

God's Provision **for Normal Christian Living**

ROBERT KETCHAM

REGULAR BAPTIST PRESS
Schaumburg, Illinois

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ketcham, Robert Thomas, 1889–1978

God's provision for normal Christian living / Robert T. Ketcham.

p. cm.

ISBN-13: 978-0-87227-009-1

1. Bible. N.T. Ephesians VI, 11–17-Sermons. 2. Baptists-Sermons. 3. Sermons, American. 4. Christian life-Baptist authors. I. Title.

BS2695.4.K48 1991

252'.0610—dc20

90-46383

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GOD'S PROVISION FOR NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

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www.RegularBaptistPress.org • 1-800-727-4440

RBP5179 • ISBN 978-0-87227-009-1

Originally published: Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1960. First RBP Printing, 1977

Third printing—2011

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PART 1

**An Exposition
of Ephesians 6:11–17**

Introduction

IT IS A DISTINCT JOY to write a word of introduction for this book. It is so because the book deals with a most important subject for the child of God.

I have reason to know how God has blessed the series of messages in Part I as my friend and brother has preached them. The Lord has been pleased, not only to grant a sense of His presence and refreshing from Himself as they were delivered, but also to lead Christians to decisions which have continued to this hour. When, at my request, the series was given consecutively morning by morning at a Moody Bible Institute Founder's Week Conference, there was a remarkable working of the Holy Spirit. Many speak of those sacred hours as constituting one of the pivotal experiences of their Christian lives.

The messages in Part II are on the tremendously important theme of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. Here the theme, already replete with the presentation of the Lord Himself as the armor of the believer, is made incontrovertible as we learn more of the "all things" granted us by God's divine power.

My joy is made full because this greatly needed message from God is given through a man I have known and loved for almost a quarter of a century. A great preacher in eloquence, the author is a greater preacher because he is a godly and humble bond slave of the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the glorious facts about the Word of God is that various facets of light break from the same passage. In this book the author takes a familiar passage and graphically portrays to the reader the shining shaft of light as God has shown it to him. In my judgment the great value of these messages is that they are so practical.

William Culbertson
President, Moody Bible Institute

Foreword—Part One

THE STUDIES SET FORTH in this book have been delivered over the past 25 years, in such conferences as Moody Founder's Week, American Keswick, Pinebrook, Sandy Cove, and others. I have been urged many times to put them in print.

I trust that in this printed form they may bring help and blessing as they did when delivered orally.

I have tried to retain something of the warmth and character of the spoken message, even at the sacrifice of literary style. The reader will find some repetition at certain points. Some things are so vitally important that they must be pressed home and emphasized by repetition.

A word concerning the title is necessary. I have used "Normal Christian Living" rather than "Victorious Christian Living." I have done so deliberately.

The word "normal" means "standard or natural." God's Word sets forth what He considers to be a standard, natural thing for a *Christian* to do. It states the norm (rule or standard) which characterizes the life pleasing to God.

The term "victorious" is a good one, but so often misunderstood by those who use it and those who hear it. In the minds of most Christians the term denotes some high state of piety obtainable by only a few of God's chosen saints. They are sure that a life of daily victory for them is beyond all hope.

If, however, God's dear ones are told that the victorious life is the normal life that God expects from everyone, I feel they will respond more readily.

Most Christians are either *below* normal and are cold and indifferent, or *above* normal and running a "temperature" of fanaticism, and engaging in all sorts of things which do not come within the scope of normalcy.

The *average* Christian life is not the *normal* Christian life. I trust the

reader will come to see what God's standard, or norm, is and not lag behind or run ahead of Him.

I send out this book, *God's Provision for Normal Christian Living*, with an earnest prayer that tired, weary, discouraged and defeated Christians may discover how precious it is to conform to God's standard.

R. T. Ketcham

January, 1960

Introducing the Theme

CHRISTIANITY IS FIRST, last and always, in its origin, method and service, supernatural, and must therefore be carried on by *supernatural* power. The fatal mistake made by a vast host of Christians is thinking that they can live a successful Christian life by human effort, willpower and determination. It is the *Christ life* and the Christ life *alone* that can enable any Christian to live for one moment, one day, one year or a lifetime in the realm of victory.

Christianity is not a set of principles or doctrines, although our principles and our doctrines must be correct. Christianity is a *Person*—the Person of Christ Himself living *His* life out through our bodies. Galatians 2:20 sets this forth with crystal clearness—“*Christ* liveth in me,” that is, in my *body*.

