

K-481 the Union of the Church and Israel

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the church and Israel in relation to the glory of God, and the role of the invisible cloud of witnesses in the church's life.

Duration: 1:11:09

Scripture: Matthew 25:41, Matthew 25:44-45, John 17:21, Romans 11:17-18, Romans 11:24, Ephesians 4:4-6, Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Israel"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the Church as both triumphant and militant, united under one head. He expresses his own sense of exhaustion and discouragement, but acknowledges that his role in the Church is enhanced by the legacy of those who have gone before him. The speaker shares a personal experience of feeling inadequate before a large audience, but attributes his ability to speak to the intercession of saints and the support of an invisible cloud of witnesses. He also highlights the need to approach the word of God with intuition and apprehension rather than logical analysis.

Transcript

But I began with just sharing something from one of my favorite theologians. Don't get scared by the word theologian. This is a piece of theological reflection.

Theo means God. Ology is the study of. And in fact, in Germany and in Switzerland, there are no separate faculties for theology, as in America.

Theology is a department of the university. And the ministers are trained in the university. And theology was considered the queen of the sciences.

I don't know about the word science, but maybe we would say the queen of the disciplines. Because it requires and draws from all of the others. Theologians are men of an immense breadth of learning.

And they bring to their study and examination of the scripture, philology, the study of language and history. They want to get to the original setting and understand what the mentality was of the people to whom the scriptures were first given. I know that a lot of it has become warped and a humanism has come into much of modern theology, but that's no reason to disown or to discredit the whole of it.

So for me, it's been a source of personal delight and insight. And I just want to share a little reflection from Karl Barth on Israel and the church. My thought was that maybe some here think that we should be dealing with more nitty-gritty subjects.

Why occupy us with the subject of Israel when we ourselves are in such personal need and that we would probably do better with subjects that pertain to inner healing and things of that kind. Well, the Lord has not moved me in that direction. He has moved others, and I praise God for those ministries that are valid.

But I have this sense that a lot of what we're suffering personally is for the want of an embracing, an understanding and embracing of the things that are central to God, the ultimate things and the eternal purposes of God. And for the absence of those considerations, we have become so bent in and turned in upon ourselves, contemplating our navels, feeling our pulses. We're so totally subjective and measure everything by how it affects us because we have not a center.

The true center is the preoccupation with what is central to God, the things that pertain to his eternal purpose and glory. I have never ceased to marvel that when invitations for healing are given at full gospel meetings and in other places, the line is immense. What have God's people to do with being that sick? Why are they so full of ailments and come back again and again? They're healed and come back again and again because I think that the sickness has largely to do with our lives being lived from a false center that opens the door to every kind of malady.

So my approach to well-being is not to heal the soul, but to restore the missing center, the eternal purposes of God, of which, and especially in the last days, Israel is at the heart. So you need to be reminded, we're not taking this up because I'm Jewish. We're taking this up because it is central to God.

And the great Jewish apostle Paul, at the conclusion, I'm never weary of telling you, 9 through 11, his great systematic statement, gives the whole purpose for it in of him and through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever. The issue of Israel is not the issue in itself. It's only a means to the greater issue, the glory of God forever.

And if ever we lose that focus, we'll have a distortion and a warp in our entire Christian life. And I believe that has happened to a great many who are fascinated with Israel and have made Israel the end in itself, rather than a means to the greater end, the glory of God. So if you have that as your framework, you're able to receive this little jewel and get an understanding of what theological reflection is and that God himself invites us to be theologically minded.

And you don't have to be professional to be it. Paul was preeminently kingdom oriented, exhorted the church to walk worthy of the kingdom and the glory to which we are called. You notice the complete absence in Paul of any particular attention to the psyche, to inner healing, to attention to that kind of thing that is so much the theme of much of Christian literature and preoccupation today.

It would have been totally outside his whole ken, his whole perception of things. He was a man and the foundational man and the chief apostle, preoccupied with the kingdom, which is to say the glory of God. God is glorified when after 2,000 years of human rebellion or longer than that, his rule is again established in his creation through the nation that has been the most rebellious and most opposed even to its own calling, has opposed itself in its stiff-necked opposition to him, but faithful God of the covenant that he is, despite them, he will yet prevail because he has spoken, because he has called, because he has given gifts and callings, because his name is at stake, his honor is at stake.

Not for your sake do I do these things, he reiterates, but for my holy name's sake. The issue of Israel's restoration is the issue of God's holy name. How then dare we think ourselves the church and not to be preoccupied with what he has appointed as the means of restoring his name and his credibility to a universe that blasphemes him everywhere.

So this issue of Israel is not some little narrow ethnic consideration, it's the very issue of God and his glory forever. Therefore it deserves our attention. So if the enemy has in any way been whispering to you, we're majoring in the minors, look I'm hurting, I need this, I need that, and here we're talking about Israel.

Let's deal with me first, then I'll be able to deal with you. Deal with God first. Take to heart his purposes and you'll, how does it say in the course, in the sight of his glorious face the cares of the earth go strangely dim? They finally dissipate away, they're not there.

