

Spiritual Warfare 2: Satan's Lies

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

It would be good, loved ones, if we could cover as much of Jesus' truth as possible this evening so I'll try to go as quickly as is consistent with you receiving the truth. But, you really need to ask the Holy Spirit and listen to him so that he will interpret it to you because I think they are really deep things. I think there's a lot of silly talk about deep things but I think there are some deep things that God will light up to us and will use to help us.

Could I remind you that God's plan is for the life of the son that he sent to earth to come into our spirits and then for that life to create in the world the kind of place that God wanted. Now, that's God's will. That's inherent in the original commission, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fulfill the earth and subdue it." It's inherent in the New Testament commission, "To preach the gospel to all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

You and I are sent here to be picture frames in which a portrait of Jesus is painted that the world will be able to see. You and I are to be Christophers, Christ bearers; we are to bear the life of Jesus' Spirit and to express it to the world. In other words, God's plan is for an outgoing life. And you remember we shared last day how the Bible outlines that we are spirit, and soul, and body. And it is God's will that his Spirit would come in, make our spirits alive, and then would pass out through our souls and our bodies, and out to the world, and would bring the world into submission to his will. And in that way would glorify him by recreating the world in his image. Now, that's God's plan.

There are several difficulties that have been placed in the way. One is that our spirits are dead. They aren't alive to God at all and they aren't filled with his Spirit. That's because we have stopped listening to him and we've started to live on our own independent from him, getting from the world the love that we were meant to receive from God. Because we've done that, our personalities have become perverted; they've been inturned perverted personalities. And so God can't give his Spirit to us because he knows his Spirit will be imprisoned in us and so there's a real difficulty there.

How do you change those inturned personalities? God did it through his son Jesus. He put us all into his son Jesus and he crucified that old perverted self that was inturned. And now he is able to give his Spirit to anyone who is willing to experience that in their own lives. That is, anyone who is willing to live outwards -- and not depend on the world, and people, and friends, and things for their security, their significance, and their happiness. Anybody who is willing to die to all that and to come alive to God himself will receive his Spirit. And many of us, of course, have received his Spirit and we've been born of the Spirit and we're alive. And immediately that happens the Spirit starts trying to get out through our souls.

But that means of course that we have to change some of the ways our souls operate. So instead of, for instance, seeking the love of our friends and our wives for our own edification, we have to be willing to give love without ever receiving it back. Now, that's quite a task and we have to decide are we willing to do that. And there are many children of God who are not willing to do that and they remain carnal Christians because they have God's Spirit inside so that their spirits are alive

but they're still living inwards from the world and so the Spirit is trying to get out but they're living from the world --getting the world's love, and depending on the world's love, depending on peer approval, depending on possessions for their security, depending on circumstances for their happiness. And so they live dependent on these things even though the Spirit of God is within them.

So they are born of the Spirit but they don't live by the Spirit and they are carnal Christians. They have a tremendous conflict here because they're not willing; their will is selfish and still wants to get from the world what it wants rather than to allow God to use it to transform the world by his Spirit. And so a big step, of course, is when you're willing to die to that selfish will and you're willing to live an outward going life where you're willing to live only for Jesus and only for the transmission of his life to the world without any thought about yourself or what you're getting.

And you remember that we said last day that as soon as a person is willing to do that, Jesus baptizes them with the Spirit and then the battle begins because Satan begins to try to deceive that person in such a way that even though they're willing for God's Spirit to come through their personalities and transform them, and transform the world, yet that will not happen. And you remember, one of Satan's lies is the one about the soul and about passivity. And you remember the verse, and I'll try now loved ones to outline some of these things so that you'll understand them.

You remember, the verse was the verse that referred in Philippians 2:13 to a passive soul. And maybe you'd like to turn to it. And it's a verse that the demons of course, and Satan himself has used against many of us. Philippians 2:13, "For God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." And Satan has misinterpreted that to many who have fallen into passivity because they read it, "For God will will and work in me." And really what they mean is, "God will work and will instead of me."