What could one do without a body? Absolutely nothing! The singer needs a body through which to display his talents. He couldn't sing without a throat. The pianist must have a body or no one would ever hear him play. The housewife needs a body that she may cook meals and keep her house. The carpenter must have a body or he cannot saw a board or build a house. No matter how brilliant or talented one may be, he is *absolutely helpless* without a body.

Is it too much to suggest that this same truth applies to Christ? Christ must have a *body* through which He can display His manifold graces and powers. Beloved, that is exactly why He purchased our *bodies* with His precious blood. He is limited in this age to what He can do through these

bodies of ours. He has no hands down here now but ours. He has no vocal organs down here now but ours. He has no feet but ours. That is why He bought this equipment (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20). He is as helpless in this age without a body as we would be.

We are by no means belittling the power of Christ. Of course He can do anything He wants to do, but *in this age* He has voluntarily limited Himself to what He can do through *yielded believers*. True it is that God is sovereign. But if God cannot choose His own methods then He is not sovereign. For purposes best known to Himself, He has chosen to do His work in and through the yielded bodies of believers—bodies which He purchased for that express purpose.

Oh, that God's own would lay hold upon this amazing truth! Our bodies are not simply the encasement of a saved soul. They are the dwelling place of the Lord. They are His to use as He will in the display of Himself. Does He ask too much when He asks for the full possession of what He bought? Certainly not. This is *Christianity*: Christ living *His* life through a purchased body.

Does someone ask, "How can this be done?" The answer is simple. It is found in Romans 6: 10–18. It is bound up in two words—"reckon" and "yield." Reckon yourself to be *dead* to whatever sin is tempting you, and reckon yourself to be *alive* to God. Then *yield* according to your reckoning. Yield to God and not to sin.

The simple technique of this "yielding" is illustrated in the story of two Christian girls. These two young ladies received Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and within a few days thereafter received an invitation to a dance. Not having been Christians very long, they had had no opportunity for teaching or instruction in such matters of worldliness. They were therefore perplexed as to what to do with the invitation. One of the girls said to the other, "The pastor told us whenever we were in doubt about something that we could find God's guidance in the Bible." So with earnest prayer to the Lord that He would show them something from the Scripture, they began to read through several passages. In God's infinite grace He led them to Colossians 3, where they read these words, "Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." They looked at each other and exclaimed, "There it is—that's God's

answer and we will follow it.” They took the invitation and wrote across the back of it these words, “Sorry, we cannot come to the dance. We are dead,” and signed it with their names. Yes, dear friend, it is just as simple as that. Reckon yourselves to be dead and then yield to your reckoning.

Several years ago I was speaking along these lines in a Baptist church in the east. A dear elderly German gentleman by the name of Cook was in the audience, and on the way home after church, walking with another brother by the name of Joe, he said, “Joey, it is chust like dat. The Devil he comes and hops up on my shoulder and says, ‘Cooky, do dis,’ or ‘Cooky, do dat,’ and I say to him, ‘Old man Cooky is dead.’ Now, Joey, what can the Devil do mit a dead man?”

How does all of this become a reality day by day? John 14:6 has the answer. We hear our Lord saying, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

In our endeavor to demonstrate just how fully this verse gathers into it the fullest supply for the deepest need of man, we will find it necessary to go back to the beginning of the human race, and look at the original relationship which the race enjoyed before the Fall.

An examination of the situation which existed before sin entered reveals that man had a threefold relationship to God as follows:

1. Unbroken communion with God
2. A perfect knowledge of God
3. Spiritual life

In these three I believe we have set forth the threefold relationship which the unfallen race enjoyed with a perfect Creator. I have tried to take one of the items out and I find I have a minus sign. I have tried to put a fourth one in, and I find I have a plus sign.

Unbroken communion with God. Even in our present state of redemption, it is impossible for us to fully comprehend the deepest significance of that phrase. No matter what our spiritual experiences may have been, no matter to what heights of spiritual ecstasy we may have been carried, no matter what glory may have filled the room in our holiest hour of communion with our Lord, sooner or later something happened to bring us to the realization

that we were not yet in Heaven. We were not the recipients of translated and glorified bodies, but we were still here, in bodies bearing the marks of sin, and in a world where sin is rampant. It may have been a twinge of pain in a sick body, it may have been the scalding tear rising from a broken heart, it may have been the shock of bitter disappointment at the failure of our fondest hopes. Communion with a holy God is always accompanied by the sense of these marks of the Fall.

