

# How to Live 6 of 12

## *Worthy or Unworthy*

#0256

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1964

If you remember that quotation—you learn to pray aloud where only God can hear you. Someone has raised the question: I've heard that we ought to pray silently, so the Devil can't hear us pray. Now, I'll tell you where that ideal comes from. It isn't far fetched. You'll find this statement in *Selected Messages*, Book 1:

"The adversary of souls is not permitted to read the thoughts of men; but he is a keen observer, and he marks the words; he takes account of actions, and skillfully adapts his temptations to meet the cases of those who place themselves in his power. If we would labor to repress sinful thoughts and feelings, giving them no expression in words or actions, Satan would be defeated; for he could not prepare his specious temptations to meet the case" *Selected Messages*, Book 1, pages 122–123.

So we are given a specific warning about speaking words of doubt or discouragement or any expression that tempts the Devil to tempt us.

But now on the other hand, we are not in any case under any situation warned to be careful not to cry to God for fear the Devil would hear us. Take this statement:

"At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles" *Messages to Young People*, page 53.

So we don't need to be afraid of making trouble for ourselves by speaking out loud to God for fear the Devil will hear us. He's the one that is going to be in trouble over that:

"At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles" *Ibid.*

So we can cry to God with perfect confidence. Well, somebody might say, "Wouldn't the Devil hear it?" Let him hear it. It's when we talk words of doubt or discouragement or foolish or sinful lust that's the time that we need to be afraid of the Devil hearing us. But when we talk to God in earnest prayer, we don't need to worry about that at all. That throws the Devil into trouble:

"At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles" *Ibid.*

Another statement that I wished to give you on an earlier day, but we didn't get time, and I want to be sure to get it in, *Volume 5*, page 163. This is on the point of listening when we come to God in prayer. You remember what I gave you. We're to talk while He listens and listen while He talks. Now, listen to this one on listening:

"The Lord speaks; enter into your closet, and in silence commune with your own heart; listen to the voice of truth and conscience. Nothing will give such clear views of self as secret prayer. He who sees in secret and knows all things will enlighten your understanding and answer your petitions. Plain, simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 163.

Now, this is while you're down on your knees praying. You have talked to God, now you're doing what? You're listening:

"Plain, simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you" *Ibid.*

Now, this is a promise, friends. Very few people have this experience for two reasons: Few people take the time, and of those few who do, too many when they get to that point, back up and back out, because what the Spirit prompts us to do may be to lift a cross.

Now, if some human being suggests some change in our diet or dress or reading or music or conversation or association or recreation we can resent that and say, "I wish they wouldn't talk to me." Well, you can get away from them. And when Jesus speaks to you in the secret place of prayer about some changes He wants to make, usually He won't hound you to death. He won't pester you. Sometimes in mercy when He sees that deep down in our heart, we want some help. He may do that. But ordinarily, these are experiences we have to seek for.

"Plain simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you" *Ibid.*

Now, these experiences deal not merely with changes that need to be made in our lives. They may be messages from the King impressing us who to work for, or what to do for somebody that we are working for. This, to me, is one of the most precious experiences in life. It's having God impress me with somebody He wants me to write to or call on the telephone or visit or in some way contact. Sometimes when I'm getting ready for a meeting and praying about it, the Lord will impress me about somebody that ought to be there. And I can get on the phone and invite them to come.

There are many things involved in this simple experience of waiting for the Lord to impress us as we linger there on our knees. But remember, we must cherish those visits of the Holy Spirit. And when the Lord says something to us that cuts across the natural inclination, instead of closing the door and saying in effect "Don't

talk to me about that,” say, “Lord, I thank Thee that you love me enough to point out the things that need to be changed in my life.”

The Lord may impress us as we pray with something we need to make right with somebody, some member of the family that we have been unkind to or unchristlike with. I remember when I was a boy, and I would go to God in prayer, and the Lord would impress me with something I needed to make right with father or mother. You know, that was hard. And you know, it ought to be hard, folks. There is nothing wrong with it being hard to confess sin. But are we looking just for the easy things? What kind of a cross was it Jesus bore? A heavy cross, wasn't it? He fainted beneath the load. But He got up and picked it up again.