So now don't flip out and don't get intimidated and threatened if this gets a little highfalutin. Karl Barth, B-A-R-T-H, is now dead, died in his 80s, Swiss theologian, but he began as a simple village preacher in one of the cantons of Switzerland and he was a man for the word and the preached word and so starting from that place of having an obligation to bring a living word to his hearers, he was brought into the reflection on the word and into the realms of theology itself. Was a professor, profound teacher, an opponent of Hitler and a giant in the 20th century.

He's likened with men like St. Augustine, Calvin, Paul himself. So I have greatly benefited from the little examination that I've been able to give some of his writing and this is a selection from his church dogmatics. His systematic examination of the word of God that runs to about 10 or 12 volumes, each one is about 39 bucks.

I'd like to have the whole set one day if you're thinking of a little something to give. I've got one volume that I obtained years ago when I came back from the last overseas trip the Lord said, and I said, don't I have one of his books on church dogmatics and I picked it up and it was bye-bye baby. I was transported into other realms and this is one selection from that book in which he discusses the church in two aspects.

The church militant and the church triumphant. The church militant is the church in the earth. Isn't that interesting to see it from the perspective of a militant company that gives us a strategic purpose for being.

The church triumphant is the church that is invisible, the cloud of invisible witnesses that has already passed on into the realm of glory. He has a view of the interaction between the church and its two segments, so to speak, that I've never before heard expressed. It's a reflection and it gives a wonderful way of apprehending the glory of what the church is.

In which he says that the church that was already belongs to the sphere of completion but the dead no less than the living have a part in the communion of the saints. It is not only the living who speak and act but their predecessors. Their words and works, their history does not end with their departure but on their departure often only then enters into its decisive stage among their successors.

Did you get that? See how we're required to hear with an acuteness that the world's babble does not require. We were just talking on the way down here about my article on priesthood and Roe and Joe were saying that they didn't want it to end and we were talking about the way that I express myself. I said somebody needs to follow up after me and unpack my statements.

And I myself don't realize how concentrated and compacted they are that the average believer is not trained to hear a statement that is so replete with meaning. Usually we hear a lot of wind, a lot of blah blah blah and anecdotes and we finally get a little, the germ of the message that we have to wait for patiently until it finally comes through in a long barrage of words. I'm the kind of guy that goes right for the jugular vein and if you're not attenuated to that you miss it.

And Barth is very much the same. This statement is a remarkable statement that those that have come before us that are already gone on in the realm of glory have a greater significance in having gone on for the present than when they were here. That when a saint dies his work is not finished but there's a sense in which as one who has gone on to glory in the invisible cloud of witnesses he exerts a present influence even more valid than when he was alive.

I shared this with Betty Long in Sacramento. I ran down to the desk of the hospital where she was likely dying although she survived yet again and again and again and had this Xeroxed for her and I was just going to leave it with the desk and Alyssa said, well bring it up. And I brought it up and I went over this with her and it was so exhilarating for her, so encouraging that if she passes it's not that she can no longer be an intercessor on my behalf but yet a more powerful factor from the heavenly realm than even was true of her in the earthly.

See we are so compartmental, secular and sacred, alive and dead, profane and the sacred, the eternal and the present. Those are not God's categories. Everything is the eternal now.

You have been, Carbot was a dialectical theologian. He saw everything in an act of flux. One of the ancient Greek philosophers said you cannot step into the same river twice.

Maybe the same name but the water is continually moving. Everything is in flux, there's a dynamic of life, there's an interaction, there's a dialectic between past and present and future. There's a continual moving that makes life, life.

But we are taught to see in static categories. Male and female, yes and no, black and white, heaven and hell, you know. I know that those things exist but there's a way in seeing them as God sees them in more of a flux and flow that is more the truth of the reality of what those words designate.

So what is he seeing? That those that have passed on are not a static thing, well they're gone, they were once with us, now they're no. They have moved into another realm of being and from that realm they're exerting an influence into the church in the present that was perhaps more significant than when they were part of that church in this life. Now that they have gone on to be the church triumphant they exert an influence to the church militant that is part of God's dynamic and it altogether constitutes the church.

If you see the church only as the present phenomenon in the earth, the living members, and don't see the role of the invisible cloud of witnesses that have passed on but are present in the spiritual dimension, you don't see. And the church suffers from an inadequate perception of itself. There's a chronic hangover, a negativism, an inferiority complex which the world loves by which we would see the church as a Sunday institution and not understand its glory.

That God has created all things in order that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might be demonstrated to the principalities and powers of the earth. The church is God's masterpiece and that's us. We are it.

How dare we have a niggardly view of it that will be reflected upon ourselves and not have the lofty understanding of what a sublime creation the church is, for which the Lord died. He gave himself for the church and continues to wash it by the water of his word. It will be to him an eternal bride.

It's the bride of Christ without spot, without wrinkle. It's the bride coming down from heaven adorned for the bridegroom having the glory of God. If this once enters your spirit, what place is there for you to have the arrogance and the conceit to look upon your own inferiority and your own hangups and your own this and your own that when you're called to the ecclesia triumphant.

That's the Latin, the triumphant church, the called out ones. So may you adjust your brain box. May you come into the perception of the thing as God himself sees it, for that alone is true seeing.

And understand that that seeing is contended against by a world that wants to make, quote the church, a Sunday addendum with programs for Sunday school and for your children where you're married and buried and you give your down on the collection plate and make that only a secondary aspect of your life rather than the primary thing to which you are called and that goes on into the realm of eternity. Everything about the faith and its theological content is calculated to bring us to a place of transcendence. I think I said to some kid who wanted to be a lawyer, oh you want to be a lawyer? Study the scriptures.

