

Paul H. Dixon
Bees in the Bonnet of Leadership
Circa 1979

Unedited Transcript

00:00:01:04 - 00:00:16:15

Paul H. Dixon

I remember when I was a student at Tennessee Temple Schools, I used to walk through the halls and periodically Dr. Robertson would put up placards and these would have different slogans on them in order to try and motivate us.

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Paul H. Dixon

And I don't remember them all, but one I do remember. It seemed like he put this one up more than any other, that everything rises or falls on leadership. And you know, that's absolutely right. I don't know whether that's original with him, but I think most of us recognize whether it's at home, whether it's in business or

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Paul H. Dixon

whether it's in school or in the church. Everything rises or falls on leadership. Now, most of the time when we think of leadership in the church, we think about the pastor as the leader. But, you know, God has established other leaders as well, and it takes teamwork and they're deacons who are leaders and trustees and Sunday school

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Paul H. Dixon

teachers at all colo. Labors together for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I want to give you tonight, will I call bees in the bonnet for leadership? You might want to write these down, or maybe you'll remember them.

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Paul H. Dixon

I don't believe that there's anything so stupendous, but I think the very practical bees in the bonnet for leadership. Now what I have at the top of the list and I believe is certainly at the top of God's list, is be right with God.

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Paul H. Dixon

If you're going to be a leader for God, you've got to be right with God. Now that involves many things, of course, that involves being saved, even as Pastor told us about it this morning about a fellow who was preaching, but he wasn't sure he was saved and he had to get saved before he could do a

00:01:43:22 - 00:01:54:14

Paul H. Dixon

work for God. And if you're a leader and you're not saved, do you have any doubts about it? That's what you've got to settle, first of all. But I believe being right with God involves far more than just being saved.

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Paul H. Dixon

I was started recently as I read the biography of David Briner. It was written by Jonathan Edwards, one of the great minds of centuries ago. Jonathan Edwards average studying 16 hours a day. He disciplined himself to write, and he would write and write and write in order to develop his logic and organization and so forth.

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Paul H. Dixon

When he'd be riding on horseback, he'd be writing or reading. It was all the time working on this thing of getting saturated in the word of God. And before I got into the biography of Brainerd Edwards having written this, they gave a brief biographical sketch of Jonathan Edwards.

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Paul H. Dixon

And the thing that really stood out in my mind was Jonathan Edwards had 70 resolutions that governed his life when it was 21 years old. He sat down and he wrote these out and these 70 resolutions. He would go over at the end of every week, at the end of every month and at the end of every

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Paul H. Dixon

year, and they would see whether he was really growing in grace. He had resolutions like this to study people things they found in people that he ought to have in his life. He would endeavor to say, by the grace of God, I want these in my life.

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Paul H. Dixon

Things he saw in people that he did not like. He did not criticize them. He didn't tell others about it. But he said, Lord help this not to be in my life. And he had resolutions regarding his Bible study and regarding his time in prayer, regarding his giving and dealing with sin every day.

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Paul H. Dixon

And it's really a soul searching thing. The way this guy was constantly looking at his life. Now, the thing that bothers me in Christianity today, I think we get caught up in a few things that we consider ourselves spiritual.

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Paul H. Dixon

Maybe because we go to all the services, maybe because there are certain things that we consider worldly, that are not in our lives. And therefore we think that with those not being in our lives and the services being in our lives and maybe having a quiet time, something like that, that therefore we must be right with God

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Paul H. Dixon

. Not necessarily so we need to be evaluating our lives today. And pardon me, as Joe Boyd would say, but you know it. So we have a very, very weak brand of Christianity today in America. I mean, even among our leaders, I mean, as preachers, I mean, as evangelists and pastors and missionary all.

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Paul H. Dixon

We need a revival in America today, and it's got to start by taking spiritual inventory on the part of the leaders and being right with God. Hozier ten. twelve says break up your fallow ground for it. It's time to seek the Lord till he come and reign righteousness upon you.

