

(clapping) (microphone sound) (microphone sound) (instrumental music) (indistinct coughing)
(instrumental music) (people moving around) (instrumental music continues) (dramatic music) (music stops) (next song starts to play) (music becomes louder) ♪ Praise God from whom all blessings flow ♪ ♪ Praise Him all creatures here below ♪ ♪ Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts ♪ ♪ Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost ♪ ♪ Amen. ♪

Announcer: Eternal God our heavenly Father, we offer unto thee, these our gifts with humble and thankful hearts. And in presenting them, we present ourselves, with the prayer that both may be used to the glory of thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (moving around)

Preacher: Next Sunday we return to our regular series of university services of worship with the return of freshmen Sunday, which will be observed at 11 o'clock here in this chapel, next Sunday. Preacher will be the Reverend Professor James T Cleland, who is Dean of the chapel, who will be preaching the freshmen sermon this year. We are stealing a little bit of a March on freshmen Sunday here today by welcoming the freshmen members of the Duke football squad who are present and worshiping with us today for the first time. They haven't come in during the past week. Next Sunday we will welcome all of the freshmen. These two Sundays, last Sunday and today, our special football squad services in two ways. First, they are designed mainly for the benefit of the football squad. They being the only students who are regularly on campus at this time. And secondly, by the participation of members of the squad in the conducting of the service. We look forward to these two Sundays of services each year. And I might say without meaning to insult the other members of the congregation who are present here, and those who are listening in by radio, we do not have you folk mainly in mind as we design and plan these services. I want you to know that I feel a good deal more comfortable in the service today than I did last Sunday. In fact, I felt last Sunday, definitely in the minority, as I took some part in the service. There was John Simpson, the pianist, and reading the scripture was John Gudikunst, the captain of the team, and leading prayers in the service was John McNab, the president of the fellowship of Christian athletes. And then when we came to the sermon, we had the gospel according to John Wilson. I was the only non-Joe Hannah, an element in the service. Today with Bob and Mike, along with two Johns, which we still have today, one Howard, is a little bit more comfortable. I would like now for you to do some supposing with me, I would like for you to suppose that next Saturday afternoon in Charlottesville, Virginia, the members of the two opposing football squads have put on their shoulder pads, their game jerseys, their shoes and all the other football gear. They have taken to the field and they are lined up in opposition to each other all the way across the field is the line of the blue and white and facing them all the way across the field, a line of the Virginia players. The referees in their white and black stripes are on the field. The national Anthem has been played and the referee in charge has the whistle in his mouth and he holds up his hand and he is ready to commence the game. He blows the whistle and instead of the player who has been elected to make the kickoff, going forward and engaging the ball with his foot, everyone on both teams begins to do knee bends, and the fans up in the stands on both sides of the stadium look in amazement at this spectacle that is unfolding before their very eyes. Here are all these

football players down on the field, going up and down, up and down, up and down. And after a little bit, the referee blows the whistle again. And the people in the stands think that he is blowing the whistle to find out what is going on. But instead of that, when he blows the whistle the second time, they quit doing knee bends and began to do pushups. And after a while of doing pushups, the referee blows the whistle and coach Murray sends in a few substitutes who take the place of some of the people who are out there on the field. And the managers of both teams rush on the field with carts that have weights in them, and they distribute weights to all the players on both teams, and they begin then to lift weights. And after this has gone on for a while, the referee blows the whistle and they have time out, a quarter, presently a half, and they have done isometrics before all the people in the stands. And at last, when he blows the whistle again, everyone gets out on the track and starts doing laps. And finally they do wind sprints. And then the referee blows the final whistle, gets the attention of the crowd and said now on the basis of my observation of the pushups and the knee bends, the weightlifting, the isometrics, the laps around the track and the wind sprints, I have declared, and of course it would be this way that Duke University has won this football game. Well the referee would think that everyone would go home. Not so, people in the stands who have been stunned beyond belief, by what they have seen, begin to discuss what they have been seeing with each other. And one man says, look here, I protest this spectacle in the strongest terms possible, my ticket, which I paid money to get, says that I was entitled to see a football game. And look what I saw when I came out here to Charlottesville today. Another one said, well perhaps there has simply been a mistake made that this was a track meet instead of a football game, and we have witnessed a track meet. And another one, quite confused, and yet unwilling to be totally confused said, no, I think we've seen a football game, because I was doing some special work down on the campus of Duke University this summer, and some of the football players were in summer school. And I saw them at different times during the summer doing knee bends, pushups, isometrics, weightlifting, doing laps around the track and wind sprints, and I asked them what they were doing, and they said they were getting in practice for football. And so they said, they were practicing to do just exactly what we have seen them do here today. So I think that this is football, this is football according to the latest revision of the rules. And another one would say, now let's go get the rules and see what this is that we have seen. Well now I think before we continue this conversation any further, we'll put out a period on this make believe game of football, this fantasy football, this supposing that we have been doing. And let me try to explain to you why I have asked you to suppose that this will take place next Saturday afternoon. It is not as fantastic as it seems on the surface, not by a long shot. This is not altogether a fantastic picture. And the reason is that the exercises and the disciplines of the summer, which are as described, will have a great deal to do with what really will take place in Charlottesville next Saturday. And when the final score is up on the scoreboard, it will be determined in some measure by how well the athletes of both squads this summer have done all of these things, which when I described them, did not sound like football to some of you who are here today and are not on the football squad, but the members of the squad will know very well what I'm talking about when I say that these things will have a lot to do with the outcome of the actual football game. Secondly, the spectacular football which you will really see, those of you who go, will be made possible in large measure by the drudgery of this non-football kind of practice and discipline and training. And so when the quarterback takes the ball and appearing to be as free as a breeze and as unfettered as an antelope and begins to run around and scramble the game and go around the end or whatever he does, this freedom which he has achieved and which he will display has been made possible by something that is not at all free, not at all unstructured, something that has been for him,

