

(John - Part 29): From That Time, Many of His Disciples Went Back - Part 1

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer explores the reasons many disciples turned back from Jesus, emphasizing the importance of a genuine relationship with Him over superficial beliefs and materialistic motivations.

Duration: 48:36

Scripture: Exodus 9:12, John 6:26-27, John 6:35, John 6:44, John 6:66, John 6:68

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses a disturbing message that the Lord gave to the people. He tells them that they are not morally able to believe in Him and that they will perish because they have never heard God speak. The preacher emphasizes the importance of longing for another world and being in touch with a higher power. He also mentions the story of Jonathan Edwards, a preacher who converted 500 souls in one night with his powerful sermon on sinners in the hands of an angry God. The preacher then explains that many people today are focused on laboring for eternal life through their actions and good deeds, but they neglect the true essence of faith.

Transcript

Now, because I know the subtle power of psychology, I wouldn't for the world remind you that this was the hottest October day in history. 90.3. Actually, .03, I don't know what it would be. Three-tenths of a degree above 90.

There had never been anything like it in all the history of Chicago. Well, 2.30 this afternoon. And this is still warm.

But I want to preach to you tonight, and I want to quote quite a little scripture, or read quite a little scripture, and tonight I'm going to do what I usually don't like to do, and that is keep turning and giving a lot of scripture to buttress what I'm saying. Usually I have a quote to be able to quote it, or will refer to it, but this time I want to turn a little, and you will excuse that, I hope. And you young preachers, if you're here, don't follow it, because it isn't a good way to do.

I want to ask a question. Verse 66 of the sixth chapter, 666. No reference there at all to that 666 in the book of Revelation.

John 6, verse 66. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Now I want to ask, why did they go back? And then I want to answer the question from the Bible itself.

But nobody has any right to ask questions that he can't answer from the scriptures. So I'm going to ask the question, why did they go back? For it's very plain here, very plain, that many of his disciples, it doesn't say a few of his disciples, and it doesn't say tasters nor hangers-on, but those who had counted themselves his followers, and obviously had been listed among his followers, such lists as they might have had, I don't imagine they had a book with it in, but they were counted as his disciples, because the scripture specifically identifies them as his disciples, and says they went back, and walked no more with him. Now I can answer the question of why they went back two ways, and the first one is by telling you that he himself was the reason.

Jesus himself was the reason they went back. Why did they go back? And the answer is Jesus. You see, my friends, our Lord was not a subscriber to the philosophy so very current in our day, that we are to trim the gospel to the expectations of the public, and if they won't accept it in its undiluted form, then we are to dilute it in order to win them.

Jesus never heard of that, and he did not practice that. He gave it to them as boldly as it was possible, and many of them went back. Jesus would have been condemned for that in the day in which we live.

Now, you know, they say bring your jive records, bring your bebop records to church, and play them in the rumpus room, and actually I saw that. You'll see that in the Alliance Weekly one of these times. It'll come out.

I see it ahead of time, and I read that piece of news, that they said now you come and bring your jive records and just raise hell. They didn't use that word. And they said, we hope that way to win them.

Well, what I'd like to know, who is converting whom? I asked that question once. I never got any answer. Who converted whom there? Did the pastor convert the brethren with red-hot sizzling records, or did they convert him? I am suspicious that I know which one got converted.

You know, when two beings run head-on, you're never sure which is going to convert the other. When Christianity and the Roman Empire ran head-on for the first 200 years, Christianity converted the Roman Empire. And they did it by fire and blood and murder and drowning and thrown to the lions and rotting in prison and the beheadings.

That's the way Rome treated the Christians in all the time. That Rome was treating the Christians that way. Romans were being converted to Christ.

And then along came Constantine. And Constantine, as many say, same man. Along came Constantine, and he converted the church.

And Rome converted the church to him and to them. And they lost their power and didn't lose their heads. They used to have power and lose their heads.

But in the 4th century, they lost their power and kept their heads. They conformed to the Roman Church or to the Roman world. And out of it was born the Roman Church.

Now, our Lord never had anything to do with a thing like that. He wouldn't modify his doctrine. Either they took him as he was or they didn't take him.

They didn't apologize. Nobody apologized and went around. Peter never went around saying, now, to the multitude behind Jesus' back, now, Jesus said, he that eateth my flesh.

But he didn't mean that. I just want you to explain. That's what's 1st century theology.