Adam and Eve knew no such experience.

There was no pain, there were no tears, there were no bitter disappointments to intrude themselves into the holy of holies where they walked in blessed communion with a holy God. Someday, thank God, we shall know, even more fully than Adam and Eve knew, the joys of unbroken communion with God. In the beginning of the race, they enjoyed a relationship in this connection which we can never know while here on this earth and in these bodies.

A perfect knowledge of God. Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect knowledge of God because they enjoyed unbroken communion with Him. Because they were in constant, unbroken communion with Him they were in a place of perfect knowledge.

Spiritual life. Before sin entered, the race possessed spiritual life. May we pause here to define spiritual life. We realize that there may be other and better definitions, but for our purpose let us say that spiritual life is that function, ability, capability, or power by which one reaches out and comprehends, apprehends, and appropriates *God in all of His fullness*. It is the bringing of God into one's experience in all of the riches of His love, wisdom, power, grace, and holiness. It is God pouring Himself in all of His fullness into the compass of human experience. This the race enjoyed before the Fall.

Into this blessed threefold relationship sin entered, and when it did it wrecked the original relationship and set up a new threefold relationship as follows:

1. Alienated *from* God
2. Ignorant *of* God
3. Dead *to* God

When sin injected itself into the affairs of the human family, the first blessed relationship went out of existence totally and completely, and this awful threefold relationship came in. And it is into this relationship that every man and woman, from Adam's day to this hour, has been born. It makes no difference whether he is from Borneo or Boston, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, moral or immoral, every son of fallen Adam is born within the confines of this threefold relationship. He is alienated from God, he is ignorant of God, and he is dead to God.

It is just here that we Christian workers engaged in the business of soul-winning need to pause and adjust some of our thinking concerning the lost men and women whom we are seeking to win to Jesus Christ. I dare say that the majority of Christians would assent to the following statement as a true description of a sinner's condition, namely, that he is *desperately, spiritually* ill, and that he is in dire need of *heavenly medicine*, or he will die. While this statement may seem at first glance to adequately describe a sinner's condition, the fact remains that it doesn't describe it at all. The sinner with whom we come in contact is not desperately ill and in need of heavenly medicine lest he die. *He is already dead, and in need of resurrection.* We need to remember that no "medicine" in the form of argument or persuasion can move a soul, dead in trespasses and sins, one inch toward God. Unless He, who is the Resurrection and the Life, operates in the realm of that dead soul, all our talking will avail as much as though we were speaking to a physical corpse. The longer I live, and the more I engage in preaching the Gospel, the more I am convinced that we need less of argumentation and exhortation, and more of a direct quotation of the Word of Life, as we deal with dead men.

And they are dead—dead to God. That power and function and ability to know, apprehend, comprehend, appreciate and appropriate God is utterly dead; therefore, of course, the soul is ignorant of God and alienated from God.

We are in grave danger of mistaking the sinner's mental and physical life for spiritual life. Men all around us are seeking to point out the accomplishments of this race ruined in sin, and insist that we interpret them as signs of spiritual acumen. It is true man has built airplanes, radios, television,

universities, improved roads, skyscrapers, and automobiles and lighted them all up with his incandescent lights, but it is also true that every one of these accomplishments has been wrought in the confines of his spiritual *casket*. For one to insist that these various things are marks of *spirituality* is ridiculous. Let us go out to the airport where a pilot is taking off. Watch him zoom up into the air, ten, fifteen, twenty, even thirty thousand feet. Is he any nearer God thirty thousand feet in the air than he was in the airport? If so, then I propose that we turn our churches into airplane factories, and get every man and woman in the country into an airplane, give them an inexhaustible supply of fuel, and cut off their landing gears!

Yes, it is true that a spiritually dead man has built airplanes, but he has never yet built one that can fly high enough to take him over the rim of his spiritual casket. He has built submarines, but he has never yet built one that can dive deep enough to go through the bottom of his spiritual casket. He has built high-powered autos to speed over his cement highways, but he has never yet invented one that could go swiftly enough to take him beyond the realm of spiritual death. He has built universities and seminaries around his head, but he has never yet invented a system of philosophy by which he could think himself out of spiritual death, Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy to the contrary notwithstanding.