And so many of us who have heard the normal statement of our consecration to Jesus as, "I'm letting the Lord use me," have interpreted that to mean that we don't need to direct our wills, or our minds, or our emotions ourselves-- we'll just let the Lord do it. And we let him pass through our wills, and will for us, and pass through our minds and think for us, and pass through our emotions and feel for us. And do you know -- God will never, never do that? God will not think for you. That's why he's given you the mind. He will not will for you. That's why he's given you the will. He will not feel for you. That's why he's given you the emotions.

He expects you to receive the life of his Son into your spirit and then to will that spirit and that life into your mind, and into your emotions, and out to the world. And of course, if you refuse to do it then you will fall into the kind of passivity that I think I mentioned last day. Maybe I could just quote a little from a book that I wouldn't even recommend you to buy it yet -- but maybe that's a good way to get you to buy it. But, it is the kind of a book that has those truths that if you don't interpret them under the Holy Spirit, they can bring you into real confusion.

So it is "War on the Saints" and it is written by an English woman years ago, Jessie Penn-Lewis. But here's what she says, "There is a passivity of the will. The will being the helm so to speak of the ship. This originates from a wrong conception of what full surrender to God means. Thinking that a surrendered will to God means no use of the will at all. The believer ceases to choose, ceases to determine, and ceases to act of his own volition. The series effect of this he is not allowed by the powers of darkness to discover, for at first the consequences are trivial and hardly noticeable. In fact, at first it appears to be most glorifying to God. The strong willed person

suddenly becomes passively yielding. The thinks that God is willing for him in circumstances and through people, and so he becomes passively helpless in action.”

“After a time no choice can be got from him in matters of daily life. No decision or initiative in matters demanding action. He is afraid to express a wish, much less a decision. Others must choose, act, lead, decide -- while this one drifts as a cork upon the waters. Later on the powers of darkness begin to make capital out of this surrendered believer and to work around him evil of various kinds which entangle him through his passivity of will. He has now no power of will to protest or resist. Obvious wrong in his environment, which this believer alone has a right to deal with, flourishes and grows strong and blatant.”

Now, I've seen that in many of us. I've seen us children of God, alive in our spirits but misunderstanding through Satan's deception how we are to use our souls and exercise them under the guidance of his Spirit. And we have misinterpreted that and we've said, “No, no, the Lord uses my mind, the Lord uses my will.” And many of us have become absolutely passive in our wills and passive in our minds. And you remember, I shared with you that many of us have rooms that are an absolute shame to Jesus. Our bedrooms at home are a disaster because we can somehow never quite get it together, we just can't. “Oh, I'm going to, I'm going to, I'm really going to spring clean this whole room some day.” But we never get round to it.

Our cars are always just not quite right, not quite right. Our job, we're never quite sure we should be in it and we're never quite sure we should be out of it so we kind of go half and half in it. And eventually, we end up living a half life and we shake hands with a hand that is like a cold fish, and we stare most of the time and daydream, and we don't really act in our lives; we are passive and we let the world beat up upon us.

Now loved ones, you remember that I shared with you that that is because we have that misunderstanding, you remember, about the relationship of our will to our conscience. God's Spirit, as you commune with him in prayer and as you study his word, will give you a clear sense in your spirit of what you ought to do through intuition. And then your conscience will begin to constrain your will to execute those directions. But a person who misunderstands Philippians 2:13, will think that his will ought not to activate at all his mind or his emotions -- or her mind, or emotions -- and they'll think, “No, no, God just passes right through my spirit, and out through my body, and out to the world and that's what they mean by the effortless life of sanctification and the Spirit filled life.”

Now it isn't, loved ones. There's only one way for the Spirit of God to get through to your body and out to the world and that is through your soul. And he can only do that through a soul that is actively cooperating with what God is showing a person in their spirit. And so it's vital to activate your soul. And I agree with you, not in the old way, where your mind used to manipulate people and things for your own glory, or where your emotions would concentrate on getting joy from the world, or from other relationships, or where your will would be utterly under the domination of your mind and emotions which in turn would be utterly under the domination of your body. Not in that way, but in that way with your will actively obeying your conscience and then directing your mind to understand and to work out in detail the directions God has given you in your job, or in your home, or in your plans for your future. And then for your emotions to actively express that joy to the world. And so God's plan is always for us to be in active cooperation with his Spirit.