All right, those are some thoughts that may be helpful to us.

Now, I want you to turn to Luke 7 and Matthew 8. I want you to have both chapters open because they are two different records of the same experience, and there are some precious lessons here. In some ways, I'm more anxious for you to get this lesson this afternoon than any lesson we've had. If you can get hold of this, it's going to bring some joy into some hearts. And these are things you can use to help somebody else. Luke 7:

“Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people...”

This is at the close of the Sermon on the Mount.

“...he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they...”

These elders of the Jews.

“...came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loves our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue”  
Luke 7:1–5.

Now get the picture. Here was a Roman centurion. He wanted Jesus to heal his servant. And the elders of the Jews came and said, “Now, Jesus, we wish you'd do this for this man because he's worthy.” They recommended him. And why did they say he was worthy?

“...he loves our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue”  
Luke 7:5.

He was a good contributor, a good supporter. So they said he was what? He was worthy.

“Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou should enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed”  
Luke 7:6–7.

Now, get the picture. Here was this man. He was a big man in the world. What was his job? Centurion, he was a Roman officer, had many soldiers under him. But he didn’t think himself even worthy to come to Jesus. But the Jewish elders came to Jesus and said he was what? Worthy. Now which was he, worthy or not worthy?

Well, you remember that Jesus healed the servant. Now, I want you to notice what He said over in Matthew:

“And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and...”

What?

“...as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour” Matthew 8:13.

Now, the man said, “I’m not,” what? “I’m not worthy.” But did he believe Jesus could heal the servant? Yes, you remember concerning Abraham, the Bible says his faith was counted for righteousness.

This is what I’d like to have us study about a little this afternoon. Some of you may enjoy this study more if I tell you it is a study on righteousness by faith. Some of you will prick up your ears as soon as I give you the label for it. But it would be a study on that just the same whether I put a label on the can or not. There are a great many lessons on righteousness by faith that do not have that label on it. Any true message on how to do right is a message on righteousness by faith. If it isn’t righteousness by faith, it isn’t a true message.

Now turn over to Titus 3:4–5. All together:

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” Titus 3:4–5.

He did what, according to that fifth verse? He saved us. And how does it say He didn’t do it? Not by works of righteousness which we have done. But instead, how did He do it? By His mercy.

Now, the Jewish elders they said of the centurion, "He is worthy." But he said of himself what? "I'm not worthy." Well, now, which was he? Was he worthy, or wasn't he?

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us..." Titus 3:5.

According to His mercy.

Now take your *Ministry of Healing*, and we'll read some wonderful comments on this, page 65. You notice this text we just read from Matthew is at the top of the page:

"...as thou hast believed,' Christ said, 'so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.' Matthew 8:13.

"The Jewish elders had commended the centurion to Christ because of the favor he had shown to 'our nation.' 'He is worthy,' they said, 'for he hath built us a synagogue.' But the centurion said of himself..."

What?

'I am not worthy.' Yet yet he did not fear to ask help from Jesus. Not to his own goodness did he trust, but to the Saviour's mercy. His only argument was..."

What?

"...his great need" *Ministry of Healing*, page 65.

Do you have a need? Don't you wish you were worthy so you could get some help? Are you worthy? Come now, are you worthy? No, you're not worthy. If you wait to get some help till you're worthy, you'll never get it. You'll never get it in all the world. The centurion said of himself what? "I am not worthy." Would that be a good thing for us to say? Would it be the truth? Would anything else be the truth? No. "I'm not worthy."

What does it mean to be worthy? To deserve something. If I go down here to the office and give them \$5.00 for a book and they've got the \$5.00, I'm worthy to get the book, right? I deserve it. It's mine. But if I don't have any money, then I'm not worthy. I don't deserve it, do I?

"...the centurion said of himself, 'I am not worthy'" *Ibid.*

Is there anybody here that is not worthy? Is there anybody here that is worthy? What are we doing around here?