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Paul H. Dixon

That's what we need to do. Now, the second thing I have on the list is be prayerful. Be right with God and then be prayerful. James, 516, says the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man of valor much, I believe when we talk about revival, the greatest revival that's needed today is the revival of prayer.

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Paul H. Dixon

I believe sometimes we need prayer meetings more than we need preaching services. I really believe that one of my favorite churches and pastors is the Metropolitan Tabernacle and England, pastored by Charles Hadden Spurgeon. My how God used this man.

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Paul H. Dixon

After they finally built the Tabernacle, it would seat 5000. This was before the days of big churches and promotion and everything else. They would pack that place out every Sunday morning and every Sunday night with 5000 people. They averaged 35 to 80 saved, baptized and added to the church every month for 37 years.

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Paul H. Dixon

And again, they I'm sure I doubt that even had an ad in the paper. The word just got around that that's where you went to hear the the Bible preached and why people from all over London would go to hear it.

00:06:09:08 - 00:06:24:19

Paul H. Dixon

Spurgeon preach. In fact, the taxicabs by Myers would appreciate this. Whatever the taxicab on Sunday would stop to pick somebody up. They'd say, You want to go to Charlie's place, that'd be the first thing they'd say. You want to go over to the Tabernacle and most people, that's where they'd be headed.

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Paul H. Dixon

Well, when Spurgeon started his church, actually, he followed some great divine, some great theologians. John Gill, once pastor of the new Park Street pulpit, where he went as a 19 year old boy. When he went to that church, he said, You must have made a mistake, said you didn't want me as your pastor.

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Paul H. Dixon

I'm only 19 years old. They said, we've got the right one. So he started preaching and he started giving the Sunday night services over the prayer. I don't know what even priest. Sometimes those prayer meetings lasted till midnight.

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Paul H. Dixon

They said sometimes they'd leave those prayer meetings and they'd take off. They felt like taking off their shoes that they were on holy ground. Power of prayer was so great. There was the beginning of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. They got so big that to lead the new Park Street pulpit they had while they were building the Metropolitan Tabernacle

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Paul H. Dixon

, they moved into the sari gardens that would see 10,000 people and 10,000 would come in there to hear Spurgeon preach. So one day he was over here in America and some pastors rallied around him and they were always asking him questions.

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Paul H. Dixon

And of course, questions like this. Mr. Spurgeon, what's your secret? How do you do it? Why do you have the greatest gospel preaching work in the world and without batting? And I looked at them and said, my people pray for me.

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Paul H. Dixon

He said that's a secret. My people pray for me one day at Pearson, the Great Presbyterian preacher was invited to preach for Spurgeon. Spurgeon had a profound effect upon him. In fact, Pearson renounced infant baptism and was immersed when he was in his sixties.

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Paul H. Dixon

He was a Presbyterian. The bulk of his ministry in that renounced infant baptism was emerged. When it's finished, it was practically over. Through the influence of Charles and Spurgeon, and Pearson was so well known back in his day, I would say he would be comparable to a Donald Great Barn house of ten or 15 years ago.

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Paul H. Dixon

He was the number one Presbyterian back there. Well, Pearson was invited to preach for Spurgeon. He went over and he said all the way over on the boat. He kept wondering what makes this place tick? Why do they have so many people come?

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Paul H. Dixon

I know Spurgeon is a brilliant man, a great preacher. There has to be more to it than that. And he said as he walked in the church, the Deacons met him and said, Would you be Mr. Pearson? He said yes.

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Paul H. Dixon

They said it's time to pray. He said he was ushered into a room where he never heard in his all of his days. Men pray like those men prayed. He said finally, somebody touched him on the shoulder and said, Mr. Pearson, it's time to preach.

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Paul H. Dixon

You preach, will stay here and pray. He said, I walked out and never did. I sense the power of God on me as I preached, as I did that night. He said that people got saved while he was preaching people.

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Paul H. Dixon

God's sake saved after the service, and he found out the secret to the Metropolitan Tabernacle one day. Some people were over there and Spurgeon was giving them his grand tour. You know, when you go to visit a church, they want you to see everything and.

