

Fren-01 Lenuage Invisiblede Tmoins (The Invisible Cloud of Witnesses)

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the importance of recognizing the invisible cloud of witnesses and living with an apostolic faith that endures through trials.

Duration: 1:09:44

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 4:18, Hebrews 10:34-36, Hebrews 11:12, Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his experience at a French meal in French-speaking Switzerland and compares it to the idea of taking joy in being stripped of earthly possessions. He references Hebrews 10:34, where Paul speaks of disciples who joyfully accepted the spoiling of their goods because they expected a heavenly reward. The speaker challenges the audience to have an apostolic and apocalyptic mindset, declaring war on the culture and unspoken premises of the world in order to see the invisible and eternal things of God. He emphasizes that true faith goes beyond correct doctrine and involves seeing the heavenly and knowing that there is a better and enduring substance in heaven. The speaker encourages the audience to not cast away their confidence, but to have patience and live for the eternal life to come. He also challenges the modern Christian mindset of simply avoiding sin and highlights the importance of seeing ourselves as running a race and being surrounded by a cloud of invisible witnesses.

Transcript

Perhaps we can begin in Hebrews 11, verse 12. A very familiar portion of scripture. Hebrews 12, verse 1. A fabulous verse.

Isn't that true? Everything is pinned to seeing that we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. The seeing of that is altogether an incentive and a motive for running and completing the race. I have to smile to myself.

Because I think of a remark that I've made so often to American Christians. It just came back to me as I'm looking at you. This book will only be an object or subject for Bible studies until the conditions come again that are of the kind that were faced by those to whom these scriptures came at the first.

How many of us even think that we are in a race? Or our Christianity is a mere succession of days and services? Can you see how strange these verses are? They're completely out of keeping with our modern temper and the whole tenor of our age. What Christian thinks of himself as running a race? We just want to keep our noses clean, so to speak. To avoid conspicuous sin.

One day is like another. We are not in this context. But we ought to be.

For example, how many of you believe that we are surrounded tonight by a cloud of invisible witnesses? Oh brother, don't get carried away. I see you have a flair for drama. You have a romantic imagination.

God forbid. I fully expect that we should be surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. Or why else would I be here? I'm not in the entertainment or the performance business.

I'm not here to bring a novelty to titillate jaded saints. I'm on the apostolic cutting edge. And I don't expect to die in a bed.

I would suspect that martyrdom is the logic of such a life lived for God. So one of us is wrong. If your view is not aligned with my view, then one of us is out of alignment with God.

So I insist on my view. It's my prerogative as preacher to bring you into my consciousness to embrace my perception of the faith. Or else what is preaching for? And prophetic proclamation who sees as God sees and speaks His words.

Are you in the faith tonight? Once and for all given the saints Are you earnestly contending for it? I'm not speaking about the correctness of the doctrines. That's kid stuff. I'm talking about the apostolic quality of the faith.

Je veux parler de la qualité apostolique de la foi. Cette présence qui est radicale et qui est céleste dans le monde présent et qui invite l'opposition contre elle-même that makes persecution and reproach an inevitability that lives for the glory of God. Do you have that faith? Because that faith needs to be contended for.

Parce que pour obtenir cette foi-là, il faut lutter. Parce que tous les facteurs qui sont dans le monde et la chair et le diable s'y opposeront. J'en prends à mon aise avec vous ce soir.

Je n'ai pas été aussi doux avec l'église allemande. Là, j'ai dit très clairement que l'Holocauste a été la conséquence d'un christianisme qui n'était pas à la hauteur. Mais si l'on avait maintenu la vraie foi, une foi de nature apostolique, il n'y aurait pas eu ce vide que Hitler a pu venir exploiter.

Mais bien sûr, c'est le passé. C'était l'histoire apostolique. Nous ne nous attendons pas à ce que cela continue maintenant.

Et si nous n'y attendons pas, nous ne l'aurons pas. Et c'est pour cette raison que nous sommes entourés par une nuée de témoins invisibles. Parce que eux, leur nombre n'est pas complet sans nous.

Et ils sont impatients et ils se tordent les mains en espérant que nous y arriverons. Parce qu'ils voient de manière plus claire que nous marchons vers une conclusion, une fin apocalyptique qui apportera la gloire de Dieu. Est-ce que vous le voyez ? Voir, c'est l'essentiel.

