

The Coming of the Holy Spirit (Apostolic Fellowship)

by A.W. Tozer

The apostolic fellowship is the pattern for the church, where believers share equally in the presence of Jesus Christ and serve one another, emphasizing the importance of simplicity, faith, and service.

Duration: 47:22

Scripture: Matthew 28:19, Mark 10:15, Acts 2:42

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of continuing in the faith rather than just starting. He criticizes the artificial complexity and extra-scriptural practices that have been added to the church. The preacher highlights the biblical norm of simplicity in teaching and the need for Christians to persevere and continue in their faith. He also mentions the fellowship of hope and the anticipation of Jesus' return. The sermon encourages believers to stay true to the teachings of Jesus and not compromise the word of God.

Transcript

Save us from empty words, and fill every word with golden content. Prepare every heart to receive the word, and prepare the speakers to lay the emphases where they belong, inspire, illumine, enlighten, and empower, we pray. May it be said, they could not resist the wisdom and the spirit.

These we beg of thee to give us wisdom and spirit. Lord, thou knowest how much religious, how many religious things there are to say. If we talk them for the next hundred years, they'll not be run out.

Thou has something to say to us now. Say it Lord, say it. And may thy servants hear this.

Amen. Now, I want particularly to take that verse, they continue steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship. Inasmuch as I can't preach everything at one time, I'm going to still like it, and talk about the apostle's fellowship, the apostolic fellowship.

Now, we have here the biblical norm. The pattern for the church is found here. It's found here in its simplicity.

Simplicity is a word we don't know very much about, but the early church was very simple. Teaching of Jesus was so simple everybody could understand, and the common people came and heard gladly. The artificial, complex developments that we have today are extra-scriptural.

See, some things are extra-scriptural, and some are unscriptural. Some things are added which are not specifically unscriptural, but they're extra-scriptural. Hyphenate that, and you'll have it.

That is, they're added. They're something that the Lord didn't specially mention, but they're just put on there. They're what the old Romans called impedimenta, that is, baggage.

And this is set down here. These truths are set down here, and we may gather from this an axiom. Those of you who've studied higher mathematics know how an axiom is laid down, or in philosophy for that matter.

Then from there on, you never need to change that. Two times two is four. You never have to change that, but Einstein couldn't improve on that any.

Two times two is always four, relatively to the contrary notwithstanding. And so, I want to lay an axiom down here for you, and say this, that the church gains in power, and she loses power as she moves away from it. Now, God isn't going to come down with a club and force you to be scriptural.

He isn't going to compel preachers, nor editors, nor leaders to be spiritual. We have a will of our own that we can do as we please. We'll have to settle for it someday before the bar of God's justice, or before the mercy seat of Christ at any rate.

But, always remember that as you move toward the simplicity of the New Testament, you gain in power. As you move away from it, you lose power. Now, I'll break this down a little, emphasize some words, and show you what the Apostolic Fellowship is.

Then, if I have time, show you who loves it and who doesn't, and so on. Now, it says here that they continued. They had received the word, and then that passed as they believed, and then that passed.

That was settled. And now, they continue. And here's where the Biblical emphasis differs from ours.

Today, almost everything depends upon the initial act of believing. If we can get a fellow to stand on the dotted line, we feel that we have done the will of God, and we're ready to fall asleep. But, you know, somebody said, I don't remember who, that we deal with the whole responsibility toward God once for all by believing.

Have you believed? I believe. We even sing the song to them that on Jesus have leaned for authority. Put it in the past tense.

If you've done it, that settles it. And, of course, this is thought to glorify God. This once for all, once done act of believing is supposed to glorify God and honor grace.

But, actually, it is to make God the author of a grotesque system which has no counterpart in the scriptures at all. In the scriptures, particularly here in the book of Acts, everything ends upon continuing. Not upon starting, but continuing.

And it's just this ordinary thought sense, trying to old Mary who sat on the farm back here when I was a farmer in Pennsylvania. Just ordinary thought sense to tell you that you can start 1,008 times, and if you don't continue, you might as well have saved your trouble. It isn't starting, it's getting there.

It's continuing. It isn't taking off out here at the airport, it's plugging on until you reach Toronto or New York, or wherever you're going. It's continuing.