hard discipline, drudgery, training, practice, repetition, self-denial, getting himself in shape. And when the fullback with reckless abandon plunges into the line and seems to be completely on his own, he will be able to do this also because of this kind of unfree, fettered, discipline for months and months ahead. And so it is with the halfbacks, the lonesome ends and all the others, who performed their tasks and who seemed to be just having a great time out there doing what they want to do. Now I would like for you to move to another point in your thinking here for a little bit, perhaps what I ought to say is now the sermon will escalate. You know, nothing develops anymore. Nothing progresses, everything these days escalates. And so now this sermon has escalated to a second point and that is that the Christian life is the same as what I have been describing about football up to now. The Christian life is the same, the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, according to the divisions we have made, chapter 9:25-27, says every athlete exercises self-control in all things, they do it to receive a perishable reef, but we do it for an imperishable. I pummel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others, I myself should be disqualified more than that, actually when you read all of the letters of the apostle Paul, you find him using much stronger terminology than simply pummeling his body, disciplining and regimenting himself. He uses the term death. He said, I die daily to sin in order that I might live for Jesus Christ. The term death, actual death to sin. Can you imagine anything anymore total, anymore serious than that. And yet this is the term that the apostle Paul uses with reference to the life of sin, in order that he might live for Christ. I think it is very interesting for us and worthwhile to note that this kind of discipline of the spiritual life, as well as of athletic life, is something which leads to freedom and without which freedom is impossible. This discipline. This way of voluntary slavery to the preparation for an ideal, this voluntary taking of the yoke of discipline and of obedience is the only way to achieve true freedom, either as an athlete playing football or as a Christian engaged in the various serious business of witnessing to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now since we've been talking about Paul here and his understanding of it, I'd like for us to take a few minutes now, just to look at what Paul's explanation is. So to speak his theory of how this works. The first point in Paul's theory is that every person in the world, without any exceptions, recognizes or should recognize himself as being created in the image of God and called to live a righteous life. And that God has given us the moral or righteous law and holds every person in the world responsible for obedience to it. And yet, every person the world is under judgment, because of this, because of the fact that all of us have empirically found that we have broken the law. We have not always told the truth. We have not always been faithful to honesty. We have not always lived according to the principle of purity. We have not always been unselfish. We have all, everyone, broken this law and therefore every person stands under judgment because of his failure at some point, indeed at many points, to measure up to that which he could have done and which under God he was called to do and to be. But God is a God of love, who is not primarily interested in punishing or condemning us because of our violation of the moral law, but who is primarily interested in redeeming us and then restoring us to fellowship with Him and to the kind of character and being which He created us for. And so He has made possible a righteousness by faith, F A I T H, a righteousness which comes by faith in Jesus Christ and identification with Him at two points. The first is identifying ourselves with Christ in His death. And secondly, identifying ourselves with Him in His resurrection. And it was this section of Paul's explanation of his theory, which Mike Shasby read a while ago. We identify ourselves with Christ's death by dying to sin, not by our physical death. People are dying physically every day. This does not identify themselves, it does not identify them with the death of Christ, whether they are Christians or not. The death which we can die to identify ourselves with the death of Christ is dying the death to sin, being dead to sin. And the only way we can ever

