

Something Better, Better Than Good

#0395

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—February 11, 1972

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” Matthew 5:6.

I'm so glad, dear friends, for that promise. And this I am sure of tonight, that in every human heart that can feel what is deep inside, that knows what lies beneath the surface, I say in every human heart there is a longing for something *better*, in fact, for the *best*. And God has made it that way. He didn't make us to grovel; He didn't make us like the serpents that travel along in the dust; He didn't make us like the oyster, to inhabit the slime; He didn't make us like the pig, to be a scavenger. He put within our souls, a hunger, a longing, for the very highest and best things in life. God Himself has implanted that longing. And every longing He has implanted He provides to satisfy.

Do you have a longing in your heart tonight? Would you like to have something better than you've ever known? You know, friends, no matter how good God has been to us, He wants to do more.

So, tonight, let us listen to His invitation as found in Isaiah the 55th chapter:

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; come buy wine and milk without money and without price” Isaiah 55:1.

In the Depression days, we used to have nickel lunches or penny-a -dish lunches for the unemployed. And the folks who came in without even a nickel or even a penny, we found a way to feed them too. Jesus is calling everybody, saying He has something to feed our hungry hearts. You can get it without money.

“Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?
And your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness” Isaiah 55:2.

Do you know that there is an idea that multitudes have that religion is a killjoy—that people who get religious miss some of the best things of life? But like those things that the great enemy spawns, that's a lie. The one who made us is longing to share with us the richest, the best, the highest, the most wonderful things. And this verse that I've read is His invitation. He feels sorry to see us spending money, time, effort, strength, to get things which do not satisfy, which only leave us with restless longings. He longs to fill our hearts and minds with that which abundantly satisfies. But you know what I find? I find that the more I get, the more I want. But, of the same

things. I thought of this way, friends. I'm like a boy who has just had a nice big piece of watermelon. He knows what he wants—another piece of the same melon.

And we can have more and more and more. Nothing less than the best is God's desire for His children.

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” 3 John 2.

He desires us to have the best of everything. And this is His plan for those who will listen to Him.

Notice how the New Testament echoes this thought:

“But covet earnestly the best gifts” 1 Corinthians 12:31.

Sometimes we think it's wrong to covet. If you go to the Ten Commandments, you will find what it is that's wrong to covet. It's wrong to covet what doesn't belong to you. And the reason is: it wouldn't satisfy you. But here we have not merely the permission to covet, we have the Savior's urgent invitation, yes command, to covet.

Oh, when He has invited us into His great treasure house and has told us that He wants to more than fulfill our highest expectations, why should we be satisfied with anything less than the best?

In the book *Education*, I read what seems to me is one of the grandest things in all literature. Listen as I share it with you:

“‘Something better’ is the watchword of education, the law of all true living. Whatever Christ asks us to renounce, He offers in its stead something better. Often the youth cherish objects, pursuits, and pleasures that may not appear to be evil, but that fall short of the highest good. They divert the life from its noblest aim. Arbitrary measures or direct denunciation may not avail in leading these youth to relinquish that which they hold dear. Let them be directed to something better than display, ambition, or self-indulgence. Bring them in contact with truer beauty, with loftier principles, and with nobler lives. Lead them to behold the One “altogether lovely.” When once the gaze is fixed upon Him, the life finds its center. The enthusiasm, the generous devotion, the passionate ardor, of the youth find here their true object. Duty becomes a delight and sacrifice a pleasure. To honor Christ, to become like Him, to work for Him, is the life's highest ambition and its greatest joy. ‘The love of Christ constraineth’” *Education*, page 296.

Dear friends, it's the "something better." And this is God's call, God's invitation to the young people today, and to all the rest of us.

Turn to Philippians, the fourth chapter. Let's read it here in Paul's epistle:

“Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” Philippians 4:8.

Isn't that a nice menu to choose from? But, my dear friends, I think we all recognize, at least after second thoughts, that the only way to get the best is to miss not only the bad but a lot of ordinary good things.

I brought along a bunch of books with me tonight. And you can see the desk here is just piled up with them. Wouldn't you like to read them all? You say, “I haven't seen them yet.” Well, I'll tell you, there's one problem: there are just so many good books being printed today that it's hard to find space on the library shelves for them, and it's hard to find time in the day or the night to read them. Do you agree with me? Do you know, a friend of mine was telling us that, just to keep up with the latest scientific discoveries, a man would have to read 3,000 printed pages every day. Did you get a little behind last week?