He didn't really mean that. Nobody was around there explaining. They either took him as he was or they didn't come.

So I'm afraid if our Lord were to come back to earth, he'd find himself a very old-fashioned man, very much out of date in the day in which we live. But why did they go back? They had been following him. They liked the way he did.

He did miracles, and that looked good. And he was a very gracious, wonderful man. And they rather were drawn to him personally.

And he talked to them about heaven and God and spiritual things and their eyes misted over and their hearts were warm. And they felt, oh, this is good. We want to hear this.

But ultimately they went back and walked no more with him. Now, why? Well, I'm going to tell you why. And to show you that I'm a good devotee of the Schofield Bible, I've got seven readings.

And they are found here in verses 26 and 27, the first ones I'll read. Labor not for the meat that perishes, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you. For him hath God the Father sealed.

Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Now, they had come to the Lord and they wanted to identify him with economic success. Now, there'd be plenty to do.

I wish that I could divide myself up into ten parts and be as ten preachers. I still would have more to say than those ten preachers could say. And I'd like to talk on this modern heresy of identifying salvation with economic success.

So that capitalism and Christianity have now married up. And they were going together a while, but they've actually married up now. And now we are making economic success to be a proof that Jesus Christ is who he says he is.

I trusted in Jesus Christ and I didn't have a dime. And now ten years have passed and I have a dime. And we were economic success.

You see, that's the thing that it is now. And brother, I don't mean to be unkind. I'm a Christian businessman myself in a way.

And I preach for the brethren and I love them and we're good friends. They count me their marriage pastor down at the Christian Businessmen's Society. But I'd like to say this to you, friends, that the theory that's among them that if you become a Christian, your sales will begin to rise and your profits to increase is all hogwash.

And there isn't anything in the Bible that teaches it. In fact, the Bible teaches exactly the opposite. And these same people here, these Christians in Jesus' time and in the book of Acts, they didn't have a big success and a wad of money would choke an elephant in the bank.

They lost everything for Christ's sake. But this bunch of carnal people, they wanted to identify Jesus with economic success. And he ran a sword through that and turned it around twice.

He said, I know your crowd. You follow me because you think that I've got a restaurant and you can eat free the rest of your life. You seek me not for spiritual reasons but because you ate of loaves and were filled, he said.

That's why you seek me. And then he rebuked them. And don't labor for the meat that perishes, but labor for that which is unto eternal life which God the Father will give.

Now that was a shock. That was one reason they went back. Now I don't mean that all seven reasons were present in the minds of all.

Just as not all people come to Christ for the same reasons, so not all test and then go away. There are different reasons affecting different persons. And then the second reason that they went away from him was found in 28 and 9 if I have it right here.

And they said, what do we do? That we might work the works of God. And Jesus said, this is the work of God. That you believe on him whom he has sent.

Now you see, he made their eternal hope to depend not upon their labor but upon their right relationship to Jesus Christ whom God has sent. Now that was a big shock. Much that's religion in our day, very much that is religion in our day is simply morally laboring for that eternal life.

They are doing this and doing that and laboring and putting down segregation and getting ecumenicity, I can't pronounce it either, for the whole wide world. And doing good things, selling flowers for crippled children and all right, God knows it's good. This they should have done but not left the other undone.

And it's the thing that they left undone that the Lord talked about here. He said, why, you say, how can we? What does the Lord want us to do? And by the word do, you show your legalism and your jury. Why, he said, you don't do.

You get into a right relationship first before you do anything. The sinner jumps up and says, all right, God, I'm at your service. I've got a wonderful voice and my I.Q. is literally way up there among the tree tops.

And I have a good education. I've got a B.R.E. and a D.D.E. and I have a lot of stuff. And Lord, if you can get me, you've got something now.

And God said, I don't need you and I don't want your works and I don't need your activity. Salvation doesn't come by doing, it comes by a right relationship to him whom he has sent. Believe on him whom he has sent.

And he couldn't take that. They said, well, we've been taught all our life to give alms to the poor and lay up treasures in heaven and get merit for ourselves. And now here he comes along and says, you don't have to do any of that stuff at all.

That it's believing on him whom he has sent. And they said, all right. And they turned away from him on that account.

Then verse 30, they wanted a sign. Now, these are different kind of people. They said, therefore unto him what sign showest thou then that we may see and believe thee what dost thou work? And he refused them a sign.