Voyons que la traduction de la Bible qui vient d'être lue, c'est Voyons donc que nous sommes entourés d'une si grande nuée de témoins. Seeing isn't in the French. We'll have to change that.

So just interpret in my English. Wherefore, seeing, we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses Par conséquent, voyons que nous sommes, nous aussi, entourés d'une si grande nuée de témoins. That wherefore is the pivot.

Something comes because you see this. Ce donc est un pivot, tout tourne sur ce mot, donc. But brother, how can you see something that's invisible ? Mais frère, direz-vous, comment voyez-vous quelque chose d'invisible ? What a French question.

Quelle question française. And what it condemns us. Et elle nous condamne.

It shows how earthly we are. Elle montre à quel point nous sommes terrestres. How limited.

Combien nous sommes limités. How unlike Paul. Combien peu nous ressemblons à Paul.

Who saw the things that were invisible and eternal. Lui qui voyait les choses invisibles et éternelles. Who saw the invisible weight of glory.

Lui qui voyait ce poids invisible de gloire. That was not a metaphor for him. Pour lui, ce n'était pas une métaphore.

It had present, concrete application and consequence. Elle avait une application et des conséquences dans le présent. It made his present afflictions both momentary and light.

Elle faisait que ses affections présentes étaient temporaires et légères. We had better see like Paul. Nous ferions bien d'avoir les yeux de Paul.

Or our afflictions will do us in. Ou alors nous serons détruits par nos afflictions. Will compromise us.

Elles nous limiteront, elles nous compromettront. Will have us to be found unfaithful and disloyal in the last days. Nous serons trouvés infidèles et déloyaux au cours des derniers jours.

Taking the mark of a beast. En prenant la marque de la bête. How else shall we buy or sell? De quelle autre manière pourrons-nous vendre ou acheter? Il nous faut bien vivre.

Il faut bien qu'on vive. God knows we have families to support. Dieu sait que nous avons des familles à nourrir.

You have to be practical. Il faut être pratique. And what's a little mark? Qu'est-ce que c'est qu'une petite marque? God knows that we don't really believe that system.

Dieu sait bien que nous ne croyons pas véritablement dans ce système. It's only a little preliminary and necessary accommodation just to sustain our physical lives. C'est un simple accommodement préliminaire et temporaire pour soutenir notre vie physique.

It doesn't compromise our faith. We still believe. Elle ne met pas en danger notre foi.

Nous continuons de croire. Well, there's believing and believing. Eh bien, il y a croire et croire.

That kind of rationale and self-justification will find you in an eternal lake of fire. Cette raison d'être-là et cette façon de croire-là vous feront aboutir dans les temps de feu. Not because I say so, but because he says so.

Non pas parce que je le dis, mais parce que lui le dit. Anyone who is found with the mark of the beast has this eternal penalty. Ce châtement éternel est pour tous ceux qui seront trouvés avec la marque de la bête.

Don't think that God's going to be impressed with your French logic. Ne pensez pas que Dieu sera impressionné par votre logique à la française. The only mark that will be found on you had better be the mark of the Father in your forehead.

La seule marque qui devra être trouvée sur vous, il vaudra bien mieux que ce soit la marque du Père sur votre front. And if you die for the want of food or you die for persecution, so what? Et s'il advient que vous mourrez par manque de nourriture ou par persécution, There are worse things than dying. Qu'est-ce que ça peut faire? Il peut arriver bien pire que cela.

Better to die in honor than to perpetuate our lives in dishonor. Il vaut bien mieux mourir avec honneur que de perpétuer sa vie dans le déshonneur. For the just shall live by their faith.

Parce que le juste vivra par la foi. A faith that sees the invisible cloud of witnesses. Une foi qui voit cette nuée invisible de témoins.

And that it's a great cloud. Et qui voit que c'est une immense nuée. Not so much in number as in character and in quality.

Pas tellement par le nombre que par sa nature et sa qualité. And it's not strange to us. Et elle ne nous est pas étrangères.

We are related to them. Nous sommes en relation avec eux. We're called to the same enterprise.

Nous sommes appelés à la même entreprise. We're moving to the same conclusion. Nous marchons vers la même conclusion.

For which they are not yet complete without us. Et leur nombre n'est pas encore au complet sans nous. Brother, this is madness.