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Paul H. Dixon

And so he said, Would you like to see my furnace room? That was the middle of the afternoon in the heat of the summer in London. And of course, really, no one wants to see a furnished room at that time of day.

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Paul H. Dixon

But of Spurgeon says, Let's see the furnace room, you want to see it. And so they said, Sure, we'd like to see it. So he took them to a big room about the size of this all the time, perhaps larger, threw open the doors.

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Paul H. Dixon

There were 400 of his people on their faces before God. And he said, Folks, that's what keeps this place on fire. That's what we need, brethren. We need a revival of pray. I am for promotion. I am for personalities.

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Paul H. Dixon

I am for advertising. I am for programs and all the rest. But I fear that we've taken all of that and substituted it for prayer. I almost think today that we could carry on the work of God if the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with it because we're so programed to do it again for all these

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Paul H. Dixon

things. But let's put prayer back in its rightful place. Let's promote the let's back with prayer. Let's thank God for personalities and preachers that he gives. But let's back them with prayer. Let's advertise. Let's have programs that get the work done.

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Paul H. Dixon

But let's not trust those. Let's trust in prayer above everything else. I'm glad for you men who met yesterday morning and decided that on Saturday mornings, you want to gather and pray. I believe God's going to do great things here at the Faith Baptist Church as you continue to pray.

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Paul H. Dixon

Week after week, may God bless you, and the third thing I have on my list is be faithful. first Corinthians 42 says moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. I believe that every time a pastor stands up to preach, he ought to be able to count on leaders being there.

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Paul H. Dixon

I've been encouraged this week by the faithfulness of the leaders and the large number of people who stood up this morning saying You'd been here every service, or maybe just missed one or two. That's what it ought to be.

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Paul H. Dixon

Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, Bible conferences, revival meetings, every service of the church. The leaders ought to be there. In other words, the pastor ought to have such a group of men and women around him that he can just count on.

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Paul H. Dixon

He knows they're with him and therefore the law. I believe this goes into every area of serving the Lord, whether it be teaching a Sunday school class, whether it be serving on a board. But we're just going to be faithful at it, whatever our duty is.

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Paul H. Dixon

They can count on us. God can count on us. And the pastor can. I believe it's the same way with visitation. I believe the leaders ought to set the way and lead the way in visitation. I remember asking Warren, Where's be some years ago?

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Paul H. Dixon

We got to talking about evangelism. It's one of my favorite men. Warren, where you'll find this. You need instructors and motivators in your life. Very few men are both. Most are one or the other. Some people just like instructors, no words.

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Paul H. Dixon

They like those who can come and teach them the word and they learn great truths. And they just like those who are deep and can feed them. If that's all you like, you're an out of balance. Christian. Others, just like motivators, they like the guy who can get up and, boy, he's got a super personality and when

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Paul H. Dixon

he gets through, preach it, man, you're ready to go out and take on the world. It stirs you emotionally and there are guys like that. Jack Irons, Lee Robertson, Jack Wirtz and these fellows are motivators, and I can't hear them without getting excited and getting stirred up.

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Paul H. Dixon

But if that's all you like, you're an out of balance, Christian. You see, the one who just gets instruction is the one who's taking and truth and sitting on that truth and getting fat and not getting involved for the Lord.

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Paul H. Dixon

The one who just like the motivation, is the one who has a lot of zeal, but it's not according to knowledge and you need both in your life. And when we can get this combination, remember what I said?

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Paul H. Dixon

The key word this morning balance when you can get balance in your life instruction and motivation. That's what the word of God has for us. Well, I ask, where's b? Who's an instructor? Great teacher of the word. one of the finest teachers in the world I've ever heard.

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Paul H. Dixon

But he had a very successful church in Covington, Kentucky. They have choirs. We have. They have a waiting list. You have to take voice lessons before you can even get it in their choir. And yet they've got a waiting list to get in the choir.

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Paul H. Dixon

A church, probably around 13 hundred, something like that. Solid man. You can count on as many people being there every night, the revival meeting

that would be there on Sunday night. There are folks that are just there every way giving.

