



# WEEKLY SERMON

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**Sunday** May 15, 2022  
**Pastor** David Miklas  
**Message:** Christian life

**Phone:** 717-715-3317  
**E-mail:** pdmikBBM@aol.com  
**Text:** II Timothy 4:1-6; Ecclesiastes 12:13

A little boy would sit on the shore of the Mississippi River and watch the steamboats go by, wishing he could take a ride on one of them, exploring up and down the river, enjoying the interesting sights. One day his dream came true! A captain invited the little boy to join him on his boat for the day to observe the skills of being a captain.

As they pushed off from shore, the boy began to gaze in wonder at all that was taking place around him. However, the captain called him over and told him that a good captain always keeps his attention focused on the water. He explained that even though the river was wide, the channel was narrow. If a captain did not discern the path of the channel and guide the boat carefully through it, he would ground the boat. He also explained that the differing shades of water must be carefully observed, because the channel's location could have changed during a storm.

At the end of the trip the boy disappointedly exclaimed, "I did not get to see the scenery along the shores!" The captain wisely replied, "The goal of a captain is not to gaze at the sights along the way, but to guide his boat safely to its destination." The same is true for our lives.

**Guiding our lives safely through the storms and dangers of life requires us to keep our focus on Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation.** There are several important signs of danger that we must watch for in our Christian lives.

One sign of spiritual danger is losing our appetite for spiritual disciplines, such as reading, memorizing, and meditating on God's Word and communing with God in prayer. This danger occurs when we fill our lives with the things of this world rather than the things of God. I John 2:15 tells us: "**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**"

Another sign of spiritual danger is losing our first love for the Lord. God said to the church in Ephesus, "**I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.**" Revelation 24:5

An additional sign of danger is when we allow sin to remain in our lives. We are instructed to "**lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.**" (Hebrews 12:1) If we fail to notice and respond to these signs of danger in our lives, we will become the servants of sin, vulnerable to further attacks of Satan. Thus, we are warned in I Peter 5:8, "**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.**"

Again consider the following quotes on prayer:

**"Prayerful study of the Bible is indispensable for powerful prayer."**

**“Prayer is faith in action. It simply means “getting God involved.”**

**“Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger people.”**

Charles Spurgeon wrote, **“True prayer is neither a mere mental exercise nor a vocal performance. It is far deeper than that - it is a spiritual transaction with the Creator of heaven and earth.”**

In ***HIS*** Amazing Grace,  
*Pastor David Miklas*

# “Recovering from a Spiritual DRY-SPELL”

**INTRODUCTION:** In I Corinthians 15:51-57 we read,

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (55) O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (56) The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (57) But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Now in verse 58 we read, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye **STEADFAST, UNMOVEABLE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING** in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Again, notice the words, **STEADFAST, UNMOVEABLE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING?** These words convey the idea of **REMAINING CONSTANT**.

Every Christian has those times when for some reason or another he goes through a **spiritual dry-spell**. This is a time his spiritual life and the activities of living the Christian life become a routine dryness in the soul.

Every Christian has times when he is tempted to **give up**.

Every Christian has times when he is tempted to **throw up his hands in despair and just walk away**.

Although he is serving God and trying to walk with Him, he is met at every turn with disappointment, frustration or failure. The pressures mount, as an inner voice says, “**Why don't you just quit?**”

**BUT THAT IS NOT THE ANSWER!** The believer has been called to remain faithful to the end.

It has been said of the Green Bay Packers when they were under Coach Vince Lombardi, they were as strong in the last two minutes of the game as they were at the opening kickoff. **They never quit!** What was their secret? We're told that Lombardi began each practice session by holding up a football and saying, “**This is a football!**” **Then he would drill them on the basics.** It was this basic training that stood them in good stead when the pressure was on. It kept them from giving up.