Turn over to Ecclesiastes, the 12th chapter. The wisest man that ever lived, who entered into more research, perhaps, than anyone in the ancient world. Put it down this way: at the end of the book that he wrote, at the end of his life, he summed up some thoughts based on his research:

“And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books, there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh” Ecclesiastes 12:12.

And may I remind you, friends, in the day when these lines were written, all the books there were available had been copied by hand—no printing presses or any other means of duplication. One book meant that a scribe had written out every word and letter by hand. If there were two copies of that book, it had all been copied over by hand. And yet in those days, the wise man said that already there so many books that it wore him out trying to keep up with them.

And so you see, friends, the force of the Savior's invitation to covet what? The best. Listen. Whenever a question comes into your mind, whether a book is bad enough to throw away, wicked enough to cross off your reading list, you're missing something. Turn your eyes in another direction. Don't be looking for the worst so you can throw it away; be looking for the very best, so that you can give it the time and thought.

Ten billion brain cells up here are too precious to be wasted on anything less than the best. What do you say?

You know, this would solve many a question that people ask about reading. What's wrong with this book? Why shouldn't I read that one? Why can't I have this one? You can. You can have anything you wish. But why not enjoy the best? “Something better is the watchword of education, the law of all true living.”

You see, friends, if we're always taking from the top of the list, we'll never even get dangerously near the bad, the impure, the filthy, the wicked, the vicious. We'll never even have that problem. We'll bypass not only the sinful things but a lot of the trivial. We'll miss not only the poison but the sawdust.

Well friends, it's so not only with reading, it's so with music. Wasn't your heart thrilled with that message the choir brought us? Dear choir, there are a lot of things you could have sung tonight that would have been good, that I'm so glad you didn't sing. Because, if you had, we would have missed this. I say this is one of the better things. What do you say?

I hear, every now and then, little whispers that remind me that we're in an interesting time on this music business. I'm so glad that I don't have to spend my time telling you what's wrong with the worst music, telling you what's bad about it. Why, dear friends, you and I don't have time even for all the good music. There aren't that many hours in the day or the night. Why not enjoy the best? I shall leave it with the dear Lord and you to pick out what's the best. I'll have to do that anyway, won't I? Of course. And I'm glad to have it that way.

Take this matter of diet. Did you ever hear people say, "Why can't I eat that? What's wrong with it?" We could show some pictures with the trichinae in it. Or we could show some other article of food and examine the specimen of it under the microscope and get a photograph of some of the millions of germs with which the carcass is teeming. But, my dear friends, there is something better than that way to approach it.

Listen. When I see the delicious apples and pears and strawberries and persimmons and pecans and walnuts and beans and potatoes and carrots and lettuce and whole wheat bread (and you can go on from there), when I think of all that, I'm so glad that we can have a menu presented to us of the very best food. And why should it be thought bondage to have the best? This is no prisoner's fare. "Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat," says the Scriptures.

Oh friends, the King's children have a wonderful table. Now listen: I have a very dear friend who spent several years in an internment camp, halfway around the world. And believe me, before they got through that period of internment, they were glad to eat just about anything they could find. But do you know what they were doing? They were always eating the best they could get.

Isn't it wonderful to form the habit, whether in reading or music, in diet or anything else, of always picking out the best? I don't mean in a selfish way. Our heavenly Father wants us to have the best. He made it for us. And He's disappointed when we look all around through a bookstore and finally find something which, if it isn't downright low, is at least very mediocre and say, "Well, I guess I'll take that." And all the while, God is offering us the cream of the crop, the top of the list.

I found this the other day, and it's been blessing my soul ever since.

“If we will, we may turn away from all that is cheap and inferior” Ministry of Healing 491.

Thank God, friends, it's possible. You know, in our relations with one another, the friendships we form, the way we treat people, let us live by the very highest standards.

In our dress, just as in music, everything is in flux. All sorts of ideas. What would you do? I'll tell you, when you get this vision, there will be a lot of things you will eliminate, not because you can prove they're bad, but merely because they're not the best. It's that simple. And, of course, if the way you dress represents your view of what Heaven thinks is best, then you are blessed in the best. You do not need to take somebody else's conscience to guide you. But, as a dear old friend of mind, Elder Luther Warren, used to say, “Play fair with God.” If you're troubled about some article of dress or some fashion, why not get down on your knees and say, “Dear Savior, I'm dressing to please you. What pleases you today? I want the best. The thing that will please you best, because that's what I'm aiming to do.” And just do what He leads you to do. The more you study the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, the better educated your conscience will be. Therefore, the Holy Spirit will be better able to help you to see what Heaven wants you to do. But keep in mind that this whole question, whether in diet or dress or reading or anything else, is not just to avoid the bad. No, no.