Be assured of this, there is only one who takes advantage of passivity and that is Satan and his

demons. That's, you remember, where transcendental meditation gets its power. It is annihilation of the soul so that the person is absolutely unprotected and the spirit is passive, and then the evil spirits make their impressions upon that spirit. Now, when a spirit or a soul is passive the evil spirits have their full way just as they want.

Maybe I could share some other things loved ones, and maybe God will give you some light as we go through some of these. This of course brings about what is mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:2, you see it there. These are of course, doctrines of demons as you realize. These are the doctrines that demons pass on to God's children to keep the Spirit shut up within them. 1 Timothy 4:2, maybe you'd like to read Verse 1 also to get the context, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, through the pretensions of liars whose consciences are seared."

The interesting thing is, if you don't exercise your will under the direction of your conscience -- it's incredible -- but your conscience itself begins to be passive. It does. Your conscience not only becomes seared, in that you do things that God doesn't want you to do, but the conscience itself loses its power to be active and the conscience goes passive. Lewis puts it this way, "As for the passivity of reasoning powers, when such believers have taken words spoken to them supernaturally as God's expressed will they become law to them so that they cannot be induced to be reasoned over them."

You notice that that's one thing loved ones do, they decide, "Oh yeah, I'll just let the Lord use my soul, and I'll just let the Lord do everything." And so they don't actively study God's word, they don't. They engage in meditation and often in transcendental meditation. They just let the word kind of soak into them and they half dream over it and half sleep over it and they feel that they're absorbing the word and they're eating it up this way, but they never exercise their intellect, or their judgment, or their reasoning powers on God's word. And so little-by-little, they cut themselves off from wisdom, and from knowledge that God is giving to them. And little-by-little, they lose any sense of touch with God's word. And then of course, the demons lie to them and say, "Now the first voice that comes to you, that's God's word." And so their conscience is pretty dead by that time and they're listening for these voices.

If they receive a commandment supernaturally about anything they will not examine it, or reason, or think upon that point and they steadfastly determine to close themselves absolutely to any further light in this particular direction. Now, that's utterly opposite to a healthy child of God. A healthy child of God may realize that their mind may not in some sense be renewed and that in some sense their mind may contradict the directions that God gives in their spirit but they will see that they've to renew their mind by studying his word. And they will see that a renewed mind will normally agree with the directions they're getting in their spirits.

But a child of God who has come into passivity in the use of their minds, and whose conscience then has become passive, will disregard any responsibility of the mind to examine these commandments and they'll be afraid to examine them. This brings about what may be described as passivity of the conscience. The conscience becomes passive through non-use. When believers think they are being guided by a higher law of being told to do this, or that, directed from God -- that is, by direct guidance through voices and texts -- and then it's very difficult to do anything with such a person.

You'll notice that such a person becomes less and less use in the fellowship of Christ's body. They become less and less communicative people, and they retreat more and more from the healthiness of

God's body and they are receiving higher directions, and higher commandments that they at times won't even tell others because no, they don't want confirmation from anybody else, and they don't want confirmation from God's words less it pervert his direct personal command to them. And so they sink back into a very lonely life.

Now of course, it feeds the pride because they sense they are going on to a new level of direct communication with God that no one else shares. But really what they are sinking into is a passivity of conscience and they're coming under the direction of evil spirits. Sometimes you'll notice such people do things abruptly. I don't know if you realize it but God does not direct his children this way and then that way, and then this way, and that way. He doesn't. He changes their nature and they walk along as friends with one another and he lets them understand why he wants them to do certain things and when he wants them to do certain things and their life gradually unfolds in the direction he has for it.

But when you get loved ones darting this way and that abruptly you need to watch, are they really very great saints that just can hear the voice of God's Spirit like that? Or are they in fact loved ones who have come into real passivity of judgment, and passivity of reasoning powers, and passivity of conscience. Now loved ones, that's one of the passivities that the demons bring about.

Then there is a real passivity that they bring about in connection with the great truth of the central work that God has done to us in Jesus. And that's the great truth there in Galatians 2:20, the great truth in Romans 6:6 that our old self is crucified in Christ. Then Galatians 2:20 is another expression of it, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

And yet you can see that Paul states there that, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God." So Paul has no question that he has not become an unentity or a dead, passive thing. There's no question that his personality is still alive. But what happens to some loved ones, as they come into the truth of our whole death to self, is they interpret it as the death of self. That is, the death of the personality -- and so they try to come into a place where they are dead to everything that they sense through their personalities. And they regard everything that their personality senses as evil and selfish. And so they begin to come into that passivity and that deadness of a moron or an automaton and they see that as dying to self.