As your Pastor, I say to you, “**THIS IS THE BIBLE.**” The Christian life is made up of basics, the fundamentals that will enable you to endure, to keep on keeping on. Here are a few:

**Attending church,  
Reading the Bible and praying without ceasing,  
Going soul-winning,  
Knowing the great doctrines of the Christian faith, and why you believe them,  
Walking the talk, and  
Depending on the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.**

These are all a part of our basics. So, when the pressures mount, you will be tough enough to resist **THE URGE TO QUIT**.

Now I encourage you to listen carefully as this may be the most important message you will hear as a Christian. Over the years I have seen this situation develop in the lives of many of God's people.

**Here is the situation.** Christians start out growing, serving and living for the Lord. Then the tingle or the charge out of it disappears and they either quit or throw themselves into neutral. Please follow me:

**I Chronicles 28:1-7:** Please notice verse 7, "...I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be **CONSTANT** to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day." The word "constant" means that you are predictable, that you do not change.

Someone said, "If you change the basics on what brought you and made you what you are as a maturing Christian, then not only your life will begin to change but you will also begin to **BACKSLIDE** in the Christian life until you stop maturing and start to age as a Christian."

Our verse tells us, "...be **CONSTANT** to do my commandments..."

**James 1:22-25:** Again please notice in verse 25, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." The word "continueth" tells me to remain constant, keep looking at the Word of God. **Keep DOING what it tells you to do.** If you think about it, for the most part, most of you have all the Bible knowledge you need to live the Christian life. All you need to do is put it into practice. Keep on doing what you know to do.

**I Timothy 4:11-16:** Please notice again in verse 16, Timothy was to "Take heed...unto the doctrine; **CONTINUE** in them..." Paul was admonishing Timothy **NOT TO CHANGE**. Listen carefully.

**Most of the decisions of life are made when we are very young. Maturity is not making new decisions; it is developing the decisions we already made.**

While Timothy was young he needed to decide about **doctrines, standards, convictions** and **NOT CHANGING**. He was told to meditate upon these things. The word "meditate" means "to keep on doing the same things over and over again." Paul was telling Timothy to:

**Keep on having the right Bible convictions,  
Keep on having love for the brethren,  
Keep on having a good spirit,  
Keep on having faith, and  
Keep on maintaining purity.**

In other words, decide when you are young what you believe - in doctrine, in standards, in convictions, in service, in practice, and in the principles of the Christian life.

Paul knew how easy it would be for Timothy to change over the years, so he wanted him to settle things while he was young. To grow in those things which he settled. **THAT IS THE SECRET TO NEVER CHANGING.** Maturity is not changing what we believe, it is building on what we already decided that we believe.

**This is what destroys churches:** A church, in the beginning, firmly establishes itself upon a solid foundation of Bible doctrine and soul-winning outreach and other fundamentals of the faith, but then starts to change.

**Sometimes they change some position on doctrine.  
Sometimes they change their position on the acceptable version of the Bible to use.  
Some change from godly music to worldly contemporary music.  
Some go from being evangelistic in outreach to being a social fellowship.**

**Listen. What made them what they are, and what brought them to the place that they are, will keep them after they have arrived, if they REMAIN CONSTANT!**

**This is what causes believers to backslide:** The day I ignore what I am, that is the day I stop growing, and begin to backslide, because:

**Backsliding doesn't happen because I fall into sin.**

**Backsliding begins when I depart from the path or depart from the basics which God has firmly established in my heart.**

Proverbs 14:14 says, "The **BACKSLIDER** in heart shall be filled with his own ways, and a good man shall be satisfied from himself." Someone has said, "A backslider is one who has given up ground once taken for God."

Now listen carefully. Over my 40 years in the ministry, I have heard these statements said over and over again:

**Pastor**, I have lost my burden for **soul-winning**. There was a day when I used to enjoy going on visitation and seeing people get saved. What a thrill it was to see people come forward to receive Christ as their Saviour. But Pastor, something has happened and I have lost my burden. The tingle to witness for Christ isn't there anymore.