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Paul H. Dixon

They don't even pass you offering plates that get boxes back at the back and people drop their offerings. And yet you couldn't believe the money they give to missions and to the work of the Lord to different church started by Dr. Easthope, who laid the foundation for this great work over a period of 30 years or so

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Paul H. Dixon

. But I have Squarespace said. Brother, we're speaker. What would you attribute your evangelism and visitation to? He said. Well, he said faithfulness on the part of the Sunday school teachers to visit. I said, Do all of your teachers visit?

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Paul H. Dixon

Oh, he said yes. He said they have to visit. I said, What do you mean? He said they either visit it or they don't teach. He said, Paul, in our church, it's a privilege to be a teacher. And he said, we expect our teachers to visit or we just give that privilege to somebody else.

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Paul H. Dixon

What are you talking about? He's talking about faithfulness, and that's what God needs, and that's what God wants. And may the Lord help us if we're going to be leaders, be faithful, if you're not going to be faithful.

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Paul H. Dixon

When I say this kindly, but resign your leadership. Don't be a leader if you don't plan to be faithful. All right. Be right with God. Be prayerful, be faithful and be submissive. Now, when it comes to submissiveness, there are many things we could talk about while the man asked me to bring a message on wives being submissive

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Paul H. Dixon

to their husbands. I won't say which one, but at any rate, we know that the Bible has something to say about this. God has a chain of command, right? Did you ever study the Bible in the light of that, the chain of command?

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Paul H. Dixon

In other words, we know that God is at the top. But God also gives other realms of authority. We know he gives certain areas of authority to government. We know that he makes us accountable to the government. Romans 13 one teaches us submit ourselves to the laws of the land and to the leaders of the land.

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Paul H. Dixon

We know that the word of God teaches that children should submit themselves to their parents, obey their parents. The word of God teaches that wives should submit themselves to their husbands. But you know, there's one area of submissive this that I don't hear preached on very much, probably because pastors can't do it.

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Paul H. Dixon

And brother Ford didn't know I was going to say this, and he's never heard me give this before. But Hebrews Chapter 13 Verse 17 says, Obey them, who had the rule over you and submit yourselves for they must give account for your souls.

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Paul H. Dixon

You know what that's talking about? Starting about church members being submissive to their pastor brethren. God blesses the church when they love their pastor and follow their pastor. When a church stops following their pastor's leadership, you might as well what ichabod over the door?

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Paul H. Dixon

Now I see two extremes, of course. As much as you know, I talked about balance, you would imagine I'd see two extremes. Well, I do in this battle of church leadership. I know some men and they don't let their people have anything to say about what's going to happen in that church.

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Paul H. Dixon

I was in a church out in New Mexico and some people were standing there showing me this new auditorium. They said, How do you like it? I said, It's beautiful. They said, We like it too. But we didn't have a thing to say about our pastor drew up the plans.

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Paul H. Dixon

Our pastor was the one who was the general contractor our past. The treasurer of the church, our pastors, everything, and we don't have anything to say, he just does it all well. If I've got to have an extreme, I'd rather have this extreme than the other one.

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Paul H. Dixon

But I don't believe that's biblical. I think the other extreme is even worse. And that is people have the idea that a board runs a church. They think, well, the deacon board hires and fires a pastor and that the Deacons are going to run the church.

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Paul H. Dixon

Well, you just can't find it in the Bible. God didn't establish deacons to run churches. The word for Deacon is the word for surfing, for a minister. In other words, it's the idea of serving in the church, not necessarily dictating to the church as a board.

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Paul H. Dixon

When God got ready to lead his people out of Egypt, he didn't call a board. He called them Moses when he got ready to lead his people into the Promised Land. He didn't call a board. He called it Joshua.

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Paul H. Dixon

When he got ready to reach the Jews, he called Peter the gentiles he called a Paul. God calls men, and God has called a man here by the name of James for the pastor of this church. God bless you.