The idea that Christians are continuers, they're people that keep on, that's almost been lost to us today. This here in the Bible, they continue. Faith to these early Christians was not a beginning only, it was not an end.

It was the beginning that led on towards the end, that the end was not faith. Faith to them was a journey. It was not a bed to lie down in, it was a journey.

You were on your way. It wasn't a vaccination against hell, so that the fires of hell could never get in your bloodstream. It was to follow the Lamb whithersoever he went.

The disciples were called followers, from the old system of a teacher having no place to meet, you know. He didn't have a school, such as Nyack or somewhere. So, the teacher just declared himself a teacher and started out, and his pupils followed him.

And wherever he went, they went, trailing along behind, taking notes, or at least memorizing, asking questions, and that's where the idea of following Christ came from. He's the teacher, we're the disciples, and we follow on until he declares school is over. And he hasn't declared it's over yet, we're still in the school of Christ.

Now, they continue, and then they continue steadfastly, and again we vary here in our modern emphasis from the New Testament order. And let me start to say here that it is what you emphasize that matters. It's not what you believe, it's what you believe emphatically.

If you take anybody who is leading a bunch of sheep astray, you take anybody and press him, and he'll admit that he wants to be scriptural, and you press him, and he will back out and come around and admit that, yes, I believe that, too. I believe the scripture. It isn't what he believes, it's what he emphasizes that matters.

There's such a thing, you know, in explosives called a detonator. Now, the detonator is the little jigger that blows off all the rest, and if you have a EMG enough to blow up the city of Pittsburgh, it's harmless until it's detonated, until it's hit in a certain way. Then it goes off and blows up the place, generally.

Now, the power of God must be detonated. It must be cut off, and you can believe the word of God all you want to, but if you don't believe it with temperature, it doesn't work in your life. Take an illustration.

You can draw from, say, the Central Vainia. We have coal lying in the bowels of the earth here. That has been lying, and it's the best coal in the world, Central Vainia coal.

It's been lying here for I wouldn't know how many hundreds of thousands of years. It's lying there perfectly quiet, just a sleeping old church member. It's there, down there, it's perfect there.

All you have to do is go in and get it out, and you can get it out and put it in your coal oven, and it still lies there, harmless under sleep. But, put it into the combustion chamber of some great factory, or some great steam engine, or some ship, or whatever is run by coal fields, and the heat will turn loose the energy that's been lying quiet for ages, and you will be able to send a ship across the ocean, or send a factory working for an eight-hour shift on that same pile of coal that has been lying for centuries in perfect quiet. Now, the

doctrines of the New Testament lie there like coal, and they have enough energy in them to save the universe or to blow it up, but it'll never work until it's set off, until you put it into the chamber, the combustion chamber, and when you put the emphasis on it, then it begins to work.

All right, now I say that our emphasis doesn't lie here with the word continued, and it doesn't lie with the word steadfastly, though if you preface it we'll admit we believe in both. You see, steadfastly, the very word itself, you don't need to have a commentary on it in an older Greek. The word steadfastly indicates that if they're going to continue, they're continuing against opposition.

Nothing nor the word steadfast indicates this. It's there. If there was no opposition, no temptation to quit, nobody out after you, the word steadfast wouldn't have a meaning in the world.

They continued steadfastly. Why did they continue steadfastly? Because the devil was trying to stop them from continuing, and they were continuing in spite of the devil. Now, that's what the word steadfastly means here, but you and I are forced to play down the juicy copy, so we're forced to tell the public that the term Jesus is a jolly thing, and that if we just believe on Christ or accept him, that all will be well.

After that, you will sell more than your competitor, you'll hit more home runs than the other anybody on the other team, your curve will break better, you will knock the opponent out in the ring, you'll knock him cold as a cheese, and you'll gain grades in school, and you'll come your way if you only accept Jesus. Now, that's the Christianity of the day, and I turn my back on the whole business. It's cheap, it's unscriptural, it's false, it's wrong.

It's watering down the word of God so that the carnal groundlings will take it. We can get away with it, and we can get crowds, and we can get apparent results, but in the day that the Lord judges the secrets of all men by his gospel, it's going to make some of us sweat. And I, for my part, want to be right now, and take to the consequences now, rather than stand red-faced in chagrin at the mercy seat of Christ.