Frère, quelle folie. Can it be the faith? Can it be the faith? Est-ce que cela peut être la foi? If we take such a view as this seriously, Si nous prenons au sérieux, It will make us strange. Nous deviendrons bizarres.

We will be pilgrims in this earth. Sojourners passing through. Nous serons des pèlerins sur cette terre.

Des étrangers, des voyageurs qui ne font que passer. Looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. Qui cherche une cité dont le constructeur et le créateur est Dieu.

Unless you in fact are such a pilgrim church. A moins que vous ne soyez en réalité une église de pèlerins. Unless in fact you are strange in this world.

A moins que vous ne soyez réellement étrange au milieu de ce monde. You cannot move us Jews to jealousy. Vous ne serez pas capable d'exciter la jalousie de nous autres juifs.

You cannot fulfill the mystery of the church and Israel. Vous ne pourrez pas accomplir le mystère de l'église et d'Israël. You cannot be to us what you must if we are to come into our millennial destiny.

Vous ne pouvez pas être pour nous ce que vous devez être si nous devons entrer dans notre destinée qui est celle du millénaire. What a privilege to speak a word like this in Albi. Quel privilège de prononcer telle parole à Albi.

How many places are there in the earth that have such a history as that this city and region has. Combien de lieux sur la terre y a-t-il qui ait une histoire aussi riche que cette ville et cette région. How many tens of thousands of apostolic saints have been cruelly tortured and burned at the stake and killed for their faith on this very ground.

Combien de dizaines de milliers de chrétiens apostoliques ont été torturés, tués pour leur foi, brûlés sur le bûcher, sur ce sol même. Do you think God has forgotten that? Est-ce que vous croyez que Dieu a oublié cela? That their blood does not cry out from the ground? Et que leur sang sur le sol ne crie pas à Dieu? That my anointing and my speaking tonight is unrelated to that? Et que l'onction qui est sur moi ce soir, les paroles que je prononce, sont sans rapport avec cette réalité-là? Or is that the very wellspring of such a speaking? Ou alors ne serait-ce pas là la fontaine même d'une telle manière de parler? Do you see yourself in connection with them? Est-ce que vous vous voyez en relation avec eux? In un broken continuum with them? Ne faisant qu'un avec eux? Who have gone before you? Eux qui vous ont précédés? But are not yet complete without you? Mais dont le nombre n'est pas au complet sans vous? And moving toward the completion of the race? Et qui marchent et qui vont vers la fin de la course? You of all Christians have this greater obligation. Parmi tous les chrétiens, vous, par excellence, vous avez cette obligation plus grande.

What shall we in America say about an invisible cloud of witnesses? Qu'est-ce que nous dirons-nous en Amérique au sujet d'une nuée invisible de témoins? Not having your history. Nous qui n'avons pas votre histoire. So leave it to the Lord to take this American Jewish upstart and bring me to Zurich to speak this to the Swiss saints.

Alors laissez au Seigneur la question de prendre cet arriviste juif venu d'Amérique pour l'amener à Zurich pour dire une telle parole aux chrétiens de Zurich. I took them on a tour of Zurich. Je les ai emmenés faire un tour dans Zurich.

I showed them where the Anabaptists were burned at the stake and drowned in the river Limat that flows through Zurich. Je leur ai montré le lieu où les chrétiens anabaptistes avaient été brûlés sur le bûcher et noyés dans la rivière qui traverse Zurich. And we went out into the woods where they had their secret meetings and a cleft in the rocks where their children could escape if the bounty hunters came to disrupt the meeting.

Et nous sommes allés dans les bois où ils tenaient leurs réunions secrètes et nous avons vu les fentes dans les rochers qui permettaient aux enfants de s'échapper quand ceux qui les pourchassaient venaient. Do you remember what the first martyr said to the religious authorities that stoned him to death? Est-ce que vous vous rappelez ce que le premier martyr a dit aux autorités religieuses qui l'ont lapidé à mort? As your fathers did, so do you also. You do always grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

Vous faites ce que vos pères ont toujours fait. Vous attristez sans cesse l'Esprit de Dieu. There's an unbroken history and continuum of persecution of true saints from the beginning and it will go until the

end.

Il y a une histoire continue de persécution des véritables saints, des véritables chrétiens depuis le début et elle va continuer jusqu'à la fin. It's in the very nature of the thing. C'est dans la nature même des choses.