All the mental and physical endeavors of this dead man are designed to make his state of spiritual death look like anything but death. I remember in the days of my youth, when we had the old-fashioned "hearse" with its four black tassels on the corners, drawn by two black horses, and the undertaker, with his silk hat, perched on a high seat. In those days we had "coffins." They were big at the head and narrow at the foot, and usually covered with plain black cloth. When the funeral party reached the cemetery it was to behold a pile of dirt heaped up on the ground, and a bare hole gaping from the earth, across which were laid two sticks with leather straps. At a given signal the four oldest, and most nervous, pallbearers each took hold of the end of a strap. Someone pulled the sticks from underneath, and the coffin began its journey into the grave. Sometimes it looked as though it would land head first, other times feet first, but usually it arrived with more or less of a bang in the outer rough box. This was death when I was a boy.

Now things have changed. Today we have “caskets” and my, how beautiful they are! Six hours after you are dead your head will be laid upon a pillow the like of which it never touched in life, silky and fluffy—what a pillow! Even if you had one like it in your home your wife would never let you lay your head on it, but now you are dead, and that’s different. Not only do we have the couch casket with all of its downy silkiness, but rouge and lipstick for the corpse! After the modern funeral service is over, the casket is put into a funeral car which looks for all the world like a limousine, and when we reach the cemetery the flowers have been strewn over the pile of dirt, and nice, green artificial grass lines the grave and a nickel-plated lowering device is ready to lower the casket into the grave, with a movement as smooth as velvet. This is a funeral today.

But I ask you, was the corpse in the old-fashioned coffin any more dead than the one in this new affair? No matter with what environment we may have surrounded the corpse, it is still a corpse. In our endeavor to make death look like anything other than death, we have not succeeded in taking out the sting, and the bodies of our loved ones must be taken away from our sight just as rapidly as ever. So it is in the spiritual realm. While man has done everything in his power to make spiritual death look like anything other than spiritual death, he is just as dead today as he was the day Adam fell, a spiritual suicide in the Garden of Eden.

Man is not only dead, but helpless to do anything about it. He thinks he has the world beneath his feet, and that he is on top, but every little while God lets him know that he is still on the bottom. There was a day in the first threefold relationship when the race was on top of nature, and everything was subject to man; but when man rebelled against God, nature rebelled against man. When man disobeyed God, nature disobeyed man, and the result is that while a pilot can soar through the skies with his big iron bird, the minute he crawls out of the cockpit in the landing field, a yellow jacket can chase him all over the airport. A half dozen tiny mice loose in a room would empty it of every woman, and possibly most of the men. The doctors have to keep shooting us with injections of “bugs” in order to kill the “bugs” which are already in us. I know we love to think of ourselves as great

ones in the earth, but when it is all said and done, man is dead to God and utterly helpless.

In Isaiah 1: 5, 6, God has hung the finished portrait of what the human race is. He declares, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." God declares that the human head is sick. Sick with an intellectualism that denies the right of God to operate in His own universe; sick with an intellectualism which denies the power of God to perform miracles; sick with an intellectualism which makes God to be a sort of helpless old gentleman, seated out in the clouds somewhere, who started something that He cannot now control; sick with an intellectualism which denies the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ; sick with an intellectualism which denies the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures; sick with an intellectualism which takes the fire out of Hell and the glory out of Heaven. With a head like that, certainly the whole heart is faint.

The body politic of the human race is covered with wounds and putrefying sores. No sooner does the social service expert think he has closed up one of those awful sores than he discovers that another has broken out somewhere else. Then while he is tinkering with that, the old one breaks out afresh. The social service experts and postmillennialists to the contrary notwithstanding, God says, "The wounds have not been bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Yes, the old man is dead and in an awful state.

Because he is dead he has no way of knowing God. He may know a lot of things about God, but he can never know God. Paul declares that the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man, and the Spirit of God knoweth the things of God; meaning, thereby, that men are familiar with the things of men, but it takes the Spirit of God to make one familiar with God. Go out on the street anywhere, and accost an unsaved man and begin to talk to him about Roosevelt, Mussolini, Hitler, Khrushchev, war, economics, the AAA, the CCC, the PWA, the FERA and all other murderous assaults upon the alphabet, and he will carry on an intelligent conversation with you. Suddenly switch to a discussion about the Cross of Christ, His shed blood,

His atoning death and man's need of a Saviour, and this man will look at you as though you had gone out of your mind and were suddenly talking a foreign language. Switch again to the subjects dealing with the political and economic realm in which he lives, and he is perfectly at home. What has happened? While you were talking to him about Mussolini, Roosevelt, and the like, you were talking to his "live" side. When you were talking to him about God you were talking to his "dead" side. Because he is dead, therefore he is ignorant, and he can never be made *wise* to God until he is made *alive* to God.