You want to sharpen your intelligence and your capacity for reasoning and analysis and compare scripture with scripture. The whole of mankind has been lifted up and ennobled by virtue of the dissemination of the Bible. There was no literacy until the Bible came.

One of my precious friends in Yugoslavia, Peter Kuzmich, PhD, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the influence of the Bible in establishing the modern Croatian and Serbian languages. Modern German is the result of Luther, who took the Latin and Greek and Hebrew and made a modern German Bible. Modern German is the result of that labor.

Probably more than we know, the English language is the result of those who did the same and brought the scriptures into secular languages. There's something about the Word of God that is a benefit. It promotes intelligence.

It promotes total humanity to reflect on a subject as noble as the Word of God must have benevolent consequence for those who will give themselves to it. And here we are, letting the dust gather and turning to popular science and mechanics today and the Life magazine and other junk, when the Word of God is so rich and it invites our investigation and you'll never come down where you were before by having given yourself to it. This is a noble man.

He's been ennobled by his investigations of the Word and I'm sure the fact that he lived to almost 90 years of age and was clear almost to the day of his departure is the life that came into his body and his bones and his organs and his mind, his sinews and every aspect of his physical being by the Word of God that was continually coursing through him. That's what he was. He was a theologian.

So also ought we to be. This is his reflection. The fact that it's not nailed down in scripture is not unusual.

The Lord is often silent about certain areas of mystery and this is where theological reflection is taking what is said. What can be understood by that? And it's not offered as a thus saith the Lord. Here it is, all nailed down.

Here's something to contemplate and to have a perception of something that is hidden and is likely being brought to light by the investigating and the weighing and the examining of a subject. So hear it in that light. It's not a thus saith the Lord.

It's a reflection. But it's a profitable reflection. It has been for me.

And maybe you can suggest scriptures that will either affirm this view or say no, this is there's no substance to this. It's true that in the backlash we often throw out the baby with the bathwater and we've done that with communion because the Catholics were keen on transubstantiation that every crumb is the actual body of the Lord and the sacrifice being performed afresh in the mass. The Protestant Church so reacted against it that it robbed communion of significance and meaning and vitality by reducing it to elements.

Symbolic elements that, what is this, plastic? So we can do the same. Let me just read this and you guys can weigh it up. Barth begins his discussion by considering the church as being comprised of the *ecclesia militans* and the *ecclesia triumphant*, the militant church in the earth, the triumphant church that has already departed but who constitute the cloud of witnesses about us.

The first is still gathered and builds itself up and lives by its mission. The others did so in past days or centuries so that it already belongs today to the sphere of completion. They're already in the glory so to speak.

Not in their bodies. I don't understand all of this because their bodies will in the day of the Lord be raised from the dead but their soul in whatever makes the cloud of witnesses invisible they're there in actuality. But the dead no less than the living have a part in the communion of the saints.

It is not only the living who speak and act but their predecessors, their words and works, their history which does not end with their departure but on their departure often only then enters its decisive stage among their successors, standing in an indissoluble relation with the present whether we are aware of it or not. The church triumphant is with Christ, with him, the head of the body. It takes part in the glory which is still hidden from the militant church because it is with him in the midst of it actively and not merely passively engaged with it.

It waits for the completion of the whole. That's why they're not complete without us. And he says it impels toward its completion.

So he's suggesting that the invisible cloud of witnesses that is not yet complete without us is not merely a spectator to us but being in the realm of glory and the things that are yet not attained or only partially seen by us exert a kind of an influence in bringing us to that completion because they are joined to the same head. This is a critical point because we're going to go from this discussion of how the church is comprised of the present and the living and those that have passed on and both are connected together as one body, one church through the head. They are alive unto the head from the invisible realm.

We are alive from the earthly present realm to the same head. We're connected to the head. He's the god of the living.

There's a connection and a continuum of both what is invisible and visible. What is past and what is present because he is the head and we are all joined to that head and that is what comprises the church. It's a view of the church that I like and then I'll show you in a moment, we'll go from that to his view of

Israel and the church equally joined to each other through the head though he's not yet conscious of that connection.

The Israel today does not yet be saved and even in opposition to God has a relationship to him whom we call Lord who is the head over the church but is also its Messiah. So he's fashioning on the head and shows a connection in the same way that the church is connected to the invisible cloud of witnesses because they are related to the head. The church is also related to Israel because it is related to the one who is head for us, who is their Messiah and has a way then of seeing the relationship between the church and Israel that is not common and I think is a refreshing view.

So hold steady. Can you hold your questions or your responses until we get his view out and then we can come back and sift through it. This means that a saint who has taken, who has gone on, is not lost to the purposes of God but rather continues from another sphere to be engaged in his purposes as much as or as significantly at least as before.

So therefore the enemy cannot win. This has helped me because you wonder how precious saints who have gone on like your father or bought himself for Paul what a loss. Why couldn't they have lived longer and continued to have contributed? It's not a loss at all.