And this is only a momentary truce. Et actuellement, c'est simplement une trêve temporaire. This so-called religious pluralism.

Ce soi-disant pluralisme religieux. This ecumenical renewal, this unity of religious denominations. Ce renouveau écuménique, ce renouveau des dénominations religieuses.

The day will come when the mask will again be removed. Le jour viendra où le masque sera à nouveau ôté. And the fierce hostility against God and against His people again be expressed.

Et une hostilité féroce contre Dieu et contre Son peuple sera à nouveau exprimée. You will not endure and you will not overcome unless you see this cloud. Vous ne le supporterez pas et vous ne serez pas vainqueur à moins que vous ne voyez cette nuée.

For it encourages you to lay aside every weight. Parce qu'elle vous encourage à rejeter tout fardeau. And run with patience and endurance the race that is set before us.

Et à participer avec patience et avec endurance en courant ce qui est devant nous. En regardant à Jésus. As they looked.

Comme eux l'ont regardé. So I took these charismatic Swiss saints and I showed them their own history. J'ai donc pris avec moi ces chrétiens charismatiques suisses et je leur ai montré leur propre histoire.

They themselves knew nothing about it. Et eux-mêmes n'en connaissaient rien du tout. They didn't know about the blood that was spilled in their own city and the teenagers that were drowned in their own river for the faith.

Ils ne savaient rien de ce sang qui avait été répandu dans leur vie le même. Teenagers. Et de ces adolescents qu'on avait noyés dans la rivière.

The great statue of Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, is in front of the great Protestant cathedral with a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other. Devant la grande cathédrale protestante, il y a une grande statue de Zwingli, le réformateur protestant, avec la Bible d'une main et l'épée dans l'autre main. And he used it also.

Et il l'a également utilisé. Against the true believers. Contre les vrais croyants.

Do you know about the Anabaptists? Connaissez-vous les Anabaptistes? No. Those who would not subscribe or submit to a state church system. Ceux qui refusaient de se soumettre, d'agréer un système de religion d'Etat, d'une église d'Etat.

Those who would not condescend to a token infant sprinkling as baptism. Insisted on the evidence of true conversion before baptism. Whose kingdom was not of this world.

They looked for the kingdom that was to come. They were pilgrims and strangers and sojourners in this present world. And they lived a radiant and pure quality of life.

Why were they so pursued and hounded and relentlessly chased unto death? Je suis allé dans les cachots. Where you look through a little slit out onto the beautiful Swiss countryside. Où il y a juste une petite fente pour voir au dehors, on aperçoit le merveilleux paysage suisse.

Everything that is human in you wants to be out there in the freedom to luxuriate in the wonderful spaciousness of the Swiss countryside. Et tout ce qu'il y a d'humain, c'est seulement vous, envie de sortir pour aller s'ébattre dans cette beauté merveilleuse du paysage suisse. C'est une liberté qui pourrait être la vôtre.

If only you wouldn't insist upon your strange apostolic doctrines. Communities of harmless saints. Of whom the world was not worthy.

Et dont le monde n'était pas digne. Il y a des hommes qui ont pensé qu'ils n'étaient pas dignes de vivre. Pourquoi? Parce que même quand ils gardaient le silence, leurs visages condamnaient ceux qui étaient en face.

L'authenticité de leur vie commune. Reveal the fraudulence of the state church systems that persecuted them. And so shall it be again in the end.

Do you believe that? Are you preparing for that? Or is this a grim and distasteful message? Negative. Au contraire. On the contrary.

This is not negative. This is joyous. To win a crown.

To finish the race. To consummate the age. To release the Lord from heaven.

The coming of His kingdom. His theocratic rule over the earth and to the nations. This is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Don't you see that? If you saw that, you would not be depressed now. Of all the things that presently disturb you. I wonder who I'm going to marry.

Or if I will marry. And what of my future? And my security? And the French economy? Those depressing thoughts lose their power. When you see the things that are invisible and eternal.

We mustn't think that those that came before us are merely dead. No, they have also a present communion of the saints. The fact that they are invisible does not mean that they are not alive.

For all live unto Christ. He is their head as He is ours. The church militant in the earth is profoundly related to the church triumphant in the heavens.

Their words and their works still have an effect now. It did not end with their departure. In fact, with their departure, their presence now is made even more incisive and more telling, more consequential.