Now, what's important for us to be clear on is that you can live two ways. You can live to defend your own rights and to please yourself -- or you can live to defend God's rights and please God. That's what death to self is about. It's death to living for yourself and for your own glory, and it's coming alive to live for God and for his glory. But it is an act of a live experience. I'd remind you of Romans 12:1, "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice," not a dead sacrifice, not a passive sacrifice, but you actively present your bodies as a living sacrifice unto God which is your spiritual service.

And every time you read God's word as it's written you'll find that God is encouraging a living for his glory and a living to defend his rights. But, in no sense the death of the personality. And of course, I think you'd agree that there is no death of the personality in those of us who are alive and ministering in Jesus. What I found was, at last my personality was free, was free. I didn't have to repress it or suppress it. At last it was something I wasn't afraid to show or I wasn't

afraid to let out. And so it is not, in fact, the death of the personality.

Jessie Penn-Lewis puts it in what I think are better terms but sometimes I think it can speak to us just because they're different terms. She says, "But when these truths of Romans 6:6, are interpreted to mean one, a loss of personality; two, an absence of volition and self control; and three, the passive letting go of the I myself into a condition of machine like, mechanical, automatic obedience with deadness and heaviness which the believer thinks is mortification or the working of death in him, it makes the truth of death with Christ a fulfilling of conditions for evil spirits to work."

Isn't that interesting, that many loved ones allow spirits of demons to deceive them about the whole truth of being willing to die and to be raised with Christ. And they don't get as far as the raised with Christ, they just stay with the dying with Christ and then they lapse into trying to elaborate more fully to themselves what this dying is. And they think, "Ah, it's the dying of everything of self. It's the dying of my personality." And as soon as they get into that they begin to fulfill the very conditions which evil spirits require for their working.

So that's why some of you may wonder, "Now, how does it happen that often when these deep truths of crucifixion with Christ are preached and shared, the evil spirits seem to be most at work?" Well, you see why it is, because the closer you get to the height of what God has done to us in Jesus the more subtle become the work of demons and Satan himself and the more he is able to misinterpret it to other people. And she says, "And an absence of conditions upon which God alone can work so that supernatural manifestations taking place on the basis of passivity can have no other source than the lying spirits however beautiful and God like they may be."

And so of course, she points out that many people get into a false kind of self effacement because of that. They kind of come into a furtive withdrawal of their personalities. They feel, "Oh, I oughtn't be what I am." Well of course, the beauty of being crucified with Christ and being raised with Christ is you can at last be what you are. Your nature has been changed and you can be what you are and it's not something you have to protect, or hide, or conceal from other people.

But she says this, "Under the conception of surrender of self to God as meaning self effacement, self renunciation, and practically self annihilation, the believer aims at unconsciousness of personality, unconsciousness of personal needs, unconsciousness of personal space, feelings, desires, external appearance, circumstances, discomforts, opinions of others so as to be conscious of God only moving, working, acting through him." And of course, the fact is you're very conscious of what other people say but it doesn't kill you the way it used to.

You don't feel a reaction, or resentment against them. You're very conscious of pains, and of sicknesses, but they have no power to discourage you from doing what God has sent you to do. They are not able to keep his Spirit from going out through you. And that's the difference, loved ones. But, there are some of us who feel, "Oh no, dying with Christ means that my personality becomes absolutely dead." Of course, you know the result of it.

The result is that such people become dead to sympathizing to others -- so that the husbands and wives, or the roommates and the friends, often find they're dealing with some kind of insensitive automaton who is stoical and does not seem to be able to understand them or to love them. And yet, what is important for us to see this evening is that this is the result of deception. And you know, if you have found yourself in some of this, oh praise God that he's giving you light about it and if

you're willing to walk out of it there is no difficulty in walking out of it if you persist in walking after the truth.