identify ourselves with the resurrection of Christ is to be raised by the power of the Holy Spirit, to a new life in Christ. And that new life begins in the flesh in this life while we live. So that the death which we die willingly and with the aid of the Holy Spirit to sin, enables us then to rise in newness of life and be identified with the risen Christ. That is the theory which the apostle Paul had for explaining, the freedom which is possible for the Christian in the Christian life. Now, at this point it would be well for us all to admit that there are tendencies within us, which go against this fine theory that the apostle Paul had. We want a shortcut don't we? Let me be very personal and say, I want a shortcut. You do your own confessing and I'll confess for me. I want to have my cake and eat it too. This idea of freedom sounds great, I want it, but I'm not sure that I want the discipline. I want to be a great athletic star, but I don't want to lift weights all summer. I want to shine as a halfback, but I don't like all this business of knee bends and pushups and going to bed at a proper time and eating the right kind of food. I want to have my cake and eat it too. I want to get an early start on the day, but I want to sleep late. I want to build up a big savings account down at the bank, but I want to buy what I want when I want it too. Within us there's this wistful wish that we could have this and that, that we can be both up and down at the same time and with the same effort. Now nobody, not even all mighty God can blame us or will blame us for having the wistful wish. Perfectly all right to have the wistful wish, but, we should be wise enough to know that it won't work that way, that we have to make a choice. Either we're not going to be a good football player, or we're going to pay the price. One of the two. Either we're going to get an early start on the day, or we're going to sleep late. We're not going to sleep late, stay in bed till 10 o'clock, and still be at work at eight. It won't work. It just isn't made that way. We're not. Now the Christian who wants to consider that he has freedom from the law and from the judgment that comes from being under the law must know that this is based upon a death to sin and to the whole apparatus of sin and the whole basic motivations of sin. He must absolutely die to these, if he is to have the freedom, which is in Christ, in the way that the apostle Paul has spelled it out. Now we are generally given some little tidbit or enticement to think that this is possible by someone who's more interested in getting a sensational headline than he is in maintaining his integrity as a scholar of the Bible or his faithfulness to the orders of his church. There is a college chaplain who has recently been quoted in the press, as having said that we Christians are free and that therefore this means that in the area of sex, we can do whatever we want to do at any time we want to do it. There is another person who has recently been quoted as a professor in a college as having said that his son was getting ready to go to bed and he said, be sure you brush your teeth before you go to bed. And his son said that he would be sure to do it and a little bit later, his father, the professor, went upstairs to the bathroom and took his toothbrush and ran his thumb over it and it was dry. So the next morning he said to his son, why did you not brush your teeth? He said, I did. He said, no you didn't brush your teeth. He said, yes I did daddy. Now he said, my son did not tell the truth, but he didn't mean to lie, what he meant to do was to say, I was tired, too tired to brush my teeth before I went to bed. And he said, this is the way we must interpret all of the false statements of human beings. And if when a person tells a falsehood, we should ask ourselves what it was he was really trying to say, and not to consider such statements as this as lies or falsehood. In other words, to take the entire moral fiber out of the dimension of human living. And I suppose we always will have a few ministers who will be willing to get the headlines at the expense of their integrity, but this has a very damaging effect upon the witness which the Christian community needs to make in the world, because it leaves Christians who follow this plan, looking pretty much like the pagans in the world. Exactly a year ago, this month, something happened on the highway between High Point and Greensboro, which illustrates what I'm trying to say. There was a young man by the name of Wallen, who took the family