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Paul H. Dixon

Is you supporting? You say, Paul? What do you do when you get a sorry pastor? And that does happen, huh? Well, you say, what do you do when you get a pastor? And you know, it's just not a good leader and things aren't going right?

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Paul H. Dixon

Well, I'll tell you. David had that happen in his life saw was a sorry, a leader after he got out of sorts with God, he was full of jealousy and envy. And you know what, David said when he had opportunities to resist Saul and to kill Saul?

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Paul H. Dixon

He said, Touch, not mine anointed. That's what God told David to do, and David would not touch Saul. He said God will take care of it, and sure enough, God took care of it. God will bless you if you follow your pastor.

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Paul H. Dixon

I was in one church and I couldn't believe it. The pastor told me that he didn't even know if he'd get to preach on Sundays. Sometimes the chairman of the Deacon board would call him up and say, Pastor, we've got a missionary coming through.

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Paul H. Dixon

We've decided the missionaries are going to preach this Sunday and you don't get to preach. Now that man had been in the ministry about 25 years and I sat there and he told me that and I couldn't believe that he'd stay there.

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Paul H. Dixon

I think I'd rather go out and dig ditches than the pastor. A church or deacon board called me up and told me that I couldn't preach on Sunday. I mean, that's ridiculous. That's not God's plan. The plan is the pastor and the people working together, but the pastor is the leader of the flock.

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Paul H. Dixon

And God bless you as you support that pastor. Be submissive. Number five, be positive. Steve Pollitt, I hear you right. That's right. Be positive, you say. Have you been reading Norman Vincent Peale? Yes, I've been reading Norman Vincent Peale.

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Paul H. Dixon

I recommend everybody read Norman Vincent Peale. If you haven't read his book, you ought to buy them. They've got something to say. I have to believe everything that's in them, but you ought to read him. I'm kind of like someone who said they believed that Paul is appealing, and Peele is appalling.

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Paul H. Dixon

Now, I'm not sure that that's totally correct. I'd rather listen to the Apostle Paul. But you know, this thing of being positive that didn't start with Peele, that started with Paul Philipians 48 says, Finally, brethren, Paul wrote This whatsoever.

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Paul H. Dixon

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 thick on these things, what he just say should be positive.

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Paul H. Dixon

He said, Think positive thoughts. Think on the true things and the honest and the just in the pure and the lovely, et cetera, et cetera. And he said, You act that way, then you are what you think. And if you allow negative thoughts to dominate your thinking, you will be a very sour, critical negative individual.

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Paul H. Dixon

If you're a woman like that, I wouldn't want to be married to you. I'll guarantee you. And if you're a man like that, I pity your wife. You watch this. Whenever you get negative, you get critical. You get critical about your family, about your job, about your country, your president, your church, your pastor, everything.

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Paul H. Dixon

We live in a negative society. We live in a day when the radio and the TV and the newspapers emphasize the negative all of the time. It's always open season on presidents. I don't care who it is, but everybody's against the president never make the right decision, whether it be Nixon or Johnson or Kennedy or Eisenhower.

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Paul H. Dixon

They never make a right decision. They're tore up by all the papers and by the TV commentators. And it just seems like, according to everybody, America's going down the tubes, and no one has anything good to say about America.

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Paul H. Dixon

Listen, don't tell anybody, but I'm glad I'm an American. This is the greatest country in the world, and I thank God for it. I'm not saying that we don't have our problems, but rather we got a lot of things going for us and that the Communists got so much.

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Paul H. Dixon

How come they got to have walls to keep their people in? Mhm. How many? How come so many of them would like to come to America and have what we have? And if we're not careful, we'll let this negative thing creep over into the church.

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Paul H. Dixon

And for some reason, it's boring to me. But for some reason we have the idea that if we're going to be a fundamentalist, we've got to be negative. You know that we got the idea that it's our job to tear everybody up and criticize this guy and that guy in this school and that school.

00:24:08:01 - 00:24:22:07

Paul H. Dixon

And it's always our job to set up as judges and just criticize everything and everybody. And some people have the idea when you preach you're not negative all the time, you're not preaching the word of God. I start when I read my Bible.