Because he is dead to God and ignorant of God, therefore he has no communion with God. He is alienated from Him. Many times I have had men tell me that they could commune with God through the trees and nature, while at the same time they deny the Lord Jesus Christ. I am told that there is eight cents' worth of gold in every ton of sea water. I could as well expect to become gold-plated by swimming in the ocean, as expect to have communion with God through nature, when dead *to* God.

This new threefold relationship sets up a new threefold need as follows:

1. Reconciliation
2. Illumination
3. Regeneration

In the original relationship of the unfallen race, they enjoyed unbroken communion with God. Sin came in and alienated them from God, therefore they needed a way back to God. They enjoyed a perfect knowledge of God. Sin came in and blinded their minds to God, therefore they needed to be told the truth of God. They were possessors of spiritual life. Sin came in and left them spiritually dead, therefore they needed the life of God. Reconciliation, illumination, regeneration is the threefold need of Adam's race.

Now, it was over against this threefold need that Jesus Christ set Himself in this marvelous text of John 14:6 when He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." It isn't an attempt of a mere orator to impress his audience with fine phrases, but it is the calm announcement of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is God's *complete* remedy for man's *complete* ruin. The race needs a way back to God. "*I am the way.*" The race needs the truth of God. "*I am*

the truth." The race needs the life of God. "*I am the life.*" How completely in these three sentences the Lord Jesus Christ announces Himself as the lone remedy for man's awful ruin!

He is the way. Not a way-shower; not a mere sign post; He is the Way.

He is the truth. Not merely a truth-teller, but He is *the truth*. There is no truth in this universe that finds its residence outside of Jesus Christ. He is absolute truth in every realm. Jesus Christ is all the truth of philosophy; He is all the truth of theology; He is all the truth of history; He is all the truth of prophecy; He is all the truth of science; He is always and everywhere the truth. *If it cannot be brought into the compass or the presence of Jesus Christ, then it is not true.*

Let no professor of astronomy come before his class with the assurance of "the consensus of modern scholarship," but let him come before his class with a face and soul and intellect made radiant by the reflection of "the Sun of Righteousness" and the "Bright and Morning Star," which have shone full upon him in his observatory of faith.

Let no professor of botany come before his class with his materialistic explanation based on the pagan theory of evolution, by which he attempts to explain the beautiful flower; but let him come with his soul and intellect perfumed by the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valley perfume he has caught in his laboratory of faith.

Let no geologist come before his class with his classifications of the rocky strata of the earth, by which he seeks to build up an artificial theory of how things as they are came to be, but rather let him come to his study of the age of the rocks, in company with the Rock of Ages.

The Lord Jesus Christ declares that He is not only the way and the truth, but that He is the life.

This last claim is deeply significant. Suppose He had stopped with the first two. This would have made Him the Christ of the Modernists. Let us suppose that at the age of 25 you were imprisoned for life. Sixty years have passed. Now you are old, 85, slumped in the corner of your cell, and I visit you. As I come into the prison, I swing open its main portals. I throw back the door to your cell. I unlock the shackles from wrists and ankles and say to you, "See, I have opened the way for you to go. Arise and walk." You shrink

back into your cell with a look of fear upon your face, and you say to me, "I am afraid to walk that way, for I have heard of strange and awful things outside these prison walls; racing cars, dashing to and fro upon the streets; great iron birds soaring through the skies, and really, sir, I would rather not attempt it." I then sit down by your side and tell you the *truth* about what lies outside. By and by, as the truth lays hold upon you, you decide that you will walk the way and enjoy the truth, and then you suddenly realize that you haven't physical strength enough to even stand on your feet. You look up into my face and say, "Of all the cruel, inhuman monsters, you are the worst. You have aggravated my condition by opening the way out and stirring my soul with the description of the truth which lies along the way, when you know I have no power to walk the way, or to enjoy the truth. So far as the possibility of walking out those doors and enjoying the truth of what lies outside is concerned, I am as good as dead. Far better for me had you stayed away and let me die in ignorance."