They're continuing to contribute but only from another sphere and realm of activity in the realm of the invisible. Not only do they appear and not only are they recognizable for what they were, Moses and Elijah, but they're functioning. They're conferring with Jesus on his deceased on what steps will be taken and why they're taken that completes his own earthly life.

Because they are already in the realm of glory. That is to say they're in the eternal realm where God is and they know what's to come so to speak and they're encouraging, they're exerting an influence. We don't know what their conversation was but they didn't come just to say hi.

They performed something in their coming. They were in actual conversation with Jesus bringing to him who was in the present realm something from the realm of glory which is to come. But what God did was make them visible in their glorified state that Peter and the other two went down as dead.

But how much of that continues on but is not seen like even now. We now are encircled by a cloud of invisible witnesses giving us an assist and exerting something from the realm of glory into our present because they know our dogged unbelief, our cynicism, our earthly plain boxes that resists this fear of the phantasmal, the invisible that in a sense they are as present with us as Elijah and Moses were with Jesus but were not being privileged to see them. And there were times, and I think it was in that first night in France in Albi where this precious young man comes from that cloud of witnesses was present because the message was do you saints here know that those who shed their blood in this locality are present with us tonight, that something is being struck tonight whose time has come, a historical moment has come to galvanize you and bring you into a conscious continuum of those who preceded you.

What you don't know is, but that they knew and needed to be reminded of the Albigenses who perished at the hands of the Catholic Church in the 12th and 13th centuries in a bloody massacre who were pre reformation reformers who wanted to return to the apostolic scriptures who came out from under the heavy hand of the Catholic Church and were mercilessly decimated. The cathedral in Albi is a fortress. It's not at all what you think of as a Gothic cathedral.

It was built as a fortress. Why? To quell the spiritual uprising that was taking place where 90% of the farmers and the ordinary people that lived in the area of Albi were moving away from Catholic tradition and wanted to return to apostolic reality. In order to impose upon them their authority, they built the cathedral as a fortress.

That night in Albi, God was restoring the remembrance of the saints to the blood that was shed in their own locality. Not only in the 12th century, but later again in the 17th century when the Church then attacked the Huguenots in that area. That area in southern France is famous for its history of persecution, but the present saints are not living in the consciousness of that, nor do they see themselves in being in continuum.

That seeing can get your head knocked off, because to consciously identify yourself with that is to announce to the powers of the air that I am in connection with those saints who preceded me. I know that they were not complete, that the things for which they suffered and died yet wait fulfillment through me and I announce by that identification that I'm giving myself to that fulfillment and therefore I open myself to your opposition that the same reason you hated them you will now hate me. See what I mean? It's no cheap thing.

We're not talking about little kiddy stuff here. And I don't think that the Church is the Church until it comes into this consciousness. And this is part of the ministry of restoration, that the Church is going to be a glory not only in this age, but in the ages to come.

It needs also to embrace its past as well as its future. And why am I feeling already now in exhaustion? It's a drain to revive these things that the enemy wants to keep down and out because he knows that you'll only be hitting on two cylinders rather than four if you don't come into this complete consciousness. This clear understanding that the Church is only the Church in the totality of both realms, triumphant and militant as one united with a single head.

But if we don't see it, the people perish for the want of vision. That understanding being lost to us diminishes what Church is in our own understanding and our place in it. I tell you that I feel that my whole role in the Church is profoundly enhanced as one to whom the baton is being passed on from those that have gone before me.

Do you know what I mean? To see myself in a living continuum with that past heightens my present. And that's normative. God intends that as normative.

And in the absence of that we have subscribed to a cheap, beggarly view of the Church as only a Sunday addendum and it shows. And we have given ourselves to claptrap and to nonsense that is unbecoming a Church that is constituted by the Church triumphant and the Church militant as being one in the head and moving toward a destiny and a conclusion for which we need their assist. There's something in the blood that has been shed even in their sacrifice and wanted them but I don't know that we're living from the life of that because he who hath the son hath life and he who hath not the son hath not life and the wrath of God abides upon him.

The head is the vital source of life to the body. And that they are connected to that head and we also from the visible plane is a whole remarkable concept that we need to see though it's invisible. We do not have an adequate apprehension of the Church.

The glorious phenomenon it is if we see only from the visible and earthly plane. And that the head is the linkage because all live unto him. Paul says whether we live or whether we die we live or we die unto him.

It changes the whole concept of death. Death then is not the disaster. It's not a termination.

It's just the shifting of the sphere of operation. And even more remarkable is that that sphere may well be more significant than this sphere. But whether it is or it isn't, it's at least as vital and the two together comprise reality.

Comprise reality. It's a whole phenomenal view. Once you get a taste of this you're opened for the spectrum of reality which is God's.

You begin to see how stunted you were in your view. Narrow. And your fear of death goes up like a puff.

For death is not a calamity. It's a promotion. It's moving into that realm where you continue to express your vital concern for the glory of God and the completion of things to which everything is tending to the consummation from just another sphere.

And it's God who determines how long you operate into one and when you come into the other. There's no loss. There's gain.

And so the devil thinks he's having a field day and making martyrs of the saints? Doesn't realize he's aiding the very thing that he hates and wants to oppose by releasing the saints from their mortal bodies and bringing them into the realm of the invisible by which they continue to exert even yet greater influence than when they rattled him on the earth and their bodies. You can't beat God. He's the God of the living of the things visible and the things invisible.

