

Adventure

In Thy Right Hand Are Pleasures
For Evermore

A Teaching Outline

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Serving God is an adventure.

Psalm 16:11

You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

This psalm is often called a messianic psalm because it is quoted in the New Testament as referring to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Both Peter and Paul quoted from this psalm when speaking of Christ's bodily resurrection

Let's go fishing for lost souls.

Matthew 4:19

And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." The Sea of Galilee is really a large lake. About 30 fishing towns surrounded it during Jesus' day, and Capernaum was the largest.

These men already knew Jesus. He had talked to Peter and Andrew previously (John 1:35-42) and had been preaching in the area. When Jesus called them, they knew what kind of man he was and were willing to follow him. Jesus told Peter and Andrew to leave their fishing business and begin fishing "for people," helping others find God. Jesus was calling them away from their productive trade to be productive spiritually.

We all need to fish for souls. If we practice Christ's teachings and share the Good News with others, we will be able to draw those around us to Christ like a fisherman who pulls fish into his boat with nets.

Allow the dangers you face to become an adventure.

2 Corinthians 11:26

I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;

Sea travel was not as safe as it is today. Paul had been shipwrecked three times, and he would face another accident on his voyage to Rome (see Acts 27). By this time, Paul had probably made at least eight or nine voyages.

Not only did Paul face beatings and dangers, he also carried the daily concern for the young churches, worrying that they were staying true to the Good News and free from false teachings and inner strife. Paul was concerned for individuals in the churches he served. If God has placed you in a position of leadership and authority, treat people with Paul's kind of empathy and concern.

There is a sweet aroma of the knowledge of God.

2 Corinthians 2:14

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

Paul did not enjoy reprimanding his friends and fellow believers, but he cared enough about the Corinthians to confront them with their wrongdoing. Proverbs 27:6 says: "Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy." Sometimes our friends make choices that we know are wrong. If we ignore their behavior and let them continue in it, we won't be showing love to them.

We show love by honestly sharing our concerns in order to help these friends be their very best for God. When we don't make any move to help, we show that we are more concerned about being well liked than about what will happen to them.

Blessed hearts are on the highways to Zion.

Psalm 84:5

How blessed is the man whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion!

The pilgrimage to the Temple passed through the barren Valley of Weeping. No specific valley has been identified. The "weeping" may have been a symbolic reference to the times of struggles and tears through which people must pass on their way to meet God.

Growing strong in God's presence is often preceded by a journey through barren places in our lives. The person who loves to spend time with God will see his or her adversity as an opportunity to experience God's faithfulness even more deeply. If you are walking through your own Valley of Weeping today, be sure your pilgrimage leads toward God, not away from him.

God wants to give you success today.

Genesis 24:12

He said, "O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham.

Abraham's servant asked God for guidance in this very important task. Obviously Eliezer (see 15:2) had learned much about faith and about God from his master.

What are your family members, friends, and associates learning about God from watching you? Be like Abraham, setting an example of dependent faith. And be like Eliezer, asking God for guidance before any venture.

We welcome the promises of God from a distance.

Hebrews 11:13

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

That we are "foreigners and nomads" on earth may be an awareness forced on us by circumstances. It may come late in life or as the result of difficult times. But this world is not our home. We cannot live here forever (see also 1 Peter 1:1). It is best for us not to be so attached to this world's desires and possessions that we can't move out at God's command.

Fight the good fight of faith.

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Paul uses active and forceful verbs to describe the Christian life: run, pursue, fight, and hold tightly. Some think Christianity is a passive religion that advocates waiting for God to act. On the contrary, we must have an *active* faith, training, working hard, sacrificing, and doing what we know is right. Is it time for action on your part?

Christian service, like athletics, requires training and sacrifice. Our discipline and obedience largely define whether or not we will be contributors or merely spectators. How would other believers rank your contributing role on Christ's team?

Paul had fought a good fight and had kept the faith.

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

As he neared the end of his life, Paul could confidently say that he had been faithful to his call. Thus, he faced death calmly, knowing that he would be rewarded by Christ. Is your life preparing you for death? Do you share Paul's confident expectation of meeting Christ?

The good news is that the heavenly reward is not just for giants of the faith like Paul, but for all who are eagerly looking forward to Christ's second coming. Paul gave these words to encourage Timothy and us, so that no matter how difficult the fight seems, we can keep fighting. When we are with Jesus Christ, we will discover that it was all worth it.

Put out into the water and let down your nets.

Luke 5:4

When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch."

Fishermen on the Sea of Galilee used nets, often bell-shaped ones with lead weights around the edges. A net would be thrown flat onto the water, and the lead weights would cause it to sink around the fish. Then the fishermen would pull on a cord, drawing the net around the fish. Nets had to be kept in good condition, so they would be washed to remove weeds and then mended.

God will show you great and mighty things.

Jeremiah 33:3

'Call to me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

This is one of my favorite scriptures in the Bible.

God assured Jeremiah that he had only to ask God and God would answer (see also Psalm 145:18; Isaiah 58:9; Matthew 7:7). God is ready to answer our prayers, but we must ask for his assistance. Surely God could take care of our needs without our asking.

But when we ask, we are acknowledging that he alone is God and that we cannot accomplish in our own strength all that is his domain to do. When we ask, we must humble ourselves, lay aside our willfulness and worry, and determine to obey him.

Gird on your sandals and prepare for the Lord's Passover.

Exodus 12:11

'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste--it is the LORD'S Passover.'

The festival of Passover was to be an annual holiday in honor of the night when the Lord "passed over" the homes of the Israelites. The Hebrews followed God's instructions by smearing the blood of a lamb on the doorframes of their homes.

That night the firstborn son of every family that did not have blood on the doorframes was killed. The lamb had to be killed in order to get the blood that would protect them. (This foreshadowed the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, who gave his blood for the sins of all people.) Inside their homes, the Israelites ate a meal of roast lamb, bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast.

Unleavened bread could be made quickly because the dough did not have to rise. Thus, they could leave at any time. Bitter herbs signified the bitterness of slavery.

Eating the Passover feast while dressed for travel was a sign of the Hebrews' faith. Although they were not yet free, they were to prepare themselves, for God had said he would lead them out of Egypt. Their preparation was an act of faith.

Preparing ourselves for the fulfillment of God's promises, however unlikely they may seem, demonstrates our faith.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

The New Living Bible

New American Standard Bible

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print