She says, "To this end, the believer gave over his self consciousness to death and prayed that he might have no consciousness of anything in the world but the presence of God. Then to carry out this absolute surrender of self to death, and this entire self effacement, he consistently and practiced yields to death. Every trace of the movement of self he becomes aware of and sets his will steadily to renounce all consciousness of personal wishes, desires, tastes, needs, feelings. All this, appearing to be so self sacrificing and spiritual, results in an entire suppression of personality and the giving of ground to evil spirits and a passivity of the whole being."

And of course, the way of Calvary is far different from that. It's being more sensitive and aware of the movements of your own personality than ever before but being in Jesus at the right hand of God so that you are able to discern from that high, and holy, and powerful place whether that is a right reaction or a wrong reaction and then you're able to choose between them. It's a position of power and a position of complete alertness. It isn't a position where you're good because you can't see the evil. It's a position where you do the good because you have no drawing towards the evil at all though you can see it. So you're able to discern between what is reasonable awareness of pain and awareness of sickness -- which is necessary after all to get the body healed and to get it made well -- and unreasonable consciousness of pain or sickness where you begin to pity yourself and you begin to be preoccupied with yourself instead of continuing to let Jesus' Spirit go out.

So loved ones, it might be good for those of you who are dealing with the whole reality of being crucified with Christ to see that it has nothing to do with the death of the personality but it has everything to do with dying to living for your own rights, and for your own glory, and for your own comfort. So it's the motive that is different, you see? It's not that your personality dies -- but it's whether your personality is used to bring glory to you or to bring glory to Jesus.

I'll just share one more with you, loved ones, because it is heavy stuff, and then try to point out the way of victory. I think some of you come into this, it's Philippians 3:10. Again, another doctrine of demons that are mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:1 there. Philippians 3:10, Paul writes, "That I may know him," Jesus, "And the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death." There are many loved ones that sink into passive suffering.

Paul sharing in Christ's suffering was an active thing. I mean, he sensed the pain that Jesus sensed when the people made idols. He sensed the pain that Jesus sensed when the Corinthian church got into immorality. He sensed the pain that Jesus sensed as he travailed in prayer that Christ might be fully formed in people who didn't want him. His was an active co-suffering with Jesus where he was actively involved. But there are many loved ones who interpret fellowship of Christ's sufferings as, "I'm here to suffer. This is what I'm here to do. I'm here to suffer."

I can give you a very easy instance. It's very interesting because God has given us a very good recipe for victory here in the body because he's given us the truth of dying with Christ to self and to protect us against the passivity or the monasticism that that might bring, he's involved us in business -- which is just about the least monastic kind of operation you could have. And so it is interesting, and challenging, and exciting to become a person who is walking on the Calvary Road and yet is being used to run businesses efficiently.

And I remember speaking to one of our waitresses in the service area and we were making some changes

in the service area. And I was saying, "Well, why can't we move the salad over here? And why can't we move this refrigerator around here? And why can't we change those things?" And she was looking at me kind of staring and I said, "Don't you think that would be better? Don't you think that would make the thing more efficient? Don't you think it would be less trouble for you? I mean, it would help you waitresses." And she said, "Well yes, but I thought the inconvenience was part of the cross."

And it's interesting you know, how many of us might have something of that in our own personal lives. We might think, "Well yes, things aren't the way they should be but if I were on the cross I should be ready to put up with it." Loved ones, do you see what a triumphant lie that is of Satan? Our job is to transform the world. Our job is to turn the world upside down as the apostles did. Our job is to put things right. Our job is to make things look like Jesus so that when he comes he'll be delighted because it will be so like heaven. That's why he sent us here.

He has not sent us here to suffer continually the unpleasant circumstances that are around us. He has sent us here to rectify those circumstances. Now, I'm with any of you who say, "Oh, well aren't there certain things, according to old Saint Francis' prayer, that you can't change?" Certainly, and God expects us to live in patience, and forbearance, and joy in the midst of those things. But, he has sent us primarily to change things and to transform things.

And do you see, that's why loved ones like Karl Marx would say, "Christianity is the opium of the people." Because, he felt that religion is used to keep people passive so that they will not change, or want to change their circumstances and their social environment, and their political state. And really, in so far as he's interpreting passive Christians, he is right in that way. But it's not at all the meaning of suffering. Suffering is not something that is meant to wear us down and it is not meant to be continually our lot in life.