Now, we have that class of people among us too. If you can't do a miracle or two, they won't believe you're a child of God at all. Some people, I'm just an old dried up carnal man and not even born again because I can't do miracles.

I haven't got a miracle at my fingertips. And they'll quote a passage and say, now if you're what you claim to be, how about that? Well, that was the way they came to Christ. They said, show us a sign.

Our fathers, they had their signs. You give us a sign. And he flatly refused them a sign altogether.

And he said to them in that 30-what-verse, he said to them, now you don't need a sign because our fathers ate manna, and they said he gave them bread from heaven, and Jesus said, I am the bread. And I am the sign myself. I am the sign.

Here's what a certain element in the church of Christ forgets, ladies and gentlemen. They forget that there is such a thing as moral proof. Do you know what I mean? There is such a thing as moral proof.

Now, there's such a thing as miraculous proof too. Our Lord Jesus Christ did miraculous things among them. He says so specifically.

He says so in the 2nd chapter. This first sign he did among them. But when they came and started asking for a sign, he refused them a sign and said, I am the sign.

Now, you see, that type of personality demands that there be some kind of an external test of Jesus Christ's presence. He walks among them quietly as he walked by Galilee, and they won't believe in him until he has done something miraculous. Now, he did miraculous things, and he still does miraculous things, but he doesn't do it to confirm or to prove anything to carnal people.

The Lord will heal a man if he wants him to live. He'll raise that baby up from its cradle of death, but he won't do it because some old sharp-eyed deacon is demanding that he do it. He wouldn't do it for the devil's sake in the desert.

When he had been in the wilderness forty days and nights, he flatly refused a miracle three times. In other words, he said, I am my own proof. There is such a thing as a moral proof.

My brethren, there is such a thing as men walking among us that carry their own credentials on their moral life, and they're from God a voice and a conscience. And they don't have to do miracles. John did no miracles.

But he was a voice, and he was a conscience. And he finally cut his head off because he was a conscience. I'm not speaking against miracles.

I happen to be among those that believe the days of miracles are not past. And I believe that if we have faith and the need is there, and we're spiritual and not carnal, the Lord our God will answer parental

wonders for us even today. And I believe that if we were the kind of people we ought to be, we'd see more of the Lord's wonders in the land of the living.

But I have sense enough to know that the Lord himself is the only sign he's ever going to give to a believing people. He came, he lived, he bled, he died, he rose, he pleased. And that's the moral proof.

And when the Holy Ghost came silently from heaven like a silent flash of light and entered the breasts of men, nobody ever could argue again about Jesus being the Christ. They rose and preached, he was the Christ. He was his own proof.

And he's his own proof today. The holiest sign Chicago can have is a man who lives good in a bad world. A woman who keeps clean in a dirty world.

A young person in high school who keeps her mind and heart and body clean in a dirty school. And a young fellow in the army who keeps right with God among all the obscenity and filth of an army barracks. And I know, there is your miracle.

There is your sign. There is your wonder. There is your proof.

Holiness is its own proof. Righteousness is its own sign. There's nobody yet been able to invent an excuse nor explanation for righteousness.

Nobody. Ten sick people came down here and knelt. And ten of them rose healed.

There'd be 25 men down at Chicago University who would prove psychologically how it happened. Now, they wouldn't, but they'd try it. But you can't argue against a holy life.

And our Lord walked among them on holy man. He was their sign. And he refused them another.

They said, OK, if you won't play ball with us, we'll go back. And they went back. Then there was 64 and 65.

Let's look at that. 64 and 65. I think I have it right.

I marked them down here. But there were some of you that believed not, said Jesus. And you do not believe.

Therefore, I said unto you, that no man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. That was last Sunday night's talk, so I'll only briefly say. Here the Lord told them a most disturbing thing.

He told them they weren't morally able to believe on him. He told them they were going to perish because they had never heard God speak. Because they weren't morally in a position.

They had never gotten in touch with another world. They never longed for another world. They were as crooked as Jacob without having Jacob's longing.

They had his bad qualities without his good qualities. And they didn't want to know God. And they didn't listen for the voice of God.

He said you're not morally ready. Now you see, people want Christianity, particularly they want the gospel, to be a kind of a beanbag that can be tossed around and grabbed by anybody that can get to it in anybody's hands and they can hide it or hold it or do as they please with it, always tossing it around. He took it out of all their hands and said, I am the sovereign God.

