

W450D_Romans_8_4.mp3

[00:00:01] This is a recording made at the dinner hour meeting at the Chapel of the Open Book, and we are still dealing with Romans the eighth chapter. But seeing that this is the end of the year and we are beginning to think about what we call a new year, which of course, is a misnomer. It'll be the same old year, only worse. When God says new, he says, and the former things are passed away. Well, they won't be. Not yet, a while, but we won't cover on trivial the trivial about words. We are thinking of another new opportunity that awaits us in 1961, and I thought there was a possibility that our numbers wouldn't be very large today and we would conform to the convention of lifting out a text so that we may have it as a sort of little motto. If you care for the year that's coming, it's still found in Romans the eighth chapter, and it is the last verse that we looked at when we met together last time. Romans The eighth chapter, verse 14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God. They are the sons of God. Shall we have a little meditation upon that for the next few minutes? Surely there's nobody who is unconcerned about the question of being led. There are some folks who, whenever you speak to them, they're always feeling led. And they are nearly always a danger. But nevertheless, leading is an essential part of Christian experience.

[00:01:26] It should be. I take you back. First of all, if you will allow me to the book of Exodus chapter 12, where we have the record of Israel's redemption out of Egypt. And in that 12th chapter where we have the the very fact that they came out of Egypt. We have in the 13th chapter, which follows a reference to this leading. 21 and 22. They have been led out of Egypt. They have crossed the Red Sea. And they're about to start their pilgrimage on the road to the promised Land. All the type and shadow so far as we are concerned. And it says here in verse 21, and the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them in the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people. So you see, you can link leading with redemption that a person who is redeemed is a person who will be led. But now you may remind me that these people died in the wilderness. They were chastised severely by God. They departed very seriously from his way. Well, perhaps he withdrew this pillar of cloud and said, Well, you're not worth it. I'll leave you. Shall we look at the last chapter of the Exodus and just see for ourselves whether that is so.

[00:03:00] That is the 40th chapter. And in that chapter, you have not redemption out of Egypt by the Passover, but you have in the closing verses where it commences in verse 17 and it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month that the tabernacle was reared up. The tabernacle is not leading you out of the bondage of Egypt. It's leading you into the presence of God. There's a twofold aspect of the work of Christ, not merely to take you out of bondage and dump you in the wilderness and leave you there, but to give you the access that belongs to a redeemed child of God. So at the end of Exodus, we have the review of this tabernacle right the way down. I can't stop to read the words till we get to verse 33. And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work. Now, to say the finished work to an evangelical believer immediately makes you think of the work of Christ. That's a finished work. And when the work was finished, it says, Then a cloud covered the tent and it says in verse 36. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys.

[00:04:22] But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed. Not till the day that it was taken up for the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night in the sight of all the House of Israel throughout all their journeys. So it didn't matter. So so far that it leading was concerned whether Israel were walking in harmony with God or to be punished. God never withdrew. I think that we make a mistake when we're everlastingly asking God to lead us. I think our prayer should be give us grace to follow. I believe I told you some time ago, but as I'm getting antique, I have to repeat myself occasionally. A lady who was a little bit on the that sort of person, a bit hysterically, you know, you met some of them or she was asking me would I pray for her that the Lord may lead her. And I knew where she was getting to. So I very brutally said, no, I'll do no such thing. Of course, that was a shock treatment. Oh, she said. I said, I know. I said, I'll pray that you may follow the leading. The Lord's already given you for that your trouble. You know full well the Lord is leading you that way, and you're wishing to go that way. There's no need to ask. Oh, Lord, lead me.

[00:05:33] Our prayer should be, Oh, Lord, give me grace to see the leading and follow it. I will not even turn to this sound because it would be an insult to you. You know it. Before I start quoting it, the Lord is my shepherd. He leadeth me. No ifs about it. So long as you can say the Lord is my shepherd. Then leading is a part of his great

redeeming work, if you can. If you slip a negative in the first verse, the whole thing is reversed. The Lord is not my shepherd. Then I shall want. And hard don't have no leading. I'll never reach the still waters or the green pastures. All hinges on that. So that's one thought. I wanted to leave with you. I have to fight for time in these meetings that leading is an implicit result of redemption. If you're a child of God, then leading is yours. Well, now, perhaps it might help us to ask another question. How do we get this leading? Well, I think we may get a lesson from the way in which it is used in the opposite sense. How are we led to do evil? Because you see, unless we are acquainted with that. So shall we turn straight away without further to two passages in the New Testament? Second Timothy. Chapter three. Second Timothy. Chapter three, verse six. I'm sorry. Second Timothy Chapter three, verse six. For this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins led away with diverse lusts.