We are meant to go into situations and change them and transform them. And I'll just share this very briefly with you, a little of Lewis and then we'll close. And she says this in her way, "Suffering passivity by wrong acceptance of suffering. The believer consents to accept suffering with Christ in the way of the cross -- and in fulfillment to this surrender to suffering, from this time on passively yields to suffering in whatever form it may come. Believing that suffering with Christ means reward and fruitfulness, he does not know that evil spirits can give counterfeit suffering and that he may accept suffering from them believing it to be from the hand of God and by thus doing give ground to them." And then she says, "Suffering directly caused by evil spirits may be discriminated from the true fellowship of Christ's sufferings by a complete absence of result either in fruit, victory, or ripening in spiritual growth."

So do you see that you can discern the suffering that you're putting up with from evil spirits by seeing that with it there's a complete absence of results either in fruitfulness in other people being drawn to Jesus or in your own spiritual growth. There's a complete absence of results. It's just a dead thing that lays upon you. And there are a lot of loved ones that lay under continual heaviness. They have a heaviness about them. They feel their lot in life is just to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and just to keep suffering and keep bearing up and grinning valiantly.

Loved ones, do you know that the walk of the saint is victorious, and joyful, and aggressive, and triumphant. It is not a kind of down at the mouth, "Well, let's grin and bear it. Jesus will give me grace to put up with it." It's not. Loved ones, if you find yourself preoccupied with Satan



there is some way in which you're not actively cooperating with Jesus' Spirit. God's saints are not constantly preoccupied with Satan, they aren't. I'm not much of one and I don't have much time with Satan, I don't. I don't spend a whole lot of time warring against Satan.

Most of us are too busy moving on, taking ground from him and triumphing over him and we haven't time to have a whole lot of concern about Satan himself, or about suffering. The saints are not preoccupied with suffering, even dear souls that have tremendous suffering. They're not conscious of the suffering. They know it's there but they're not preoccupied with it. Whereas those who come under the suffering of evil spirits allow it utterly to dominate their life and that's one of the chief marks and characteristics of their life.

"If carefully observed it will seem to be entirely purposeless, that brought by evil spirits. On the other hand, God does nothing without a definite object. He does not delight in causing suffering for the sake of suffering. But, the devil does. Suffering caused by evil spirits is acute and fiendish in its character and there is no inward witness of the Spirit which tells the suffering believer that it is from the hand of God. To a discriminating eye it can be as clearly diagnosed when from an evil spirit as any physical pain can be discriminated from a mental one by a skillful physician. The suffering caused by evil spirits can be spiritual by causing acute suffering in the spirit, injecting feelings to the spirit repugnant or poignant; soulish, by acute darkness, confusion, chaos, horror in the mind; anguish, knife like pain in the heart, or other innermost vital parts of the being, or physical in any part of the body." Loved ones, that kind of suffering is not of God.

What have you to do in the situation? See that if you've been crucified with Christ then the glory is that you've been raised with Christ and that is your position. And your power over Satan depends on continually living in that position. And I think you know that Wilkerson was right years ago, he wrote, "There are some people who do not really die to self with Christ, and therefore continually are preoccupied with death and crucifixion. But there are others who do truly die to self with Christ and immediately experience resurrection with Christ and they are preoccupied with their position in Christ at God's right hand." And loved ones that is our position.

Maybe you'd look at it, it's Ephesians 2:6. There are two verses that are the basis of our victory in this spiritual warfare. One, is Ephesians 2:6, and you remember you get the continuation of the grammar if you look at Ephesians 2:1, "And you he made alive," made past tense, "When you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked." And then in Verse 6, "And raised," -- ed, the past tense, we've already been raised. Not "will raise" but "has already raised". "And raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Now where is Christ Jesus? Oh, Ephesians 1:20, "Which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and he has put all things under his feet and has made him head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." "Put all things under his feet," which means Satan and his power is under the feet of Jesus. And even if you have just got into Jesus' heel, or maybe you're just in his big toe, but you're still above the things that are under his feet and that's our position of victory.