00:24:23:01 - 00:24:37:06

Paul H. Dixon

You know, the Apostle Paul, when he wrote to the churches, generally had something good to say about the churches when he started out. It generally started out as a letter with a positive note, and it closed it with a positive note and somewhere in between.

00:24:37:09 - 00:24:51:29

Paul H. Dixon

As only the Apostle Paul could do it, point out their sin and caused them to deal with that sin. But he would always emphasize the positive when it was there. And I've been picked up by and at airports, by pastors.

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Paul H. Dixon

As soon as they get me in the car, they say, Paul, are you having any revivals today? And just the way they say it, I know what they mean. They mean nothing's happening today, is it? We're living in terrible days and they want me to tell them that just because nothing's happening in their church, that it's not

00:25:11:29 - 00:25:28:15

Paul H. Dixon

happening anyplace else. And I tell them I'm having the time of my life that God's still on the throne and he's still working and things are happening today because we've got a great god. I don't see how anybody who knows who God is can be anything else but positive, man.

00:25:28:25 - 00:25:43:21

Paul H. Dixon

I don't think we should look at the circumstances, the problems we are to look to God. He's above the circumstances and he's above the problems, and he ought to make this positive. one day I was with a pastor and I seldom do this.

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Paul H. Dixon

I love pastors. They're my friends. I learn from every pastor I'm with. They have something to contribute to my life. But this dear brother, first night we got home from the meeting and he said, You know who wasn't there tonight?

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Paul H. Dixon

And he started telling me who hadn't come out. I didn't think anything about it till the next night. We got home. And he said, You know who wasn't there tonight? And he started telling me the deacons who hadn't come Sunday, school teachers who hadn't come.

00:26:13:00 - 00:26:26:05

Paul H. Dixon

I believe in faithfulness, just like, you know, we talked about earlier. But by Wednesday night, it was beginning to get under my skin and I knew what was going to happen and we got home after the service. And he said, Paul, do you know who wasn't there tonight night?

00:26:26:08 - 00:26:44:15

Paul H. Dixon

And I said, Wait a minute, I could care less. I said, Brother, I don't think you even know who was there. All you know, those who did not come and you are letting people who are unfaithful, defeat you and rob you of the blessing.

00:26:44:21 - 00:26:58:17

Paul H. Dixon

I said there were 37 kids there tonight and I had the time of my life if they were the only ones who showed up. I'm not going to let a bunch of backslid, hard headed Christians defeat me and my Christian life or in my ministry.

00:26:58:19 - 00:27:07:00

Paul H. Dixon

I'm going to get up and preach the word of God and let the spirit of God do the work and they're not going to. They have my joy and they're doing that of you. And I said, I want to challenge you.

00:27:07:15 - 00:27:19:27

Paul H. Dixon

I said, I've listened to you for three days, and every time you open your mouth, it's negative. When you talk about your kids, when you talk about your wife, when you talk about our nation, your church, your people, it's negative.

00:27:20:01 - 00:27:30:29

Paul H. Dixon

I said, in fact, the Chicago Cubs were winning the pennant and he couldn't find anything right with the Chicago Cubs. They went on to blow it like they usually do. But that's just the way it was geared to the night.

00:27:31:00 - 00:27:47:28

Paul H. Dixon

Or did he get mad at me? He didn't like it one bit. I challenged him to evaluate what was coming out of his mouth for two days. He came to me at the end of those two days and he apologized and said, Paul, I got mad at you.

00:27:48:14 - 00:27:58:16

Paul H. Dixon

But he said, at least I did what you told me to do, and he said I didn't know it. He said I didn't realize that I had been caught up in this. I didn't know what I was saying.

00:27:58:22 - 00:28:09:29

Paul H. Dixon

You see, that's what happens. You get caught up in this negative thing and you actually get to think in your spiritual. The more negative you get, the more spiritual you feel. And really, you're getting more carnal all the time.