And I am in charge. And my Father is in charge. And he gives it to the morally prepared and to no other.

That shocks some of you out of a two year's growth. But you're getting too tall anyhow. It won't hurt you.

Because you've been taught the opposite. Jesus taught them bluntly that there was a moral preparation. Not that he saves the good, but that he saves the bad who know how bad they are.

And that's moral preparation. The Lord didn't come to save the righteous. He came to save the sinners who knew they were sinners.

That's moral preparation. When a man knows he's a sinner, knows how bad he is, and he's had his heart opened by the voice of God to his conscience, he's still lost, but he's prepared to be saved. The flippant.

The flippant and the insincere and the superficial and the shallow who make religion a jukebox. You put a dime in and press a button and get this old house or something else. Jukebox religion.

No, my brother. Jesus Christ, the Sovereign, took it out of the hands of dying men and said that God Almighty moves among men and by his Holy Spirit and he's reaching and finding the prepared ones, the ones that have heard him and listened and who know they're bad and know how bad they are. That's moral preparation.

Leading to repentance. They couldn't take that. They went back.

And I know there are hundreds of people who go back from hearing me. I know you people want a crowd gatherer. You'd better get rid of me fast.

Because too many people hear me, come way out here to hear me and flip me over and shrug and never come back and I don't blame them. I feel like saying, will you also go away? Now, verse 5 or point 5, verse 53 to 58, listen to what it says again. Familiar with this too.

Jesus said, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed.

He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven, not as your fathers did eat man and are dead.

He that eateth me, or of this bread, shall live forever. Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, saying, This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? Jesus said, Does this offend you? Now they couldn't get this, and they didn't want this.

They wanted the religion they could get their hands on, and label it, and cut it to measure, and fit it, and put a tag on it, and boss it. The Lord said, Oh no, you'll never get salvation that way. I'm boss.

I'm Lord. My Father is sovereign. And you'll either get salvation through me and eat me and live off me and bow and take what I say, or die in your sins.

I, of course, did not say it in that very many words, but the whole book of John tells us that. Men who will not eat of him and drink of him, they shall die and perish. Now, it has always been an offense to the world.

You know that church history shows us that one of the charges brought by the Romans against the early Christians was cannibalism. They said, The Christians eat babies. We know they do, because we have had our spies among them, and we have heard them pass out food of some sort.

We didn't know what. And when they passed it out, we heard them repeat, This is my body broken for you. Take, eat.

They ate babies, they said. So there were many a Christian lost his life because they said he was a cannibal. And they arose in the righteous indignation and slew him, sent his whole lot to be with the Lord under the false trumped-up charge that he was a cannibal.

And of course, when the Lord stood there, a man and said, My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, they didn't know he meant to say that he was going to pour out his blood for their redemption. They didn't know he was saying, I am the word, I am to you what the mother's milk is to the babe. Some old English preacher I heard years ago said, What did Jesus mean when he said, He must drink of my body and of my blood, eat of my body and drink of my blood, before you can have life? He said, I can tell you.

He said, I was visiting in a home the other day, and he said, There I saw a lovely little mother, and he said she had a big strapping boy baby, a big ox of a fellow full of power and vim and noise and hunger. And he was a breast-fed baby. And the old preacher said, This little mother was thin and skimmy and worn out and happy, but mighty thin.

He said, Why? He said, He was literally living off her flesh for the milk she was giving him. He said, When I saw that, I knew what our Lord meant. The word which I have spoken unto you, you live from the sincere milk of the word, and you live off my body which I gave for you.

They didn't know that he meant that, and so they turned away. But here's the odd thing. He didn't waste any time explaining or making it easy.

Go to a lot of preachers and give them a terrible verse like, He that cometh to me and hateth not his father and mother and wife and all the rest, and they'll explain it away and say, Jesus didn't mean that. It says back in the Old Testament and is repeated again in the book of Romans that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. More preachers have run to God's defense on that and explained that he didn't harden Pharaoh's heart, surely harden Pharaoh's heart.

God doesn't want anybody running to his defense, these little fellows who will be dead tomorrow and forgotten day after tomorrow, running to defend the sovereign God sitting on his throne. Brother, if God says that, let it stand in its bald grandeur. Don't run to prop up the mountain with a two-by-four.