And what is the final consummation? When the Jerusalem from above comes down over the Jerusalem that is below. When there's no longer spheres of separation or distinction and now it's all one and he is all in all. But we can at least have a foretaste to see the reality that's already true though invisible.

So praise God for Carl Barth. See this is theological reflection. This is a man pondering what is the invisible cloud of this? Why are they present? Do they constitute something? Are we missing something? Have we dismissed that too lightly? And we have to say yes.

What is invisible has threatened the church that the invisible has threatened those that are so taken up with the visible. It's icky because it has been made phantasmal and speculative and eerie and others like the one you mentioned have exploited that realm. And so the church is kind of drawn back historically and well let's leave the thing alone though to its detriment.

We need the ennobling sense of the glory that the church is in both its visible and invisible realms. And so what Carl Barth is going to lead us in, now he says if you can see that, now I want you to see this. That in the same way as the invisible church that has gone on before is vitally connected with the present church, so also is Israel vitally connected by the very same means ahead.

So the church which was and the church which is are very concretely one church. All live unto him. Luke 20 verse 38.

Not only on that side but on this. Not only on this side but on that. And because they live to him, they are one community, one church.

For the same reason, now he makes the bridge, for the same reason, the people of Israel in its whole history and the Christian church are two forms and aspects of the same thing. Of the one inseparable community. There's a radical view of the connection between the church and Israel that has been lost to the church's consciousness today.

We see ourselves as separate entities. The Lord says that the two shall be made one flesh and we agree to it doctrinally but we don't live as if we believe that. We're separate entities.

The wife still wants her distinction and recognition of herself apart from her husband. She doesn't see herself as being one entity with him so that his distinction and his honor is also hers. Her gratification for being is in him.

So there's a real urgency to shift gears and come into the apprehension of these things and not really allow them to sit as doctrinal statements in our minds. And when we come into that reality, that's the glory. I'm waiting to see the first couple who are one.

In that sense that they've been made one flesh. The fact that they are spatially separate does not alter the spiritual truth. The spiritual truth needs to become the actual truth by faith.

And now he's saying the same thing about Israel and the church. It's a whole perception that is lost to us for the same reason the people of Israel in its whole history and the Christian church are two forms and aspects of the one inseparable community. Because Israel doesn't know that.

It despises the church. It sees it as something alien to itself. It's Goyish.

It's Gentile. It's alien. But the church also sees Israel as separate from itself.

Does not see it as one inseparable community, which it will be one day. One operating from the heavenly realm and the other from the earthly, but one continuum. Just as the husband and the wife are separate entities and spatially separate, but are one in God's sight and need to be that in their own sight.

The one inseparable community in which Jesus Christ has his earthly historical form of existence by which he is attested to the whole world. What is Barth saying? That it's only in this connection that the Lord, that God, is attested to the world. Isn't that something, the echo of that in the prayer of Jesus in John 17? That when we become one as he is one, the world will know that the Father hath sent him.

That the revelation of God rests on the demonstration of the visible unity of God's people. And what Barth is saying is that in the like manner there's a witness to God that comes from the unity of the church and Israel as one that needs also to be seen and to be demonstrated. It attests to God though both segments do not recognize each other but need to.

Not only does this attest to God to the whole world, but by which the world is summoned to faith in him. It's a witness that has a consequence. It brings the world not only to the acknowledgement, but to the God who is revealed in it.

He himself is the one person the crucified Messiah of Israel who as such is the Lord of the church. What's the connection that makes one inseparable community? The head. The one whom we call Lord is Israel's crucified Messiah.

They don't understand that, but the reality is not contingent upon their understanding. It's a spiritual truth. It's a reality in God.

Whether men have recognized it yet or not does not alter the reality. But when it is recognized it becomes powerful. God intends that it should be seen by those who have spiritual sight, namely ourselves.

So that changes the whole way in which we're viewing Israel. It's not merely a subject. It's us.

It's the one inseparable community of God's people. Though right now they are presently separated and don't recognize themselves as being inseparable. In fact, there's a friction between them and from both segments, even an alienation.

And is that accidental? Satan recognizes this truth more than the church. And so he has actively worked to keep them separate and that they should see each other as not only being separate, but in opposition. So, for example, in the church today in America, in certain charismatic sectors, the church not only does not recognize Israel as being part of itself, it has replaced it and become it and sees itself as the Israel of God.

And that Israel has no further purpose with God. It's obsolete. It's cast off.

They blew it. They missed it. They crucified Jesus.

They're finished. We are it. Thinking they're doing God's service when they're actually cheating God out of his glory.

Very much in the same way as some Christian subscribing to unisex. Cheating God out of the glory that is his when that which is male and female is made one. Not by the loss or the blurring of that distinctiveness, but they're coming together in the way of God's intention that reveals his glory.

Is this too much for you? You rather would have had breakfast, huh? Oh, okay. I introduced this. This is not our topic for today.

This is a foreshadowing, a little substitution for breakfast. So, he who is the crucified Messiah of Israel, as such, is also the Lord of the Church, the risen Lord, who as such is the manifested Messiah of Israel, and in this form of a servant was truly the Lord. He whom we call Lord would not be Lord, except he was also Israel's Messiah.