car about midnight and started out to the home of two friends of his who lived on the highway between those two cities. He stopped at a gas station to fill up the tank just a few minutes after he left home, and then he did not arrive at the home of his two friends. About one o'clock they called his home and the boy's mother answered and told them that her son had left to go to their home. And when they compared the time, they learned that he had had ample time to reach the home of these two boys who were calling. So they got in their car and went out on the highway to find him, thought perhaps he'd had a wreck. They drove up and down the highway and they did not find him. He had completely disappeared it seemed. All night they looked for him. They had the highway patrol out searching, the Sheriff's department, they looked on all of the highways. They could not find him, could not find his car. No one had heard from him. The next morning when daylight came, again the search was renewed, and they looked up and down the highways, he had simply disappeared. They found that he had stopped at this filling station to get gas, so that they knew he had headed out that way. All day long they looked, and finally late in the evening, someone thought to look among the cars in a junkyard at a bend in the road, the car was found there. He had gone around this curve too fast, his car had jumped the ditch and gone through the fence into the junkyard, had rolled over by the junked cars. And because it looked like all the other wrecked cars there, no one noticed the car. And they found the body of the young Mr. Wallen, in a bush, some 10 yards away from his car, and the medical authorities examining him said that if his body had been found, even as early as nine or 10 o'clock in the morning, his life probably could have been saved, because of the nature of his injuries. But having been there all day, he had died. His car looked so much like all the other wrecks that no one noticed it or could see any difference, or look for the young man there. I think that the Christian whose moral and spiritual behavior looks like the pagans, does a disservice to the Christian community, by attempting to get freedom without discipline. And that means that freedom without discipline is license and license is the enemy of the Christian faith. This brings us to ask a very crucial question, which is, how far does freedom go? If freedom without discipline is license, then just how far does freedom go? Where does it extend? What are its dimensions? Whatever else we might see in answering a question like that, I think we have to say this, that freedom is limited to our choice. Wherever there is an alternative which we may elect, freedom extends as far as the electing of that choice, but there it stops. We are not free, both to choose what we will do, and choose the consequences of that choice. It is not a double choice that we have. We have only a single choice. When I have chosen which of two alternatives I will take, then the way the world is built, the whole moral structure of the universe takes over. And I am not free to say what will grow once I plant the seed. If I plant corn, I cannot then decide that I want to reap rice. If I buy a ticket and get on a plane that is headed for New York, I cannot then decide that I will land in Miami on that flight. So it is in our athletic life and in our Christian life, we can choose discipline or we can choose license. But if we choose license, we cannot have freedom. If we choose freedom, then we must also choose as a requisite, a rigid kind of discipline. I call to your attention again, the portion of the scripture passage, which Mike Shasby read, where Paul says, for if we have grown into Christ by a death like His, we shall grow into Him by a resurrection like His, knowing as we do that our old self has been crucified with Him in order to crush the sinful body and free us from any further slavery to sin. In London, many years ago, there were two students who were studying at the same time. They both attended St. Paul's Cathedral regularly, every Sunday, during the days they were students there. One of these students was more impressed with the content of the order of worship, was more impressed with the theology that was being propounded there. And he committed himself to that theory, that theology, to the faith that was verbally expressed in the service. He became a great Biblical Scholar, Dr.

Robinson. The other one equally as brilliant was more impressed by the great gap, which existed between the theology which was expressed verbally in St. Paul's Cathedral and the actual practice, the lives of the people who sat in the pews. He knew some of them, and he saw that their lives did not conform to the theology which was expressed and which they said they believed. He was specifically very disappointed in the interest which these people had in the poor of London. They talked about giving to the poor. They talked about being interested in the poor, but they were not interested in the poor. And this man became the founder of the World Communist Movement. And many years later, when Dr. Robinson went back and interviewed Mr. Lennon, his fellow student, and his fellow occupant of a pew in St. Paul's Cathedral, he said, why did you not read the New Testament? He said, I read the new Testament through seven times. And if people would only have lived the way the New Testament said, I would have been a believer, but I did not see them living that way. I saw them self-centered and callous and crude and lustful. They did not live this way. And so he said, I did not believe it. I do not know what serious effect will be caused if I am unfaithful to the Christian witness, but I know it will hurt someone. I do know, according to the testimony of Mr. Lennon himself, that the World Communist Movement and all of the evil that has come as a result of it, came about because a particular congregation of people did not take seriously the discipline of the Christian life. And one young inquiring mind turned away from it because it was undisciplined. They wanted the freedom of the faith without the discipline. May it be true of this congregation that we will seek the freedom that is in Christ by disciplined dedication to His Spirit. Let us stand. (Congregation stands) Oh God our heavenly Father who has called us to faith and life in Christ. Give us thy Spirit, that we may be faithful to the heavenly vision through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Now let us sing hymn Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise. (music starts to play) (music continues to play) ♪ Immortal, invisible, God only wise, ♪ ♪ In light inaccessible hid from our eyes, ♪ ♪ Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, ♪ ♪ Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise. ♪ ♪ Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light, ♪ ♪ Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might: ♪ ♪ Thy justice, like mountains high soaring above, ♪ ♪ Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love. ♪