Whether we are aware of it or not. But it's good to be made aware. God wants us to bring these considerations into our present thought life.

The things that are invisible should not be strange to us. On the contrary, it's the things that are visible that should be strange. Like French fashions.

And what is one wearing in this season? And what do the new cars look like? All that emphasis in this sensual civilization. What a contrast to come from Germany into France. You're voluptuous.

Sensual. You like things that are visible and seen and touched. You're going to have to fight against every visible thing.

This is contending for the faith. In order to see the things that are invisible. And are eternal.

And will endure. And make these the foremost considerations of your present life. It's seeing these things that permits us to run the race.

To know that we are even in one. That we're moving together toward a consummation. For which they gave their lives, for which they sacrificed.

Of whom the world was not worthy. So I said to the Swiss saints that night, How would you like to be in unbroken continuum with those who came before you? To bring the invisible into your present consciousness. And to be presently identified with that.

Guess what their answer was? No thank you. And I have not had relationship with them since. You say, well why couldn't they make that identification? Because they understood only too well that to confess such things is to bring upon your own head what had come upon theirs.

The true believers are those who confess that they are strangers and pilgrims and sojourners in the earth. For they that say such things in verse 14 of Hebrews 11 declare plainly that they seek the country. Verse 14.

And we could read 15 and 16. Verses 15 and 16 as well. The powers of darkness look down on Albi tonight.

And they say, Jesus we know and Paul we know. But the evangelical, charismatic, Pentecostal church of Albi, who? They're not impressed with our amens and hallelujahs. It's better that you should be feared by the powers than you should be respected.

Then you are something to be feared. Then you become something formidable. When you make that confession.

My Swiss friends were unwilling to make it. Because they intuited only too well that to make that confession is to open themselves for the same opposition and persecution that made of the invisible witnesses themselves martyrs. And for that they were unwilling.

Charismatic, yes. This far but no further. So I want to ask you tonight.

How far are you willing to go with God? Seeing that these are already the last days. Are you thinking in terms of your eternal destiny? Will there be a reward waiting for you when the Lord comes? For it says he brings his reward with him in his coming. Have we obtained one? Can we say with Paul that I labored more than you all? Will you have works that will pass through the fire of God's judgment? That will not be burned up as haywood and stubble.

But true works that have had consequence in time. And have obtained for you an eternal reward. These are rhetorical questions.

You don't have to answer me. I know your answer. The truth of the matter is that up till tonight we have not been too eternally minded.

And that will impoverish our present faith. Will impoverish our present faith. And we will live inadequately in this present world.

Because we do not authentically anticipate the world to come. I'm pleading with you to be heavenly minded. But brother, the world says if you're heavenly minded you're no earthly good.

Yeah, that's what the world says. Who lies in the evil one who is the father of lies from the beginning. Was Paul no earthly good because he was heavenly minded? Who saw himself as a citizen of heaven already? From that place looked for and waited for the coming of the Lord? And from that place he looked for and waited for the coming of the Lord? Not at all.

That was the key to his apostolic glory. He was profoundly relevant in this life. And occupied with every practical question of the daily life of the church.

How do we take communion? How do we behave ourselves in the house of God? How do we judge an unruly brother? He was totally occupied with the weight of the church daily in the earth. And he could be that because he was heavenly minded. It had a practical consequence in his present life.

It made his present afflictions both momentary and light. Just like Stephen who didn't even feel the stones. While he was being stoned to death he saw the heavens opened.

Being full of the Spirit of God. He saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father waiting for him. He saw the glory of God.

And he was indifferent to the pain. Suffering in the flesh was not to him what it is to us. Whose life has lived so much in our bodies.

How we look and how we feel. I'm still recovering from the French meal that I had in French speaking Switzerland. My God, it took an entire afternoon.

It wasn't a meal, it was a sacrament. Chorus after chorus after chorus. I couldn't bear to sit so long.

But for my host it was customary. First this and then that. And then a long pause.

Then the next. All in a smoke filled room. You're going to be apostolically minded.

Have an apocalyptic anticipation that's eternal. Labor for the reward that shall not fade away. You may have to declare war on France.

On its culture. On its unspoken premises. On its persuasive logic.

And choose to be heavenly minded. And have your citizenship in that place. Et que votre patrie soit là.