**Pastor**, I'll be honest with you. I no longer enjoy **reading my Bible** as I once did. There was a day when the Bible was like a love letter from heaven to me. God wrote it in bold letters just for me, and I loved to read its pages. But now I don't enjoy reading it. What's wrong?

**Pastor**, this hurts me to say this, but there are times **I don't enjoy coming to church**. There was a day when I was delighted to come to all the services. The choir sang so beautifully, and the messages reached into my heart. I enjoyed them. I loved them. And oh, the fellowship of God's people - what a blessing that was. Now I find myself not really enjoying the church services as I once did.

**Pastor**, my prayers seem to bounce off the ceiling. **I used to love to pray**. Coming into the presence of God was like having an audience with the King of Kings. But Pastor, something has happened. Prayer time is no longer thrilling. It seems like God doesn't hear my prayers any longer. Now I only pray when the mood hits.

**Pastor**, **my marriage** has hit a snag. She is not like she used to be. He is not as loving as he once was. We just seem to be existing in the same house, sleeping in the same bed, eating at the same table, but the tingle is gone. The sweetness is missing. I feel miserable, and it is his fault, or her fault. Does that sound familiar? It ought to since it is so prevalent in today's marriages, even Christian marriages.

**Pastor**, I would like to talk with you. My **Sunday school class** has become a burden to me. I used to enjoy teaching. There was a thrill and excitement as I stood with the open Bible in front of my class. But Pastor I don't enjoy it anymore. I find myself sometimes not wanting to even come to Sunday school. By the way, would you mind finding someone to take my place?

**Pastor the blessing is gone.**

**Pastor the excitement is gone.**

**Pastor the tingle is gone.**

**Pastor I'm just going through the motions without any emotion.**

**Pastor the joy is gone.**

**Hold it right there!** It's at this point that you may make the mistake of your spiritual life and make a change, and then start to backslide, or you will keep doing that which is right until the JOY of it returns.

**The day when you don't want to pray.**

**The day when you don't feel like coming to church.**

**The day when you don't tingle in the service of the Lord.**

**The day your marriage seems to be dull, boring and unresponsive.**

But when you do that which you ought to do because you ought to do it and not only because you like to do it, that is the day **YOU MATURE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**. Please listen to me.

You are not a mature Christian because **YOU DO** what you like to do when you enjoy doing whatever you are doing.

You became a mature Christian when you come to that place in your Christian life when, for example, the Bible is no longer an enjoyment, but you read it anyway because you are supposed to read it.

**"WHEN YOU TRANSFER INSPIRATION FOR OBLIGATION in Bible reading, in prayer, in soul-winning, in service to the Lord, in your marriage or in whatever ministry, then you are a mature Christian."** It's the same thing with a job. All jobs come to the place where they lose their charm. They lose their glow. The boss is after you, or if you are the boss you have employee problems, and you think now is the time to change jobs as you drop into despair. **RIGHT HERE IS THE CRITICAL POINT.** You must keep doing what you are supposed to do until one day duty will again transform to delight.

Here is my point. When you say, **"BY THE GRACE OF GOD I WILL DO WHAT I AM SUPPOSED TO DO..."**

**Not because I want to do it,  
Not because I am inspired to do it,  
Not because I get great delight out of doing it, but  
Because I am supposed to do it."**

Then you have not only understood the principle of being **CONSTANT**, but you have also taken a giant step away from backsliding.

I am just like you. There are times I get into what is called a spiritual **dry-spell**.

**Pastor**, do you always like to preach? I love preaching, but there have been times in which I go through preaching **dry-spells**, when the tingle is not there. I just go through the motions.

**Pastor**, do you always enjoy reading your Bible? No! You mean to say there are times you, the preacher, the pastor of this church, don't enjoy reading the Bible and praying? Yes, that is true. But I keep on doing it. Because I am supposed to read it until one day the tingle comes back and the enjoyment returns.

I could admit to a heap of other things in the Christian life that, occasionally, causes me to stumble.