Now, I want to tell you something. Unless you get hold of the lesson we're studying this afternoon, one of two things will happen. You will either try to jack yourself up, make yourself believe that you're making it, getting somewhere, or else you'll get utterly discouraged, one of the two. And either one is a mistake.

"...the centurion said, 'I am not worthy.' Yet he did not fear to ask help from Jesus" *Ibid.*

How could that be? He wasn't worthy. He knew He wasn't worthy, and yet he didn't fear to ask help from Christ. He was counting on God's mercy, wasn't he?

"Not to his own goodness did he trust, but to the Saviour's mercy. His only argument was his great need" *Ibid.*

Do you have a great need? Jesus gave Simon that parable of the two debtors. Neither one of them had anything to pay. One of them owed ten times as much as the other. The creditor forgave them both when they had nothing to pay. Jesus said, "Which one do you suppose would love him the most?" Remember what Simon said, "The one to whom most was forgiven." Jesus said, "That's right."

Do you see, dear friends, the more unworthy you are, the more help you can have from Jesus. What are the degrees of worthiness?

They are degrees of unworthiness. There are no degrees of worthiness. That thief on the cross, that murderer, that rebel that died on the cross considered himself most unworthy. And he was. Wouldn't you think so? The apostle Paul said:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" 1 Timothy 1:15.

Now, look at this next wonderful sentence in the new paragraph. I want you to read it with me. All together:

"In the same way every human being can come to Christ"  
*Ministry of Healing*, page 65.

How can you come? In the same way. How can the man you are working with to try to win to Christ come? In the same way. This is the way the centurion came. This is the way the repentant thief came. This is the way Paul came. This is the way you can come. This is the way every human being can come. Let's read that sentence again and then read on:

"In the same way every human being can come to Christ. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.' Do you feel that because you are a sinner, you cannot hope to receive blessing from God? Remember that Christ came into the

world to save sinners. We have nothing to recommend us to God..." *Ibid.*

How much have you got to recommend? How much is there? Suppose, I put it here on the board, what will I put on? A zero. Now, if I can get someone to come with me, what have they got? Zero. Well, we're a little better of now, aren't we? We can just keep on going here. We have what? Nothing to recommend us to God. Do you believe it?

"...the plea that we may urge now..." *Ibid.*

What are the next two words? And ever. I've read this dozens of times, but I got a new look at this today; those two words—and ever.

"...the plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition, which makes His redeeming power a necessity" *Ibid.*

You know the Devil's got a lot of temptations. The person that has never come to Christ, he tries to tempt him to believe, "Well, Jesus won't pay any attention to you. You've just done so many wicked, bad things. There's no use coming."

But now he has a different temptation for most of us. His temptation is this. And notice how nice the Devil is. He says, "Sure, Jesus accepted you and forgave you when you came to Him. Sure He did. But the trouble with you is that you just keep doing the same thing over and over. And He's tired of that." You see, the Devil is trying to get you to do what? To doubt God's mercy. He's trying to make you think that God would forgive you provided you'd walk straight from then on.

But somebody says, "Brother Frazee, do you mean people can just go to God and get forgiven and go sin again, and come and get forgiven and go sin again and just keep right on and on and on?"

No, that isn't exactly what I'm trying to get at. But I'll tell you the cure for that, don't miss this! Sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting are not getting scared that we've about run out of mercy from God. That isn't the cure for it at all.

Let's study a little further here. Let's start reading again, "We have nothing to recommend us." All together:

"We have nothing to recommend us to God. The plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition, which makes His redeeming power a necessity. Renouncing all self-dependence, we may look to the cross of Calvary and say, 'In my hand no price I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling'" *Ibid.*

Do you know what song that's taken from? *Rock of Ages*. Let's sing it:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow?  
All for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.  
In my hand no price I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;

I want to tell you something, friends. This is studying how to live—this class is. And the way we live is looking to the cross, look and live.