Someone told me that, in the German language, there is a proverb which, translated, says, “The good is the enemy of the best.” You see the point. The person who is satisfied merely with avoiding the bad may miss the highest and the best things of life.

“Oh, but can't I have *some* things that are cheap?” Well, yes, you can have it *all* that way if you *want* to. But oh, we don't *have* to. That's the good news.

“If we will, we may turn away from all that is cheap and inferior, and rise to a high standard” *Ministry of Healing* 491.

When we go to Heaven, it's going to be that way. The diet is going to be the very best. Let's get as near to it now as we can. The music up there is going to be the very best. Let's get as near to that music of Heaven now as we can. And every enjoyment of life will be ours, to the fullest. And Jesus has died to make it possible.

If some dear friend could spend a thousand dollars to buy you some gift certificates to be used at one of the leading department stores, wouldn't it be a shame to spend those gift certificates for anything less than the best? When they're purchased as the result of his kindly thought and interest in us? But oh, when we look at these wonderful and lovely gifts that Heaven has arranged for us, we ask, “What did they cost?” Ah friends, what a price. Jesus took the guilt so that we could have the pardon. He took the sorrows so that we could have the joy. He took our sins that we might have His righteousness. He died our death that we might live His life. He invites us to bring Him our weakness that He might give us His strength. Yes, these best gifts that He wants us to cultivate are the purchase of His broken body, His spilled blood.

Every person here has a battle of some kind, temptations, something that's a real struggle. I have given you, tonight, the keys to dealing with that problem. Turn to Romans, the 12th chapter, and you'll see what I mean.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good"
Romans 12:21.

Think for a moment of the temptation that is hardest for you to meet. And then take this verse. You will not meet the enemy successfully if you are trying all the time to show that everything he offers you is bad, wicked, vile, terrible. He is skillful in arranging his temptations so that they include many *good* things. Was not the tree from which he gave his first broadcast called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Was there something better than that in the garden? What tree was that? The tree of life. What a shame that Adam and Eve missed the tree of life in order to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

We will not meet the enemy successfully by standing there and arguing with him about what's bad and what's good on that tree. Never. But we can conquer by turning away from the mixtures and accepting the best—the tree of life, planted for us by our Lord, and purchased for us by His precious blood. We can meet evil successfully by overcoming with good—good that is pure, good unmixed with evil.

In this little book *That I May Know Him* is a statement that will bring cheer to some heart here tonight:

"There are thoughts and feelings suggested and aroused by Satan that annoy even the best of men..." *That I May Know Him*, page 140.

Oh, is that so? Even good men, even the best men, sometimes have feelings that they know are suggested by Satan? Yes. What do they do with them?

"... but if they are not cherished, if they are repulsed as hateful, the soul is not contaminated with guilt, and not other is defiled by their influence" *Ibid*.

So then, when the enemy darts a suggestion into these minds of ours that we know is not the best, let's not stop to argue, let's turn to the very highest things. Repeat the Scriptures; fill the mind with the Word of God, and in that Word, we shall find the lovely things, the pure things, the true things which satisfy the soul. Perhaps a song will come to our minds. We may sing that song. And music will drive away the evil angels. Perhaps we may dart a prayer to Heaven and say, "Dear Lord, turn away my eyes from beholding vanity. Fill my vision with Thee and Thy love. Oh Lord, I do not want to be contaminated with sin. And Lord, I do not want to satisfy my mind with the trivial, even if it isn't so bad. Lord, I want the best. You paid such a price for my life. You've given everything that I might have the finest. Oh Lord, help me to make you happy by taking what you paid such a price for."

Shall we send Him the word tonight, that we appreciate His paying such a price to give us the best? Would you like to do that? God grant it.

[Testimony service follows]

I'm sure that scores of us tonight have been inspired to reach out for the better things and to take steps closer to Jesus. But my heart is going out to somebody here who knows that you and the Master are walking in different directions. Either you never knew the Master, or you knew Him once and have lost contact. My dear friend, won't you come tonight? Don't miss an opportunity like this. Let the Holy Spirit help you to come.

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