Loved ones, first you have to believe that you are in that position in Ephesians 2:6. And if you ever lose your belief in that position, if you ever think in the middle of a conflict in the office,

or in the middle of a battle at home, or in the middle of depression over finances, if you ever for a moment think, "I'm down here on earth slugging it out toe-to-toe with Satan and I can't push him off me," you're lost. At that moment repeat Ephesians 2:6 to yourself and say, "Thank you Lord that I have been raised up and made to sit with Christ in the heavenly places. And thank you that that's where I am at this moment. And from this holy and high and powerful place I then," and then James 4:7, loved ones.

It's the second clear direction of God's word to us for victory in spiritual warfare. James 4:7, first "Submit yourselves therefore to God." In the position that he has given you in his right hand and then, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Then resist Satan. Do not put up with circumstances that are wrong. Do not put up with situations that are wrong. Do not put up with an absence of money. Do not put up with an absence of clothing. Do not put up with situations at home that are unbearable. Resist Satan; stand against him.

In your prayer time stand against him. Even if you have to repeat audibly to yourself, "Satan I reject you in Jesus' name." Do that and constantly as you come against the situations don't for a moment accept those situations, don't for a moment believe that those situations are God's will. Resist them and from your position in Jesus at the Father's right hand, speak to them in faith-- to the mountain be removed and cast into the sea -- and act on the basis that the mountain is going to be moved. Because, that's what faith is.

Faith is not just a lot of shouting and yelling. Faith is living in the basis and in the belief that in fact, the mountain has been removed by God. And so if it's not removed you walk through it. But, you set your sight on it having been removed. Now loved ones, it's the only way for spiritual victory in this kind of warfare. But, would you see that the only hope is that you continue to allow the Holy Spirit of Jesus to move out through you. The Holy Spirit is always moving out, always taking over new ground -- so if you see some area of your life that is just stagnant, loved ones, that area will drown you. It will drown you in its own stink and its own smell unless you move forward and transform that area of your life for Jesus. And it's done by willing together with God from your position in Jesus at the Father's right hand.

Now loved ones, be sure that you ask only the questions God wants you to ask because it is difficult and dangerous stuff, you know, that we're talking about. So are there any questions?

Question from Audience:

Is it true then that the suffering you're aware of, comes from demons -- and the suffering you're not aware of comes from God?

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

Well, do you see brother one of the reasons I'm even hesitant to answer questions on teaching like this is that there isn't a set rule because there are demons listening to us. And as soon as we set a rule they then bring you some suffering that you're apparently not aware of and they begin to get hold. Besides, your victory then depends on being able to discern with your mind something that I have told you because of a law that we've established. And I really do believe that the only safe place is our faith in our position at God's right hand and our constant awareness of the Holy Spirit's discerning and guidance.

That's why I think, in the New Testament when they warned of the deception that would come in the last days, there were two guards against it. One was God's good word, the Bible, and the other was the Holy Spirit. So I think that that's the right answer. I'm trusting Jesus to guide me to say the right thing to you in that situation.

(Question from Audience inaudible:)

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

Well loved ones, do you see how Satan has transformed God's mighty army into a pretty weak harmless group of part time philanthropists? Do you see that? You can see how it's happened because you know that many of the things that God has shared with us this evening really apply to so many of us and so few of us are moving forward. And loved ones, we have to move forward and it will be agony, and it will be torture. I can tell you because I know from the businesses that we're involved in through the week, it is agony to begin to use your spiritual life in an active life in the world.

But, unless we do it, we're harmless, really. Satan has effectively neutralized us. And I would ask those of you who are in ordinary jobs to be sure that you are moving forward. And probably the worst attitude and the most dangerous attitude is this kind of down at the mouth attitude, "We poor Christians, we're constantly being persecuted and I wish they wouldn't swear when we're in the office. And the Christmas party -- I can't go to it because they drink." That's terrible. That's pitiful.

Jesus was the dear one you know, who was into everything, into everywhere. Wherever there were people that needed to be saved he went there. And he went aggressively, and constantly, and triumphantly. And there is no place for that attitude, "They're telling dirty jokes again. I'll have to get out of the room." Get out of the room? You should be staying in the room and telling them what you think. But loved ones, unless you move forward you'll sink, you really will sink.

You'll sink, you'll deny your Lord until there's no Lord left in you, you will. Or by silence you'll deny him -- so you must take arms against these things and you must begin to wage aggressive warfare. Otherwise, Satan will leave you the little bit of spirituality that you think you have because he knows it's harmless unless you are engaged in spiritual warfare from your position in Jesus at the right hand of God. And do you see that? That not one of us are really here, do you see that?