Don't put a match under the sun or try to hold the river back from running over Niagara. Let her go. God put her there and he'll take care of her.

And so the truth of God stands and we ought to believe it as it is and we'll die if we don't and we'll perish unless we do believe it as it is. They didn't. They said, we won't take that kind of stuff.

They'd have said now, they'd have given him a name this long, a hyphenated series of Latin words borrowed from Sigmund Freud. They'd have said that he had an Oedipus complex combined with a death wish and a mother fixation. And they'd have said he was insane and they did say that about him, of course.

Not in this chapter, but they said more or less about him through his lifetime. This strange man had the devil, they said. But he said, I am the bread of life and it was beyond them, so they went back.

Verse 62. He claimed to have descended from God. He said, this bothers you? Why, what if you should see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? He was before and so he had to descend to get down here and he said, fools, I go back.

What do you think? And they couldn't believe that either. And you know this ascension and descension business is still bothering people. This idea that Christ came down and went back and he came down in a body and went back in a body and came and took a body and went back in a body and he'll come back in a body, that bothers people an awful lot.

I didn't attend that conference over at Evanston, but I understand that the second coming of Christ was more or less up for discussion and a lot of them turned away from it. The liberals in this country didn't like it because the liberals from across the water believed Christ was coming back. Isn't that a weird outfit anyhow? Isn't that a strange thing that a man can be a liberal and not believe the Bible and yet believe Christ is coming back and preach if you don't get ready? For Christ coming, you'd be disappointed? Isn't that a strange thing? You know, friends, the only answer I have to that was given to me by a dear old man named M.A. Dean.

They called him Ma Dean in the conference where he was because he was M.A. Dean. And I was a very young preacher and he was an old man and I said to him, Brother Dean, can you tell me how it is that some people are so inconsistent and they do this thing right and then they flop on that and he said, Well, young fella, I've thought about it for years and the only answer I've got is that some people are spiritually cross-eyed. He said their eyes cross and that's all I know.

They look this way and they cross. I think these people who are liberals and yet believe in Christ coming, they must be cross-eyed. It was the kindest and most charitable explanation I had for them.

But it's still, still an awful bothersome question. A fellow wrote me a letter here the other day. I told Brother Chase about this, Mr. McAfee.

He wrote me a letter from a college, a university out in the east and he said, Mr. Tozer, I've been reading your books and Finney, and he named a C.S. Lewis and he said, Now you three have been a bridge to me across which I've moved to Brunner. And I said, Well, I'm in good company anyhow. Finney and C.S. Lewis helped to wreck him and he blames me for it too.

But what I'm trying to get at is this, that such a man as Brunner doesn't believe Christ rose in his body, doesn't believe the resurrection was in Christ's body, and yet he believes that Christ rose, but doesn't he believe he rose in his body. I don't understand how he could rise unless he rose in his body. And I wrote the young fellow back and said, Young fellow, if you were 50 years old, I'd recommend you raise Brunner

just to know what he's talking about.

But I said, You'd better stick to the Scriptures and some books that are right with God or you'll be in the bushes. But anyhow, these men, they believe and yet they don't believe. And they're all confused.

And these people were confused. Now they said, Listen to me. Nobody ever descended.

Nobody ever descended. He was born, they said. We know his mother.

We know his mother. He was born. But he never descended.

Now he's talking about ascending, reversing his descent. And they said, We don't get all this he came, he's coming, he came, he's coming stuff. These bunch of fundamentalists.

And pre-millenarians talking about ascending and descending. I don't get it. So they wouldn't have any more to do with him.

And I think that's the sixth one. And then the seventh one is, that's verse 63. He said, It is the spirit that quickeneth.

The flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. The flesh profiteth nothing.

Now you say that to a Quaker and of course he wouldn't mind. But say that to a Jewish Pharisee and he didn't mind. Because he'd actually trimmed his beard in a religious way.

Did you know that? His beard was trimmed after the most orthodox way. And his garments were measured. And the little trimming put on them here, the phylactery.

Everything was just as it should be. And the flesh profited everything. They were good men and they did righteous.

And they tithed and minted and cummined and rued. And they lived good lives. And the flesh was everything to them.

And Jesus said to them as quietly, You've got it all wrong, you big boys with the trimmed beards and the memorized texts and the keeping of holy feasts and holy days and standing in the marketplaces and making your long prayers. You've got it all wrong. That's flesh.

