thing again which is just Satan's trick, so that you become absolutely paralyzed and unable to do anything about it, instead of that, look away from the situation up to God and say, "Lord, I thank You that I left that with You in Campus Church last Sunday and I thank You for the way You are controlling it", and thank the Lord and praise God and as you begin to thank Him and praise Him in all circumstances for all things, He begins to realize this person is leaving the judging to Me. This person is beginning to accept what I give to them as success and not want what they think of success, and God begins to see that you're letting Him be God and then He begins to be able to act in the situation.

Loved ones, that's what it means, those two steps, committing your way to the Lord means at a definite point of time and that's why I am suggesting this, this morning, even though it's so unlike us to do this kind of thin. I am suggesting that you come up here during these next 10 to 15 minutes and you take your hands off the thing. None of those easy prayers: "you know Lord I give this to You, You take it from me, I can't release it." No. You let it go and some of you need to see that any tension in your life comes from a closed fist, that's where the tension comes from.

The knuckles get white because of the tension and the moment you open your hand, the tension goes and some of you will find that you've some things in jars, glass jars with narrow necks and during these next 10 minutes you will be burrowing in there and you'll get the hand in and then you'll find you can't get the hands out and there's only one reason why you can't get the hand out if you got it in and that's because you're holding something in it and you won't let go of it. The moment you let go off it, all the tension goes from your life and you're able to commit it to God.

So the first step is to come up here and give it to God's control. Say, "Lord, I take my hands off

this. I no longer want to control it my way. I give it to You. You be God." That's all we're saying. That's a small thing. "You be God in this part of my life. You have Your way Lord, have Your own way Lord." That's all you are saying and exercise your will to let go the control of this thing and let God run it whatever way He wants and then when you get up from your knees, leave it here and say, "Lord, I thank You for the way You are controlling this", and each time that subject comes up through the rest of your life, look away from the subject to God and say, "Lord I thank You for the way You are controlling this."

Loved ones, that's what is involved in committing your way to the Lord and that's why some of us can work joyously, not because we have no burdens, but because we have handed them over to the Father. We have let Him take over control and we thank Him daily for the way He is controlling them. So loved ones, I would just ask some of you, you know as husbands and wives who want to come up together, some of you will want to come up singly and individually and I just say do it.

The Father is here and if you let the thing go to Him, He will more than bless you and more than release you. But the beauty of it is, of course, you're not giving it to Him so that He'll succeed in the way you want Him to succeed, you'll let Him do whatever He wants to do with it and take your own hands off.

Okay, just come, I wouldn't wait for others, I'd just come. I think it's really good that we're natural about it and so that people will feel free to go who want to leave. I think just let's continue praying and those of you who're waiting just wait and we'll pray, and those of us who're sitting, maybe you would just turn to song number 34 and while the rest of us are seeking God, then we'll sing and I'll just pronounce the benediction and then those who want to leave, can leave and then the rest of us can remain and I would urge you to remain and deal with God. Let's just remain sitting loved ones, as we sing and those of us who are praying just continue praying and getting these things into God's hands, that's what He wants.

Lord Jesus, we know that You are taking from us burdens, now that we are letting go of them once and for all. Lord we would pray for the loved ones who are now doing that. Lord Jesus we thank You that we're putting them into the hands of Him by whom all things were made. Oh Lord we thank You that these are strong and mighty and powerful hands and that they will not drop what we have committed on to them but we are persuaded that You will keep what we have committed unto you this day and Lord we thank You for that. Lord Jesus we thank You for that and so far as we let go of these things so You are able to take them over and oh Lord we thank You for the joy with which we will be able to walk these coming days.

Each time the thought occurs, Lord we will be able to look up to You and thank You for the way You're controlling this thing which now is no longer ours. Lord we thank You for that. Lord I pray now that as John continues to play on the organ and as others of us go home, Lord Jesus I pray that You now will continue to take from us the things that we have to give you. Lord I pray for the loved ones who are standing here that they will have a real freedom just to stand and wait until they can put these things on the altar so that they will deal with You and complete their business with You this day, so that they can walk out of here free.

Now Lord Jesus I pray that the grace and the love of your dear Father, our God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit will be with each one of us now and until we see You face-to-face. Amen.