00:28:10:07 - 00:28:22:15

Paul H. Dixon

And this is something that will defeat you as an individual. It'll defeat you in your hall. And boy, will it ever defeat a church. I can go into a negative church brother, and you can just feel it. A strong leader.

00:28:22:27 - 00:28:39:18

Paul H. Dixon

A strong leader can kill a service. I appreciate Brother Milton. He had a great deal of service. Just, you know. He's got a lot of froth. He ate. He says a lot of things that aren't worth saying, you know, but especially when he talks about the evangelist.

00:28:39:24 - 00:28:53:15

Paul H. Dixon

But I like, you know, it radiates irradiate and it comes through in a positive way. And I've had some guys and of course, we praise the Lord. We've had a good attendances all week, but you get some strong leaders and you get up there with the crowd.

00:28:53:15 - 00:29:06:23

Paul H. Dixon

That's not, you know, just packing the place out. And he'll say, well, there are many here tonight, but let's do our best for Jesus. You know, he sounds real, pious, do our best for Jesus. You might as well just have the closing prayer and go home.

00:29:07:11 - 00:29:23:07

Paul H. Dixon

You don't say that. Yeah, if you got a handful there. Have a great time and never, never in the handful. That's one of the most ridiculous things in the world is to have a small crowd and have somebody tear up that crowd because the others aren't there.

00:29:23:08 - 00:29:36:05

Paul H. Dixon

They couldn't help, but they're there. They're afraid for the people who aren't there ought to be here in the skin. Do you have a small Sunday school class? Do you have a great time? With that class? You endeavor to go out and build it up the next week.

00:29:36:12 - 00:29:50:11

Paul H. Dixon

You got to go 300 and Sunday school and you only get 200. Don't say a great deal about it. Just go on. Just go right on your way. Be positive. Someone has said what we need today is realistic optimism.

00:29:50:12 - 00:30:09:14

Paul H. Dixon

I like that o word realistic optimism. We're not talking about some kind of optimism that makes things to be great if they're not great. In fact, I think we can overuse this word great if we're not careful. Everything's great, you know, and tremendous and so forth, and we can overuse it.

00:30:10:00 - 00:30:28:03

Paul H. Dixon

But realistic optimism means looking for the positive in every situation. Generally, what we do is we look for the negative. You know, there is something negative in your life if you look hard enough and there's something negative in your husband.

00:30:28:12 - 00:30:42:28

Paul H. Dixon

If you really look, you know, and there are some things that are not quite right and your kids, if you want to look for them and don't tell him, I said so. But probably after a few more years, you will find that Pastor Ford does have a few things wrong with them.

00:30:42:28 - 00:30:58:12

Paul H. Dixon

If you're looking for them, you won't find them as pastor. You'll probably find a few inconsistencies and things in your people. But you know, if you learn to look for the positive, it's there too. And instead of gearing to look for the negative all the time.

00:30:58:23 - 00:31:11:06

Paul H. Dixon

Gear yourself to look for the positive in every situation. I I've heard of two fellows who run a guard house that I think this illustrates. Quite fittingly, one fella looked at the other and said, How long you were in here for?

00:31:12:02 - 00:31:24:25

Paul H. Dixon

He said, I'm in here for a day. How long are you in here for? He said, I'm in here for six long months. He said, What did you do? He said, I killed the general. What'd you do? He said, I hit the sergeant.

00:31:25:12 - 00:31:40:21

Paul H. Dixon

He said, Kill me now. Can I hit the sergeant and get six long months and you kill the general and you only get a date? Oh, you said they're going to hang me tomorrow, but I don't know how realistic that is.

00:31:40:27 - 00:31:58:01

Paul H. Dixon

But brother, that guy had optimism that he learned to look for the positive in every situation, and that's what we need to do. Oh, what a difference it'll make in our lives, in our homes, in our church. If we're positive and then finally, be enthusiastic.

00:31:58:27 - 00:32:16:03

Paul H. Dixon

Get excited, get excited about the Lord's work. You know, you get excited about a service and you'll listen better. You get excited about the preaching of the word of God, and you'll get more out of the preaching. You get excited about teaching that Sunday school class and you'll be a better Sunday school teacher.