And the flesh profiteth nothing. It's the Spirit of God that quickens it. And you don't understand that.

And they said, Well, this man's upsetting all our past, all our church. Everything will be upset if we listen to him. Because we have founded our hopes upon our morality and upon our almsgiving and upon our goodness and our high birth and our circumcision and our feast keeping.

We've founded our hopes upon it. And he sweeps it away with one sweep of his hand and says, The flesh profiteth nothing at all. It's the Spirit that giveth life.

And he turned Christianity into an intensely, innately spiritual thing and swept away all their externals. You know, brother and sister, and you'll excuse me now for blunt language and you'll know that I mean it seriously, you're not serving God right at all until you can serve God without anything on. You're not

serving God right as long as you have to have one lonely button to serve him with.

If your service to the Lord Jesus Christ depends upon anything you can wear, you're not serving him right. You're not serving God until you can serve him without anything to eat. For if your service to God depends upon your food, you're not serving God right.

The flesh profiteth nothing. Profiteth nothing! And you take away a lot of robes and yokes. Some ritualists have taken them out tenderly and unfolded them and with shining face have shown me their cute little dickies that they wear.

A man that can't serve God without a carefully cut coat and a right-made collar and a velvet dickie, he's not serving God. He's serving the flesh. You know that.

He's serving the flesh. A man that has to have his chain and the right shoes and the right pants and the right collar and the right dickie, he's not serving God. He's serving the flesh.

I repeat, a man can't serve God right until he can serve him with nothing on. If he has to have a certain garment to feel that he's pleasing God, he's serving the flesh. And the man in his bath is as holy as the man standing in a pulpit wrapped in fourteen bath robes and seven chains around his neck and two bells to ding-dong on.

Candles burning behind him and all their boys to hold up his coat. The flesh prophet of nothing, ladies and gentlemen. The flesh prophet of nothing.

We might as well learn that. You don't learn that from the Quakers, either. Get her stopped.

But in fact, nevertheless, that day he took it out of the hands of the flesh and of the beard and their hair and their parity. That's why a man when he's young can serve God with lots of hair, and when he gets old he can serve God just as well without any hair. And that's why a woman when she's young and graceful can serve God in her beauty, and when she gets old and fat she can still serve God because the flesh prophet of nothing.

And that's why a young fellow that can play football as one of our Alliance preachers did, he shocked some of the dear old Alliance people out of fourteen years of good, solid, honest growth by preaching in the Alliance church on Sunday and playing on the Iowa State football team on weekdays. Got the youngest Ph.D. ever taken out there. They want him to go to Washington and help head the something or other.

He said, no, I'm opening the Alliance branch. Excuse me, I don't care to. And they still write him a couple times a week and ask his advice.

All right, there he is. He's a good looking, you know it, you wouldn't believe. Just look at the guy and say, I took him out to lunch.

I just wanted to look at the fellow. Thirty-two years old. And brother, if you ever saw a handsome great big beast, he said, give him thirty years and that black shiny hair of his will be what's left of it.

It'll be as gray as the dawn. And those great strong shoulders will be bent over. Mother Nature and Father Time will pull him down, twist him up, bend him over, line his joints and harden his arteries.

But he who serves God at thirty-two in his strong masculinity and health can serve God just as well at eighty-two when he's old and bent and tired and ready to die. And if age makes any difference, looks makes any difference, size makes any difference, abilities make any difference, then it's not true Christianity. Flesh profits nothing, said Jesus, and swept away all the flesh with all of its pride.

Little black eyes, girls want to be blue eyes. And girls with straight hair want to be curly. Sweet little blonde girl with blue eyes and hair just as straight as lead pencils.

She'll say, don't you think you're just a little bit curved back there? No, honey. Not a bit, just as straight as wire. We all want to be different, and all want to be different.

Jonathan Edwards was a little sawed-off fellow, nearsighted, and read his terrible, wonderful, God-anointed sermons like this. Look up and read and read and look up. It must have been an awful sight, but 500 souls were converted one night when he preached on Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.

Nice to be like my friend Berg out in Iowa. Looked like a quarterback, but that guy looked like a quarter of a man. But he had that which made him a man of God, a spiritual man.

I'd just like to add this about my big friend out in Iowa. I sat there talking to him across food I couldn't eat. I had the awfulest time getting anything I need anymore because restaurants are getting bad.