C'est alors que votre vie à Albi aura davantage de conséquences. Paul avait une profonde connaissance des choses éternelles. Récompense éternelle, châtement éternel.

Et notre sens de la terreur de l'enfer n'est pas plus grand que ne l'est notre sens des joies du ciel. C'est pourquoi les hommes ne sont pas persuadés par nous, qui ne connaissons pas la terreur de Dieu. But

now.

There's a now. This is what I love about the faith. All of this consideration of things eternal and invisible has a practical consequence in this present world now.

It made Paul's sufferings actually momentary and light. He didn't feel it the way others would feel it. Because he was not living in the sensate bodily world.

As the world encourages us so to live. That you need consciously to resist it. Or you'll have no seeing of the things that are invisible nor eternal.

In chapter 10 of Hebrews, in verse 34, Paul speaks of other disciples who joyfully took the spoiling of their goods. Could you be joyful if you were stripped of your goods? It's contrary to every reasonable and human logic. They took it joyfully, not resentfully.

Et pas en récriminant. Why? Pourquoi? Parce qu'ils s'attendaient à une récompense céleste qui dépasserait tout ce qu'ils auraient perdu sur la terre. Êtes-vous consentant à être ainsi dépouillés? En Suisse, beaucoup d'églises réformées ont été construites sur le site des ruines des églises anabaptistes.

Their farms and their properties were confiscated and the funds went into the coffers of the Reformed Church to train their ministers and to build their buildings. Leurs fermes, leurs biens ont été confisqués et le profit est allé dans les coffres de l'église réformée pour bâtir ses... To build their church buildings. Pour construire les bâtiments d'église.

If I'm not mistaken, your cathedral in Albi was funded in exactly that way. Si je ne me trompe, votre cathédrale d'Albi a été financée de cette manière-là aussi. I've had a small taste of this myself.

J'y ai même un peu goûté un peu moi-même. What it means to be stripped. Ce que cela veut dire d'être dépouillé.

When I invited some questionable brother to come and live on my farm. Un jour, j'ai demandé à un frère qui n'était pas droit de venir vivre dans ma ferme. The Lord had brought our community into death and we had all abandoned the property.

We were required to abandon the property, to give it all up to God. Le Seigneur a amené notre communauté jusque dans une mort. Et il a exigé que nous l'abandonnions.

Et il a exigé que nous redonnions tout cela à Dieu. We had to taste death. Il nous a fallu goûter la mort.

And if you're receiving life tonight, it's because of that. Et si ce soir, vous recevez la vie, c'est à cause de cela. So here was this man who was divorced.

I found him with a pig and two dogs. Living in a hut. I said, come live on the property.

And be a caretaker for the property, seeing that there's no one there. Accepté d'être comme un concierge de la propriété, puisqu'il n'y a personne. Isoler les bâtiments.

Refaites la couverture des bâtiments et je vous donnerai de quoi vivre. J'ai même payé pour les frais de son divorce et pour les frais de ses enfants. But he was an unstable man.

And about a year and a half later, he wanted to leave me. I was then on a ministry trip in Chicago. And he called to say, what should he take? By that time, we had seven horses.

Training them for work on the farm. And we had bought all kinds of equipment for them. And many other things.

I said, take what you think is fair. And came back to find that he had taken everything. The man who began with one pig and two dogs.

Cet homme qui était arrivé avec un porc et deux chèvres. Il a pris les sept chevaux. The equipment for the haying.

Taking in the hay. Tout notre équipement pour la fenaison. Even the ropes that pulled up the hay that were in the barn forty years before he got there.

Et même les cordes qui servaient à monter les balles de foin dans le fenil, quarante ans avant que lui arrive. Non seulement il a pris les chevaux, mais il a pris les planches tachées d'urine, ou les chevaux urinés. Ne restait pas un outil, pas une paire de pinces.

Not a nut or a bolt. Stripped. And the Lord said, don't you express resentment.

Don't see yourself as a victim. Don't exert yourself to bring any return. It was not easy.

But these of whom the world was not worthy. Took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and enduring substance.

Notice the verbs of tonight. Seeing and knowing. True faith is much more than the subscription to correct doctrine.

It's seeing what is invisible. The things that are heavenly. It's knowing that you have in heaven a more enduring substance.

That is better. Therefore cast not away your confidence which hath great recompense of reward. Therefore cast not away your confidence which hath great recompense of reward.