00:32:16:07 - 00:32:29:28

Paul H. Dixon

You get excited about visitation and you'll love visitation like one guy. I know he got saved and he went out with the pastor to visit. He said, wow. He said, I used to get excited about a basketball game and playing on the varsity team that night.

00:32:30:03 - 00:32:48:04

Paul H. Dixon

But he said this is more exciting than playing on that team, going out and knocking on doors and telling people about Jesus. Maybe that's why the church is about to vote. This young man, a layman on as a full time visitation man in that church because he's still excited about visitation, saw a couple weeks ago, said Paul

00:32:48:10 - 00:33:00:02

Paul H. Dixon

. He said, You know, I'm really concerned that the church vote me on, so we got a lot to do. He said we only run 500 people on Wednesday night, and only 100 of them go out on Thursday night on visitation.

00:33:00:06 - 00:33:14:15

Paul H. Dixon

I thought, You've really got it bad, buddy. But I didn't tell him. I just let him think that we'd get all five other album visitation on Thursday night. That'd be great. But what he's saying, he's excited. He's excited about visitation and soul winning, and you get excited.

00:33:14:18 - 00:33:26:29

Paul H. Dixon

You get excited about a business meeting and you enjoy the business. You get excited, whatever it is and the work of the Lord, and it'll make a difference. And Vincent Peale said enthusiasm makes the difference, and it does.

00:33:27:13 - 00:33:44:16

Paul H. Dixon

The Bible says whatsoever. Thy hand, find it to do. Do it with thy might. Ecclesiastes Chapter nine verse ten. I heard about one follower who was driving along in his car. He was a salesman. And you know these salesmen.

00:33:44:17 - 00:33:58:02

Paul H. Dixon

They can teach us a lot about enthusiasm and being positive and getting the job done. Every day you pass this little boy who had this mutt for sale, just the dog. I mean, you know, all American ground you.

00:33:58:18 - 00:34:14:10

Paul H. Dixon

Here's the kid not to clean himself with the dirty dog and the little sign that said Puppy for sale \$5 now. The salesman goes by every day, and finally, one day stops and says, Buddy, if you want to sell that dog, you get a bath.

00:34:15:01 - 00:34:27:20

Paul H. Dixon

You give that dog a bear. You get you a big sign and you ask a big price and you'll sell that dog. He said. I'll do it, mister. And so the next day, the man goes to work and there's that kid.

00:34:27:21 - 00:34:45:18

Paul H. Dixon

All they got him a shirt and a tie on his hair slicked back, standing there with the shoulders back. Just so proud. There's that puppy. He's had a bear since their wagon. This tail got a great big gold ribbon around his neck, and there's a great big sign in the yard like a billboard that says puppies for

00:34:45:18 - 00:35:05:08

Paul H. Dixon

sale. \$1,000. Well, he said, I'm glad that kid's excited and he's thinking big, but I got teach teaching to think simple. He said, You got to keep it simple. So I'm straight. I'm out when I come home and he comes home and the kid's gone and the dog's gone.

00:35:05:10 - 00:35:21:03

Paul H. Dixon

And of course, the sign is written. Said, I can't believe it. So he goes up, knocks on the door. The kid comes to the. Already just so exciting to says, thank you, Mr, thank you. He said you really helped me.

00:35:21:07 - 00:35:47:23

Paul H. Dixon

The salesman said, Kid did, did you really sell that dog for \$1,000? He said, Yes, sir. He said all I had to do was take two 500 dollar cats in for a trade in. Well, you know, there is a kid that got excited and, you know, I don't know of anything that's worth getting excited over more than

00:35:47:23 - 00:35:58:08

Paul H. Dixon

the work of the Lord. We've got such a great God. I'd rather be involved in the work of the Lord and be a preacher of the word of God than be president of the United States. What a privilege is ours.

00:35:58:09 - 00:36:02:06

Paul H. Dixon

May God help every one of us to be the leaders that we ought to be.