That's what makes him the Lord. He had to be there, promised Messiah, but as the crucified and resurrected and ascended one is also our Lord. On the one hand there is the promise, on the other it's fulfillment.

There's Israel, still identical as a nation, and the Church as a kind of separate entity, but called to the commonwealth of Israel. Remember when Paul said, you who are far off and without God and hope in the world have been brought nigh by the blood of Jesus into the commonwealth of Israel. Paul saw the Church as this one community, this inseparable community, but with the advent of Catholicism, the schism was made and the entities were split and the anti-Semitic thing that came with the Holy Roman Church, because it was not really regenerate, had not really entered the spiritual commonwealth of Israel.

It can only be that by the Spirit became an independent Gentile entity called the Church and was opposed to and resisted everything that was Israeli, of Israel or Jewish or Hebraic. So that Passover became Easter, which is the name of a pagan goddess, Ishtar, and the thing became so blurred and distinctively

different that Jews can no longer recognize it as being part of itself. And that's the way it has come into modern times, and the Reformation did not heal the breach.

It was not a complete Reformation and still kept the separate identity and antagonism between the parts that prevails largely, till today. But Barth sees it as one history, the one covenant which stretches over the whole. And we inherit their promises, because we are them.

We are one with them in one community. Their promises are our promises. We are the children of Abraham as they are.

And we have an inheritance with them and the things that were promised their fathers. It's therefore essential to the church from the very beginning, and it always will be, to represent this unity in itself and to exist in it. This is, I'm reading Barth, this is the way he writes.

You have to lean forward, you've got to come into his statement. It's essential that the church, from its beginning, to see this unity in itself, not only to see it, but to exist in it. It's not enough merely to mentally acknowledge the mystery of the inseparable community which has been made separate, but to live in the understanding of that.

We'll give you a very different view of what the church is than what we presently hold. And this is different from Christians who say, well now I'm a Jew. No, you're not a Jew.

You're a Gentile who by the blood of Jesus have been brought nigh and brought into the commonwealth of Israel and its covenants and its promise. With Abraham, and with every saint of old. And that's the glory.

You're part of the inseparable community of God, the Israel of God, and you need to live in that kind of consciousness. And now he spells out what that will mean. It has to do with the church in all its fullness, for only as such can it attest to the whole world and summon it to faith in him.

That this recognition and the act of living in it is the church's most powerful witness to the world. And including to Israel herself. What a witness to Israel that the church does not see itself as some separate entity, but part with it, because its Lord is their Messiah, and that their history is our history, and their completion and their glory and their consummation is ours.

Wouldn't that if that was truly our understanding, and we were living and existing in it, what would our witness to Israel be? Totally different. Totally different. And I'm wondering if this has greatly to do with the last day's issue by which Gentiles are judged when the king comes by our failure to recognize the least of these his brethren.

Then be cast out into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for the failure to extend mercy, to give water, food, clothing, shelter to the least of these my brethren. Because when did we see you hungry or thirsty or in prison and so on? It's a failure to recognize the Lord in his people. We did not recognize the brethren as our brethren, being inseparably connected with them even in their unbelief.

We saw ourselves distinct and different and separated, and therefore we did not extend to them what we would have extended to each other. And therefore we're judged for that. Because we did not see and we did not give, shows we are out of the whole context of God and therefore we're condemned together with the unbelieving.

Let me tell you just how tragic it has been historically for the church to recognize what Calabar is speaking. There would not have been a holocaust, there would not have been a history of Christian persecution of Jews and anti-Semitism if we had seen ourselves in this continuum with them, though yet in their unbelief. The church in Germany did not see itself as being an inseparable community with the Jews in its midst.

Had it seen that, it would have transfigured German Christianity. The whole history of the relationship between the German and the Jew would have been different. There would have been no room for Hitler ever to have found a place, let alone to make as his cardinal ideology the hatred of the Jew, that the nation was unified on the basis of an anti-Semitism against a people whom they should have recognized as being one with whom they are inseparably joined as the Israel of God.

So we're not talking about some light fiction. The practical consequences of the loss of the view of the connectedness with Israel has been tragic in its consequence both for the Jew and for the church. The church in Germany was denuded.

It was anemic. It made room for every satanic, demonic phenomenon that came to be called Nazism because it did not have the vitality that would have been theirs had it viewed itself as being inseparably connected with the Israel that was even in its midst and moving together toward a glorious consummation for which it did not need a third Reich and that the thousand year rule that Hitler spoke about was already their inheritance with them in the scripture. Are you guys following that? We took their lives.

Isn't it the irony that we become the vehicle of their destruction rather than their salvation when we don't see as God intends that we should see? And I know this better than you because I've studied it, that the leading Nazi ideologues, the spokesmen for Nazism and all that preceded them in German theology that was anti-Semitic flows from the failure to see this. In fact, they resented it and even hated Paul for bringing in what they called a Judaistic influence and that it was not a Christianity becoming to German nationhood. They wanted a Christianity that was compatible with German national aspiration with supermen and they despised Paul because he brought to them a Christ crucified in weakness.

They didn't like this emphasis on weakness. They wanted strength and exaltation of men. They lost in the word the Hebraic component and despised it for being that.