But I was looking at him over the chicken livers and something or other, and I said, listen, boy, you've got a Ph.D. in your brain. You look like something out of an arrow collar ad. You could turn to politics and be elected like that to Congress.

You've got it all, boy. But let me tell you something. Sweep that whole thing under your feet.

Tramp on it and get filled with the Holy Ghost and be a prophet to your generation. He bowed his head over his food and said, oh, that's smarter than we give him credit for, even if he has a Ph.D. He knows his Ph.D. won't help him. The flesh profiteth nothing.

It's only the spirit that profits. When I come back from Atlanta, I want to preach on the text Will Ye Also Go Away? But I'm going to stop tonight by asking whether we're going to allow the errors that ruin the Jews to ruin us. These renegade disciples turned away and perished, I suppose.

Maybe they came back as some of my dear friends who are strong in their belief that they were converted and that they certainly would come back. I'll say that's all right. I agree with you.

I hope they did. But for the time being, they went away. And in going, they went because they were earthbound.

They were talking to one who was as spiritual as the heartbeat of God. They were talking to one that while he had a body, he was as unfleshly and unearthly as an angel. They were talking to one who had come from another world and was soon to go back to that other world.

These religionists were bogged down in their flesh, bogged down in their clay. They loved the earth. They loved to eat.

They loved food. They loved sleep. They loved pleasure.

They loved even to be known as being widely known as being religious. He came a tender, spiritual man from another world. And they, oh, people, you ought to understand.

After all you ought to. You oughtn't to make that mistake. You oughtn't to make that, you oughtn't to ask of me that I entertain you.

You oughtn't to ask of me or this church that we provide entertainment for you or your supposed young people. You oughtn't to ask it. You oughtn't to know better.

They ask it. You turn coldly away and let them die. You oughtn't to know better.

In the days to come you will love my memory because I stood and stuck my old skinny jaw out and refused to give you anything but God. You love me for it but you don't now. All right, you oughtn't to make that mistake.

They trusted in the flesh and they couldn't see that the bread of life was. He died for us in his flesh and rose and his blood was poured for us and that we now believe his word and thus receive the benefits of his broken body and shed blood. You can see that, can't you? They couldn't.

They perished because they couldn't. Can you? There are thousands who can't. There are religionists by the thousands who can't and they wanted to labor for their salvation.

Give them something to do, they said. Give them something to do. I recommend a greased pole and say, now you climb that greased pole and if you get to the top you've got salvation.

You know, if I put a greased pole out here and chant around it and have a nice picture put up and play colored light over it and say the second greased pole of the covenant. If you can climb to the top you'll have eternal life. We'd have to get the police to keep the crowds away from that greased pole.

Everybody would be wanting to do something to get to heaven. The Lord said, no, no, friends, that's not the way. It depends upon a relationship to Jesus Christ.

People would dash up in their big cars and get out wrapped in furs and say, could I have a chance to climb the pole? Hoping to climb the pole and wrap their furs around them and drive off in their majesty. He says, honey, you don't do it that way. Can't be done that way.

Might as well walk on your two pretty little feet. Come and kneel on your two knees for salvation doesn't come by effort. Salvation comes by relationship to me in faith.

You believe me, whom God has sent, that's your salvation. Then after that, you can do all the good works you want to in my name, but you don't get saved that way. Isn't it too bad people don't see that? Don't you make that mistake, I plead.

Don't do it. They did it and died. Don't you do it.

Why did they go away? I repeat, they went away because they couldn't get him to conform to their idea that religion ought to be a profitable thing. They ought to have profit and sales and money and goods. He said, oh no, that's not it.

Labor not for that which perishes. And he couldn't get them to give him a sign. They couldn't get him to give them a sign.

He said, I'm the sign. I'm the bread of life. You eat of me, you live.

They couldn't take that. And they couldn't believe that religion was a spiritual thing, essentially, and salvation was internal. They couldn't believe that.

Well, they said, isn't there something you do? Isn't there something you do? Can't I cut something or splash water on something or twist something or massage some part of you? Can't I do something? Don't you do anything, Lord? The flesh profits nothing. No massaging, no oil, no anything can save a man. But Jesus Christ and faith can save a man.

So, brethren, let's have hope. And you can be saved tonight. You can believe on him tonight.

But don't turn away and don't demand that Jesus Christ trim and cut his salvation to please you. Take him as he is and come as you are.

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