Suppose that this is all Jesus Christ had to say to us. Truly of all inhuman monsters, He would have been the worst, and yet, this is exactly the Christ of the Modernists. They talk to us of the Jesus way of life, and glibly tell us that if we will follow His way we shall find the way back to God. But what power has a corpse to walk in anybody's way, much less the Jesus way? Thank God He did not stop with "I am the way and the truth."

Let us return to the illustration which we have been using. I look down into your face and say, "I know you do not have the life with which to walk the way and enjoy the truth, but do you see this powerful body of mine, with all of its throbbing life tingling in every fiber? I will tell you what I'm about to do. I am going to pour all of this pulsing life of mine into that emaciated, weakened body of yours, and in *my* life, and in *my* strength *you* can arise and walk the way, and enjoy the truth, and I will be your life while you do it."

Oh, beloved, this is exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ says to every poor, dead sinner of the race of fallen Adam. "I will be your life. I know you cannot do it, therefore, I will do it. All I ask of you is that you receive My life in which to walk My way, and enjoy My truth." Thank God for Jesus Christ, God's complete remedy for man's complete ruin!

Thus it is that we “reckon” and “yield.” *We* are dead but He is alive. He can live the Christ life (His life) in our bodies. He can and will live the normal Christian life in us if we will but “reckon” and “yield.”

We wish now to present a proposition upon which the whole exposition of Ephesians 6:11–17 will be based. It is this. God never asks *any* man or *any* woman under any circumstances to be or do *anything* for Him without at that moment placing at his or her disposal ample and adequate provision to be and to do that thing. An English author has said as much in fewer words: “God’s commandments are God’s enablements.”

God makes full and complete provision for every demand involved in Christian living. Unless we begin at this point, we shall never proceed very far, but are apt to meet the same fate as the little boy who fell out of bed because he lay too close to the place he got in.

Suppose we take a look into the Scriptures to see if this principle of God’s provision for all demands made upon us can be substantiated. A man was lying at the Pool of Bethesda. Thirty-eight years he had been totally paralyzed. The record says that at certain intervals the waters in the pool were moved, and whoever got into the waters first after the moving was healed of whatsoever disease afflicted him. But this dear fellow couldn’t get in. He didn’t have a wiggle in him! He had plenty of circumstances!

One day the Lord Jesus walked by and looking down upon him said, “Wilt thou be made whole?” The paralytic replied that he would, but that he had no man to put him in the water. Poor fellow! The Lord Jesus replied, “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” Then followed a long argument. The man looked up into the face of Jesus and answered on this wise: “Sir, if I could get up and walk, I would have been out of here long before this, and I certainly would not have waited all these years for you to come tell me to do it. There isn’t anything else in the world that I want to do more than to get up and take my bed and go home, but I can’t. Furthermore, it is not very kind of you to call attention to my helpless condition by commanding me to do something which you know I cannot do.” And thus the argument proceeded. You say you did not read that record in John 5. Right you are. You read it in the record of your own life!

What had been utterly impossible for this man five seconds before was

now the perfectly normal thing for him to do. And what made the difference? The command of the empowering Christ! God's commandments *are* God's enablements! God never asks *any* man or *any* woman under *any* circumstances to be or to do anything for Him without at that moment placing at his or her disposal ample and adequate provision to be and to do that thing. When the Lord Jesus Christ bent over the paralytic that day and dropped words of *command* into his ear, he dropped *ability to obey* into his body.

This paralytic became conscious of this God-given ability the moment he made the effort of obedience. He could have remained at the edge of the pool the rest of his life saying, "I can't," and he would never have known that he could. He would never have known that with those precious words of command, that which all his life long had been a hindering circumstance and a hopeless barrier had suddenly been removed, and in its place God had put the glorious possibility of a normal life.

Our churches are full of men and women who are saying, "I can't" in the face of God-given responsibilities. Thousands of these dear ones would be the most surprised individuals in the world to discover that they *can* do that which He asks them to do. They will never make this glorious discovery until they make the first effort of obedience.

On another occasion, the Lord Jesus was walking in the synagogue when He met a man with a withered hand. Immediately He sent forth the command, "Stretch forth thine hand," and again the man proceeded to argue that he couldn't, and that if he could he would. No, beloved, there was no such argument. Instantly he stretched forth the withered hand.

Oh, that Christians everywhere would get hold of this glorious truth that God does not call us to live the life without first giving us the life to live! Oh, that Christians everywhere might know that to be assured of the call and the command of God in their souls to do a certain thing is the positive guarantee that they can do it. No matter how impossible before, it is not impossible after He has spoken.