Well, here they turn to Christ, these Christians. They turn to Christ with the full understanding, these early Christians. They knew that they were espousing a hated cause.

Nowadays, we have people out busy trying to show our young people that Christianity is no longer an unpopular cause, but that the big folks believe in Christianity now, and we name their names. We say, look, he believes, and we make out that the cross of Christ is now a very popular thing. My friend, the cross of Christ, properly understood, is no more popular now than it was when they nailed Jesus on it.

But the cross of Christ that has been smoothed over and painted up and varnished and decorated, of course, but that's not the cross of Christ. That's the one we're offering people, but it's not the cross of Christ. They knew they were espousing a hated cause, and they knew that they were joining the unpopular minority.

Talk about a minority group. Now, we're hearing a lot about that. If you happen to be a Jew or a colored person, or Chinese or an American in some places, you're in the minority group.

And sometimes the minority group is not popular. In the case of Christianity, it is not popular. The minority group.

Jesus belonged to the minority group. His disciples were small-hand, coal-reeling. Lots of people came out to get bread and fish, but very few people came back to follow him up to Calvary, and they that did ran

away.

Now, they knew that they were putting their property in jeopardy when they followed the Lord Jesus, and they knew they were putting their lives in jeopardy, and that was no idle rhetorical flourish for the simple reason that many who stood there when Peter preached his sermon lost everything for Christ's sake, and many who stood there lost their lives for Jesus' sake. At least some did, and many of them lost everything for Jesus' sake. They knew that.

They knew that they would be unpopular if they followed the Lord Jesus Christ, but they did it anyway, and they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine. Now, they recognized God's right to teach them. They brought nothing to the doctrine.

They came to the doctrine for everything. But you and I tend to come bringing our prejudices and preconceptions, and our tattered fragments of human learning, and try somehow to fit them into the jigsaw puzzle of Christianity. Now, brother, if we could only treat from our hearts all that we know.

I had a brother-in-law. He was all right, but he was a funny fellow, and he was drunk one night, and he prayed for his friend while he was drunk, and God said to his heart, "'Are you praying for your friend? What about you?'" He got right down to his knees and began to pray, and God saved him that night. He had memorized scripture as a boy.

He had come from a part of the country which shall be nameless, where they like to ask questions. "'What is man?'" they asked me that one time. It was a profound question, and of course, scripture usually is a misinterpreter.

He had a lot of those misinterpreted scriptures in his head, and he said that when God got through with him, all he knew was one verse. "'With man it's impossible, but with God all things are possible,'" he said. That's all that knew.

But he got converted anyhow. The cross that they had given him got converted. "'Well, we bring these tattered fragments,'" I say, "'to the apostles' doctrine."

If we could just rid our minds of it all and come like little children, and let the Lord teach us and start over as if we didn't know a thing, and we really don't.' So, they came to the apostles' doctrine and entered the apostolic fellowship." So, I want to talk a little bit about the apostolic fellowship. First, let's look at the word fellowship. It's a half-naked cliché now, and I rarely use it.

We have the fellowship of the this and the that, you know, but the word fellowship is a beautiful word. The word fellow means an equal. It's a Scots word, and you find it in Shakespeare and back in Old English.

They say, they would say, this fellow was not to be found in all England. They meant his equal, and so equal and fellow is the same word. And ship, of course, is a state of sharing, so that a fellowship was a sharing equally in something.

Now, a fellowship may be any kind of a fellowship, good or bad. You may have the fellowship of thieves, and you'll have the fellowship of ganglers, and that is a sharing equally in something. Two lions kill a deer, they have a fellowship.

They share in the deer. They share equally if one isn't bigger than the other, and therefore fellowship means an equal sharing. And I'd like to tell you this, my brothers, before Jesus Christ, everybody stands on the same level.

You've got a lot of big shots lined up here like crows on a telephone wire. But you know, they're just common fellows. They put their trousers on one leg at a time, and they go to bed at night, and they eat in the morning.

They're just people, you know. Never be afraid of big folks. They're just people like everybody else, and if you knew how many weaknesses we had, and all you'd laugh.