They wanted a Christianity that was voided of its Jewish influences. Had they received it as being their faith and would have given to the church a distinctive character, it would not have been the arrogant Germany of modern times that not only in itself almost single-handedly decimated the European Jewish community but almost destroyed Western civilization itself. We're not talking about a little triviality here.

What we have paid for the failure of the church to be the church in the fullness of God's intention is tragic beyond all speaking. And having seen that tragedy do we yet recognize what has been lost and have restored it? This was my message to the church in Germany. Even in the light of the visible tragedy that has taken place, has the church in Germany yet been altered? Yet repented? Yet made amends? Yet been restored to what has been lost that made that tragedy inevitable? And the answer is no.

Some of you know that I wrote a little summary of the last days of that six-week ministry and how I came to the church in Frankfurt symbolic of so much of what had happened. Oppressed and feeling totally out of it and what have I to say and who am I, what's my qualification and what a strange message and no wonder people want to run the other way and stick their fingers in their ears. To come to the church in that

condition and to hear from the pastor, he's already been warned.

Rumors have already reached him that Cass is bringing the church in Germany under condemnation and guilt. And he said, you need to know, brother Cass, that I don't want that here. I said, well of course I don't blame you.

I didn't know that that's what I was doing. But I let me off the hook. I don't want to speak.

Well, he said, well I know that I don't understand, he says, because I know that God wants you here. So I said, well I guess we've got to go ahead and take the risk. Well, let's pray.

And we prayed. It was really earnest prayer. And I felt a real release there because I was so discouraged coming to hear that after being crunched from all of the weeks of activity and spent and so then we came down to the meeting on a Wednesday night in the basement of a commercial building and there were 400 people there.

Oh my God, where did they come from? And they're all young and all this now generation, the Pepsi Cola generation and all swingers and the worshipping was lively and I felt like a blob. Now I'm saying this, not to exalt me, but to give you a taste of what your calling is. This is the nub of the work of restoration, the prophetic calling Elijah must first come and it's no picnic.

It's the cross every time. And when I looked out my eye disappeared. I said, Lord no.

You bailed me out many times when I thought it was hopeless, but this? No way. This is... Look at them Lord. Listen to that music.

Listen to that worship. It's totally out of keeping with the burden that I'm bearing. They'll look upon me like some anomaly out of the past.

Some queer duck talking about the past and the holocaust and failed Christianity that made inevitable that tragedy and that unless we look into that burning bush there's no being called by name. There's no apostolic sending to Pharaoh. There's no releasing of the captives to bring them out.

What a strange word to a people who are not at all related to their German past. I know their German past as a Jew better than they do. I was in Germany before they were born.

I was there in Munich in 1952 and watched the prostitutes come out from the heaps of ruin of the demolished and bombed city in an unbelievable surrealistic scene that that same heap of rubble today is where they go skiing. That's called the Teufelbergen, the devil's mountain and they don't even remember. It's the rubble from the judgment of God that bombed their city to the smithereens they were born after the time.

Now they're zipped up in their ski outfits and got their skis over their shoulders and you're going to tell them what that rubble means? Forget it! And I'll tell you, if there were not an invisible cloud of witnesses giving me some kind of an assist and intercession from saints who are being stirred by the spirit in California without even knowing what's taking place there's not a hope. And I began by speaking about the prophetic word and saying, now listen you Germans I know you're logical. That's your bag.

That's what you're famous for. But if you're going to try and hear this word through your logical mind, forget it. This is a mystery.

It's got to be intuitive and apprehended, not analyzed and critiqued. And then I went on, then I went into the message itself. And remarkably they seemed to be listening.

They seemed attentive. They seemed to be hearing. And when I finished the pastor got up and went on for ten minutes and my interpreter was telling me what he was saying.

Celebrating the word and saying, this is God's very word for the church and for the nation. And he went on like that and he said, let us go down on our knees and receive this call of repentance and turn ourselves to the burning bush and look into it and receive the implications of the past for us, which are still present with us and must be recognized where there's no apostolic future. And whooom down they went, 400.

Now generation kids, what it takes to restore what is lost. And Germany is still the nub of the nations, still the great pivot. As Germany goes, so goes Europe.

It's at the heart of that compact federation of nations. It's the most vital economy, the most powerful and energetic and dynamic people. And the church is the key to which direction that nation will take.

Will what is happening now, these little neo-Nazis, these skinheads, be just a passing aberration? Or like the Hitler time, though it's a sewer phenomenon from the dregs, will it in short time rise to a place of prominence and acceptance and take over the whole structure of state as happened 50 years ago? This is a live question and the church, its prayer, its intercession, its witness is a fact that can be a fact now that was not then because of the preached word that has come to it. So, we started this morning by talking about, Lord give us a respect for the word. The exaltation of the word that by the word you're going to accomplish.

In my 64 years of life and my almost 30 years as a believer I'm grateful that we are finally coming to an hour where the word of God and the church of God is no more just a Sunday question but vitally affecting the issue of nations and the destiny of the world itself. We must come of age. Let me just finish this paragraph except that we see this and live in that reality can we rightly be the church in all fullness for only as such can the church attest to the world and summon the world to faith in Him, including summoning Israel.

Maybe Israel will never be moved to jealousy until it begins to see the church not as some alien phenomenon but as being not only an extension of itself but more rightly itself than even itself is. It's more truly and more visibly the Israel of God than what Israel is because it's the spiritual truth of what Israel is. And it's being demonstrated by Gentiles.