**Maybe Miss Unlovely has crossed my path, and I lose my spirit to be kind. Or Mr. Oh No has caused me to throw up my hands in despair and wonder about this business of being a pastor.**

But over the years, I have learned something very important from the advice Paul gave to Timothy. Just keep at it! Don't stop, don't give in, don't quit!

If in this service, I could **INSPIRE** you to go soul-winning, you might say, "I am inspired to go soul-winning." Your enthusiasm would probably last for a week or two, or until someone you witness to rejects the Gospel. However, if I could impress upon you to go soul-winning out of **OBLIGATION** instead of **INSPIRATION**, you might say, "I will go soul-winning, not because I feel like it, but because I am supposed to go." This duty-bound service will change your life.

This also applies to church attendance. I have met people who were very enthused about going to church for several weeks, maybe even a month, and then they can't be found. The inspiration was gone, the tingle was gone. However,

Does it not tell us in Hebrews 10:25, **"Not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together?"** That my friend is a spiritual duty, a spiritual obligation on our part to be in the House of God.

Does it not tell us in Luke 14:23 **"Go... into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in?"** Mark 16:15 tells us, **"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."** That my friend is a spiritual obligation on our part to be a soul-winner.

Does it not say 16 times in the Epistles that we are **"to love one another?"** That is an obligation,



not when we feel like it, or when it tingles, but something we are supposed to do.

Does it not say in Ephesians 5:25, "**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved also loved the church, and gave Himself for it,**" and in Titus 2:4, "**... the younger women...to love their husbands...?**"

**DOING RIGHT** is not always enjoyable, but **DOING RIGHT IS ALWAYS RIGHT**. If it is not now, one day it will become a **DELIGHT AGAIN**.

On the one hand, here is a person who goes to church if he wants to. He is not much of a Christian. But on the other hand, here is a Christian who goes to church every time he is supposed to. He is preventing himself from backsliding.

Pastor, why do I have spiritual **dry-spells**? I believe God allows you to go through a **dry-spell** because He is saying, "I want to see if you will do what you should do because you love me,

**Not because it makes you tingle,  
Not because you enjoy it,  
Not because you delight to do it.**

**Just as a test, I want to find out if you do what is right because you LOVE me, even when it is not enjoyable.** The Christian who has character, keeps on doing it. Why? Because he is supposed to do it. **IT IS HIS DUTY**. As you keep on doing it, one day the dear Lord looks down from Heaven and says, "I think you are going to do right anyhow, so Holy Spirit make it fun again."

In Ecclesiastes 12:13 we read, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **FEAR GOD and keep his commandments; FOR THIS IS THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN.**" Did you notice the word **DUTY**?

I do what I do in the Christian life out of a sincere love for what God in Christ Jesus has done for me.  
I do what I do in the Christian life out of a sense of duty because God has instructed me to do it.  
I do what I do in the Christian life out of a sense of obligation because it is right to do.

When I think of **DUTY**, I think of the Apostle Paul. Reading the 11th chapter of II Corinthians, you will discover that Paul did not have a road of glory. But **He Kept on Keeping on**. He did not quit.

**It was his duty to preach and preach he did.  
It was his duty to care for the churches and care for the churches he did.**

When I think of **DUTY** I think of the Lord Jesus Christ. He could have quit before going to the cross. The Devil was tempting Him and the road was tough. But praise God, it was His LOVE for you and I that drew Him to the cross of Calvary. It was duty to the father, and it was duty to us as sinners. Luke 19:10, "**For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.**"

To David, God said "**BE CONSTANT.**" To Timothy, Paul said, "**CONTINUE.**" The secret is - **DON'T CHANGE, DON'T QUIT, SETTLE IN AND KEEP AT IT. "Occupy until Jesus Comes!"**

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon, "**Recovering from a Spiritual DRY-SPELL**" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"  
Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **“I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.”**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to [pastormiklas@aol.com](mailto:pastormiklas@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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