Not one of us is really here. We have been raised with Jesus and in spiritual reality -- as far as the powers of evil are concerned -- we are at God's right hand at this moment and Satan knows it. "One little word will fell him." That's what Luther said and he knew one little word would fell Satan. One person who stands in Jesus and says, "I reject you in Jesus' name." That person has power over Satan. Satan, and his circumstances, and his evil works will fall away out of all things, because of your word. Your word -- not because of you -- but because of the person in whom you live.

Question from Audience Inaudible:

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

The word "exalt" would be good enough, brother. I'm game to stand on it, yes. It's our response,

you see? It's not suffering but it's a response to suffering. Do we exalt in it, and do we glory, and do we triumph because of it or through it? Or, are we under it? And it seems that when we come under the suffering that evil spirits bring, we lay under it and we suffer and nothing comes of it, no fruit comes.

Question from Audience:

Could you say a little in regard to passivity -- particularly in the sphere of authority and submission?

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

Loved ones, I'll just very quickly do it. It was new to me coming from the British kind of educational background, it was new to me that a person in authority when he said something would not be questioned. That is, in Christian circles. Often in Christian circles a person in authority says something and the person who is supposed to be in submission to them says, "He said it? It must be right."

Now, I didn't believe that that was authority and submission. I thought authority and submission was the person in authority saying something, and a person in submission who had real doubt about it saying to them in a spirit of submission saying, "Now, could you explain why you think I should do this?" Or, "Do you not think that there is something to be said of this?" And they would reason with the person in authority over them. And I thought, you see, that you can do that with a spirit of submission that is absolute but knowing that authority itself is relevant.

As in the example, you remember, "We must obey God rather than men." And so what I have seen certainly is a tremendous misconception about authority and submission not only in our Christian businesses and in church ministry but also in husband/wife relationships. I've seen many of you come under a kind of fearful thing that you call submission and I don't think it's submission.

I think submission is absolutely consistent with you using your mind and you being in such a relationship of trust with the one who is in authority over you that he doesn't think for a moment that you're trying to undermine their authority when you say, "Well, now do you think we should do it this way?" Or, "Do you think we should do it that way?"

In other words, reasoning with them in a spirit of submission is not a questioning of authority. But Bob, if I could follow it up, I think that where many of us have failed is we've engaged in the practice that brought Miriam and Aaron, I believe, into leprosy and I think it has brought many of us into spiritual leprosy. We have not in fact, spoken to the person in authority but when they have gone out of the way we have murmured among ourselves and we have complained, and criticized until all relationship with Jesus was lost and then we became Satan's agents in the ministry of Jesus. And I've seen a real failure among children of God in that regard.

I think there's no place for murmuring. There's no place for negativism. I think I could do the most idiotic thing in the world and there's no place for you to murmur against me or criticize me. You ought not to touch any of us who have been anointed by God and put into places of authority. You have every right to come to me and say, "Now brother, do you think that's a sensible thing? Do you not think we should do it this way?" That's entirely different. That's coming and letting us reason together.

But there's no place loved ones, for murmuring or criticizing. And maybe could I share that, because I sense some of you are from other churches. No, you don't help your dear pastor one iota by murmuring against him, not at all. In fact, you confuse the whole issue because he knows that that is of Satan and so there's no possibility of him ever seeing what your point of view is at all because he knows that's of Satan.

Whatever else is right, the murmuring and the criticism is of Satan and it is simply destroying the church so he moves against that in full confidence that he's right. So never murmur or criticize against your pastors, or your leaders, or your teachers. Go to them in love and say, "Pastor," or, "Brother," or anything that convinces them that you're not trying to undermine them, "What do you think of this possibility?" Or, "I don't quite understand," and make it clear to them, "I'm not saying this to undermine you. I'm not doubting your spiritual authority or your wisdom but I don't understand this. Now, can you explain to me why you think we should do this?"

And of course that brings light and life, and brings fellowship and friendship, and opens relationships. But the murmuring, and the criticism, and the negativism is straight from hell. Straight from hell whether it's right or wrong, it's straight from hell if it's murmuring and criticism.