You have in fact need of perseverance, so that after you have fulfilled the will of God, you may obtain what is promised to you. Can you live for after? After this life. The life to come.

The eternal life. The true life. This is only momentary and passes away.

This is only preparation for that which is eternal. Yes I know that brother. But are you living as if you know that? Then are you a witness unto him.

For you have need of patience that after you have done the will of God you might receive the promise. For yet a little while and he that shall come will come and will not tarry. Are you expecting his coming? Well it's doctrinally true I know.

I didn't ask you that. Because the apostate church also will believe what is doctrinally true. Believing is not subscribing, believing is expecting.

And living in the anticipation of his coming. That will be fearful for the unbelieving, he comes as judge. The heaven and the earth will flee from the face of him who comes.

With those who have been faithful to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. And did not take the mark of the beast. And resisted the system.

Whatever their suffering. He will vindicate them in that day. His coming will be a glory and a triumph and a joy.

And he brings his reward with him. That endures and does not pass away. For he that is coming shall come.

Do you believe that? Are you living as if you believe that? Are you witnessing as if you believe that? That's the faith. And the next verse says, the English says, now the just shall live by faith. And this is really living.

This is freedom. This is joy unspeakable and full of glory. This is an end of fear and intimidation.

This is walking through this world like the giants of God. This is freedom from the power and the influence of the world. This is a separated life.

That obtains a reward. Now, the just shall live by their faith. What faith? That after you have been patient and fulfilled the will of God.

After you have been patient and fulfilled the will of God. You will obtain the reward. We're not all going to the same place in heaven.

There's an outer darkness where a steward was cast who only gave Jesus back the same talent with which he began. You wicked and slothful servant. He was not speaking about a man in the world but one who belonged to him to whom he entrusted a valuable deposit.

That's not someone in the world. He was a believer. But he gave back what was given to him at the first without any increase.

He was not invited to inherit the kingdom prepared for those who were faithful stewards. He was eternally cast out from the brilliance and the light and the glory of that kingdom into an outer darkness. We're not all going to be occupying the same place in heaven or enjoy the same distinction and rank in heaven and we won't.

We may not even all be going at the same time. For Revelation 20 says, the rest of the dead slept another thousand years. 20.

They were not qualified to rise with the first. They were not fitted to rule and to reign with Christ in the millennial kingdom. They had to be judged with the other dead in the general resurrection of the dead.

A thousand years later missed the whole glory and missed it eternally even if they were saved out of the fires of hell. If their name was found in the book of life and had not been blotted out we have a serious faith, saints. And we have either all sinned or fallen short of the glory of God.

And God is as grieved with saints falling short of the glory as he is with sinners sinning. Have you confessed that you are a stranger and a pilgrim and sojourner in the world? For to those who say such

things God is not ashamed to be called their God and has prepared for them a city Let's bow before the God of this gospel. We are surrounded tonight by a cloud of invisible witnesses of whom the world was not worthy who died for the faith that is being described tonight.

And would not need to have suffered if they would have accepted something less something more convenient something more acceptable and respectable So Lord Jesus open our spiritual eyes to see what it is to which we are called forgive us for having a wrong center and a focus Our priorities have been worldly and natural The word heaven and eternity were for us abstractions without meaning and we ask your forgiveness for that We have not lived in the most holy faith We have not contended for it earnestly and therefore have lost it even when we think to possess it Call us again to the place of the beginning the true and the primitive of the original faith the one that might require of us a martyrdom which is also the assurance of a crown Help us to see these things Believe for these things Desire these things For we tell you tonight that we confess that we are strangers in this earth we are consciously looking for another city and even if opportunity should be given us to return to our old country we will refuse it for we are seeking another kingdom and we want to live worthy of that kingdom and its glory that we might have share in it eternally Is that your confession tonight? We prayed in the back room Lord not just a message but a transaction Are you making it? The time is short and God is pleading earnestly with his church to be what we must to prepare for the things that must shortly come to pass and he awaits your consent for his radical sanctifying work that you should not be ashamed in the day of the Lord's appearing so I invite you to go on your knees right by your chair make it an altar and get eternally serious settle something with God for which the cloud of witnesses is waiting a moment has come for the church of this city don't miss it cry out to God ask his forgiveness for an inadequate Christianity sufficient for us but not for his glory settle something for eternity tonight

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