[00:07:31] So then led away with what is called here diverse lusts and want to link with that two Peter 317 before we stop two Peter 317 Ye therefore beloved, seeing you know these things before. Beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked. Fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in grace. So you see, there is the idea of being led. But led away. Led away by what? Well, now the word lust has become a very evil word. And I want to restore it to its place. It's so besmirched with one attitude that we hardly like to use the word. Would you believe it that when the apostle in Philippians said he desired to depart and be with Christ, it's the very word translated lust. What is lust in the Scriptures? An overwhelming desire. Would you believe that Christ used the word about himself? He said, with great desire. Have I desired to keep this peace with you? Meaning the Passover. And he used the word lust. So let's face it. We are led by our desires. Oh, dear. So we're right back down on the rock bottom of things. That's true. All the world over. If we have a very impelling desire that's leading us, but leading us by the nose. Of course, now God is using us as we are made and constructed, but the desires are now sanctified.

[00:09:10] The desires come from above and not from beneath. And just as surely they lead us. And then I can't help but believe that Peter, who spoke about the word enticed led by these things and enticed. That he didn't say to himself, that's true, because that word means the bait on a hook. The bait on a hook. And he was a fisherman. Now, I don't need to say God baits the hook. But you go right back to the first temptation that we have in the Bible. And when she saw it was to be desired. Oh, yes. It was the bait on

the hook. And we've got the results with us still. Well, now God says they won't use the low down expression that he baits a hook. But he says, Set your affection on things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Let this mind be in you. That was also in Christ Jesus. And as we get those things fashioning and shaping that great prompting within us that desire, then we needn't worry about how the Lord leads us, or whether he'll lead us or when he leads us. It's just implicit in redemption. I thought it might be a word in season for us to remember that this coming back now where we started. That if we are a redeemed child of God, leading is a part of his gift to us.

[00:10:39] As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Whenever we can, we can read in the scriptures. Lead me in a plain path because of my enemies and all sorts of different ways in which we can approach it. But there are two are linked together. Going back to the Old Testament, I won't turn to the passages for time's sake, but you can discover them. It says, with regard to the leading of Israel, which we looked at in Exodus earlier, that the Lord led them by a right way. Well, I suppose we could say, Well, surely that must be so if God is leading. Yes, but it won't always seems to be a right way to you friends because he sees a bit further than you do. So he says in the very same about the same time and the same people that he led them around about way so that they wouldn't have to go through the land of the Philistines. They, of course, I suppose, wondered what had been led to a roundabout way, and sometimes you and I in the same predicament. Oh, be careful, friend. You don't overstep the boundary and make a shortcut. But I dare say even you, in your experience, have learned the wisdom of the proverb that a shortcut is often the longest way round. And a short cut is a part of the devil's bait.

[00:11:56] I finished with this in Matthew 24. Our Savior was led of the Spirit to be tested. The word tempt and attempt doesn't mean tempted always to evil, but tested in the wilderness. And he was given as a final test. A shortcut. He had come to the king. And the evil one says, What act of worship from me and the kingdom and the glory are all yours already. Why go all that way around to the cross? He didn't party. He simply said it is written. They ended the story. So I said yes to you and to myself. As we think of the prospect of another year in front of us, that we realize that our desires are the link between us and the leading of the Lord and those desires which are in harmony with His will, with His Word, with our calling, all sufficient for us to guarantee day by day that whether we are appreciating it and understanding it or not, it's there. And if you want

another corrective in Ephesians chapter two, we are told that once we walked according to the course of this age and we were energized by the prince of the power of the air, doing the wills and desires of the flesh, you see the man in the street who is being led by the wicked one to work his will. He doesn't bother about the wicked one. He doesn't know anything about it. He's doing his own desires.

[00:13:22] Well, you're just as free as a child of God to do your own desires. God doesn't coerce you. But if you're a child of God and your desires are in harmony with his will. What a blessed thing it is to walk with him, isn't it? So maybe be glad to know that he's not really redeemed us out of our Egypt, dumped us down on the other side of the Red Sea and then said to us, Well, now carry on. Do the best you can in the wilderness. Moses stayed with them for 40 years and what a 40 years that was. And our savior is greater than Moses hasn't dumped us down outside and said, Now carry on. He said, Every step of the way I win you. So if it's not very pleasant walking and there's a certain amount of restrictions, he's walking with us. He's not giving it to us and going back to glory and left us to ourselves. We have not a high priest who is not touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but is in all points being tested as we are seen excepted. He knows all the temptations of a wilderness journey. Shall we face 1961 then, and put our hands in the hands of the Lord? And if we walk in the dark, we can trust Him to lead us out into the light again as it's in harmony with his will and the circumstances which are completely under his control.