Now in this class and in other classes here, we'll be learning many things that we are to do. We need to drink water every day, and if we don't, we'll suffer for it. We need water. This brain you're thinking with is 83 percent water. We need to breathe deeply. Every cell in the body needs oxygen. We need to eat proper food at proper times. We need to get enough sleep. We need to get enough exercise. We need to get rest. We need to take time to pray, time to be with nature, time to study the Word of God. We have our work to do and study. It's quite a program, isn't it?

But I want to tell you something, friends. Don't miss this! It is not the grade you give yourself on how you're getting along with all that, that should be the basis for your courage and cheer. No, no. Come to Jesus today and tomorrow and the next day, every day just as you are. And the more you study the great program that God has given, the more you'll sense you come short of it.

But the centurion came and said what? "I am not worthy." But did he still expect some help? Do you know why? He needed it. Do you need it? The more unworthy you are, the more you need it. The shorter you seem to yourself to come to the standard, the more you need Jesus' help, and the more His heart of love goes out to you. Jesus isn't just looking for children that can get out of the cradle and start running and never fall down. Of course, that's all right. But most of us, when we're taking steps out of the cradle, we do what? We fall.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not teaching you that you have to fall. But I'm just teaching you that when you fall, you're not to feel that God is going to cut you off, kick you out, and if you do come back, then He's going to keep you in the dog house until you prove you can do better. No, no. What did we read there in Titus that is quoted on this page? Look at that verse again:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to..."



What?

“...his mercy he saved us” Titus 3:5.

And this so far from discouraging us from doing all these good things has just the opposite effect. We'll be so glad to drink our water and get our sleep and study our Bible and pray and exercise, why? Not only to please Him, but because we understand that this is the way we can be stronger physically, mentally, and spiritually. But watch it! We do not grade our acceptance with God according to how we think we're making it on all these physical, mental, and spiritual habits. No, no. We are accepted in the beloved.

Suppose here's a mother, she's going to teach her little girl how to play the piano. Might the little girl hit some wrong keys? Wouldn't it be too bad if she thought, "You know, if I could ever learn this piece so I never hit the wrong key, I'm sure mother would love me. But I tell you, I don't know whether I'm going to make it or not."

Suppose she would lie awake at night, just lie there awake, the little child and "Oh, I wish I'd hit the right key every time today because then mother would love me. But I don't know. Mother's disappointed and I don't know whether she's going to give me breakfast in the morning or not." Wouldn't that be too bad?

Ah, my dear ones, never think that your worthiness is the basis of your acceptance. Never think that. What did the centurion say? "I am *not* worthy." Did he tell the truth? Yes, he did friends. You'd better tell the truth.

Years ago, I was holding a series (some meetings) in the city of New Orleans. I was asked to visit a patient in a great hospital there. And I went downtown to where this big hospital was, and I went up there, and there was a great sign across the entrance, "Charity Hospital." Do you know what kind of people got in there? People that didn't have any money.

Suppose a man comes, and he comes in the business office and says, "I want a room here. I can pay \$50.00 a day." Do you know what they'd say to him? "You go to one of the other hospitals."

"Oh, but I want to come in here."

Do you know the way to get in there? Prove you don't have a nickel, then you can get in.

God is running a charity hospital in this world.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" Titus 3:5.

Let's get in on the basis He has made possible. What do you say?

I wish we could kneel and pray together.

Heavenly Father, I have a great longing today that everyone here shall sense how simple it is to come to Jesus, not merely the first time, but every time, every day. In our hands no price we bring, simply to Thy cross we cling.

Oh, Thou who died for us, Thou who doest live for us, Thou who doest plead for us, make us conscious this moment of how great Thy love is for us. May we not be on some strain to get all these things done that Thou hast told us to do. They're all good things. We need to do all of them, Lord. By Thy grace, Thou art going to help us to do all of them. But Lord we're not going to hold our breath till our record looks good to us.

This moment we hang our helpless souls on Thee. This moment as we surrender all, we believe that Thou doest accept us. We thank Thee that we're loved, that we're accepted and treated just as if we had always been good. Oh, what love, what wondrous love! We thank Thee in Jesus' name, amen.

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