You want to know what it is to be Israel? Look at the church. And I'm not saying by that messianic shtick laugh, like banging tambourines and Davidic worship and the we were now stars of David and accoutrements of an external kind. I'm meaning that without anything external that would indicate us as being Jewishly oriented there is something so authentically Hebraic, something so authentically biblically Israel, the commonwealth, that they see in us Gentiles what they ought to have been if they had not been broken off out of their own tree.

And to produce that is going to take a little bit more than wearing a star of David around your neck. What a call for the church to be the church. And I'm saying it cannot be it until it first sees this.

You can't restore what you don't see. First division then the fulfillment. Write it on the tablets make it plain that we might run after it.

And that's part if not a great part of what the school is about. It's not another school of discipleship. It's conveying a vision of the things lost that need to be restored in a way that I don't know is being expressed anywhere.

Because when I came back from a previous trip the Lord said, call Bart and then brought me into these things. So even, not only the world needs to see that, what the church attests to, but Israel itself. And had the church in Germany seen that or will still see that, will affirm that it would revolutionize its perception of itself, radicalize its message, its witness, its power, its glory.

This is the key to the church being the church in Germany. And for the want of that, the skinheads are now coming into view. There's a vacuum again as it was in the incipient Hippolyte time because the church is not the church in its fullness.

And whenever something is not full, it invites something else to occupy that space. You remember what Peter said to Ananias and Sapphira. Why have you allowed Satan to fill your heart with a lie? Because you gave something in part that God intended be whole.

Whenever you only give a measure, you open the door for the enemy to fill it. We must be full of the spirit. We must be full of truth.

Wherever we're partial comes the path to destruction. That fingers the whole defect of the church in Germany. Because of the German national mentality, it was satisfied to know something as doctrine and as concept without any obligation to translate it into reality.

That is to say, if you could recite it, that was enough. They did not insist on the existential payoff. Germans love verbalization.

If you can conceive it verbally or doctrinally, you have it. And in my own academic experience, that's what we're doing with kids in schools. If you can write it down on an examination, give it back to the teacher verbally, you pass and you get an A. Whether it's actually gone into your spirit, whether it's actually reflected in your walk, in your conduct, in your life, it does not matter.

If you have it verbally, that's it. Can you see then that just to embrace the subject of Israel from the level of sentiment or affinity because you like Jews or they're cute or it's exciting what's going on there and you want to be part of it, is to miss the whole thing by a million miles. You're just as much off target as if you were an anti-Semite.

The only one embrace that's the true embrace is this apostolic view. Because it requires all, because it's central, because it's the way that God intended we should see it. It's transforming.

It transfigures us as the church. We cannot be the church except by it. It's that key.

So, to take it and just to see it sentimentally but not to see it is equally to apostate. And often I'll say, to be sentimental about Israel is as much to oppose God and his purposes for Israel as to be opposed to Israel. We thought we were this.

We go to the Feast of Tabernacles and we plant trees. What are you talking about? Why? Because to plant a tree and go to a feast does not require in terms of the cross what this requires. This is an ultimate requirement to come into this perception of the faith.

And many would just rather be related on a sentimental basis than on this basis. Because this is real church. This is the real McCoy.

This means we can no longer play with church as attending Sunday services or we can take it or leave it or shop around or visit once in a while. This means getting with it. This is earnest.

This means coming into the grit of it and being what we ought to be to each other and this reality and being identified with the invisible cloud of witnesses and that our careers, our businesses are secondary things to our calling. And how many people have a stomach for that? It means the end of your independence, your self-will, your leisure, what you're going to do. Well, I can stay home and watch a telecast or I'll listen to a tape.

I don't have to go to a service as if the issue is services. Are you joined? Are you bonded? Are you integral? Are you related? Are you in the body that is related to the head that you can be related to the church triumphant who is also joined to that head and receive its benefit? Whole radical thing. So, I'm saying that for Germany, that if they could see this and affirm this, it would revolutionize its perception of itself, radicalize its message, its witness, its power.

There'd be no room for skinheads. They'd blow them right out of the saddle. It'd be a vital, powerful church that has the message for the hour for the nation and bring the nation to a repentance for its past that is more than just paying reparations, which Germans like to do.

They don't mind some billions of marks, but they do mind breaking in their pride and acknowledging that the horror of the Holocaust is the statement of their failed Christianity, which still continues. Is it not for the want of this that we languish and grope for panaceas and fads and gimmicks and personalities and renewals while we run after so-called prophets and gimmicks and the power evangelism and this has come up and that and we're a church looking for novelty. But we're missing something fundamental and foundational that no little gimmick is going to ever answer.

To deny this unity would be to deny Jesus Christ himself, because he is himself the head of it. As the attestation of the one work and the one revelation of the one God, and then I write myself, isn't this in fact what the church has done? It has denied the Lord. It has denied this reality that has not seen itself as being part and central to it.

So Lord, and we're asking for a mercy and a grace to consider the things that have been lost, that have been absent from the church's consciousness that you've intended as normative and we need a grace, Lord. No wonder you came full of grace and truth. And we thank you that you chose this morning to insert this at this time.

Let not a syllable fall to the ground. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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