But it's like other people. I've been afraid of big fellows. I did all of them all my life.

I got acquainted with a lot of them, and then I found they were just people too. So that fellowshiping, sharing, means that we are sharing something equally. The President of the Alliance, or for that matter the President of the United States, doesn't have a right to anything you don't have a right to.

You can have just the same, and just as much of, and just as often as the biggest fellow in the world. Old Brother John in California doesn't have access to anything you don't have access to. The Christian Church is an equal sharing.

Now, what is the equal sharing? Well, you'll be bullies over here murdering me when I get out of here, I'll bet you. Well, anyhow. Well, there is the fellowship of a presence.

Now, there is the equal sharing of a presence. A whole family. Say the six children that my mother had, three boys, three girls.

My wife wasn't as good a mathematician, so she had six boys and one girl. Didn't divide them up right. But you know, when we were all together, they shared equally, and we tried to keep it like that.

If I'd go home, and one of them had a birthday, do you suppose I could take one of them a present, with the other six looking on hungry? No. If one of them had a birthday, and I was off in meetings, and I went back with a birthday present, I had to have little consolation prizes for where I was. And they shared to know that sharing, that's what it is.

We share a presence. Oh, my friends, the presence. You can't overdo that word.

Now, I'm not Spanish, you know, I know nothing about it, but I met one time with a couple of boys from Puerto Rico, and one of them prayed. A model on one of our line churches there, he looked up and he prayed. And he would, every once in a while, he would use the word presencia.

That's the nearest I can get to it. So, I asked my secretary, who was Marion Butcher of Chile, I said, what did this man mean, saying presencia, detention? Oh, she said that means presence. He was enamored by the presence.

He was looking up praying over the presence, and he was looking into the face of the one who said, where two or three are gathered, I am in the midst. We will come and make our vogue with you. Lo, I am with you always.

The presence of Jesus Christ is the most important thing about this meeting. The presence of Jesus Christ. Now, I like to go to council, I like to meet the brethren, eat with them, and talk with them, and see them, and that's about all I get out of usually, but I go there for that purpose, and I love the brethren.

I love to be where they are, but the most important thing in any fellowship anywhere is that we are gathered unto Jesus Christ who is in the midst, and it's a fellowship of worship because we meet to honor the author of our being. We honor the author of our being, Jesus Christ our Lord. Not a program, I repeat, but a presence.

A fellowship of service, I might say, because we Christians share equally not only in the benefit, but it's also the obligation. And when you share the presence, and when you sing, "Break thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,' you close your eyes and sing, "'Majestic sweetness sits enthroned upon my Savior's brow,' you are preparing yourself to share in an obligation, and that obligation is to do good unto all men, especially those who are the household of faith, to visit the sick and the fatherless, and to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth." Now, there aren't many things Christians are sent to do, and we are told what they are. The Church is always being approached by do-gooders and sociological bigwigs trying to get us interested in doing something they've taught us.

I have never been interested in anything any sociologist will come to me with. I know what I'm sent to do. I know what a Church is supposed to do, that I have anything to do with.

I know what the apostolic fellowship is. It is the sharing of a service. We are to serve the world, and we preachers ought to remember something.

We're not a privileged class. I have preached to a good many preachers in my time. Only a week ago, in Toronto, a conference met there, a prayer retreat they called it, and I said to them there, there is grave danger that we ministers shall begin unconsciously to think of ourselves as a privileged class, when actually we are a serving class.

The very word ministering word is the word servant. We say, she's rich and has servants. We mean she's rich and has ministers that minister unto her.

So as to this, you reverend brethren and doctors, remember that when you call yourself a minister, you mean a man with a towel over his shoulder. You're a servant, you're a waiter, you're there to serve. So we share in a service, and we share in the fellowship of the new creation.

Now, I believe that the Church ought to be just one breath short of the other. I think we ought to be supernatural. I think we ought to be mystical.

I think that we ought to have upon us a miracle. I think that a Christian ought to be miraculous. I don't believe that a Christian ever should be explained.

I don't think that any psychologist can explain a true Christian. I think there's something that's different, something that's divine, something that's celestial, something that comes from God, and the whole Church ought to be like that. We ought to be walking around very lightly.

No Christian ever ought to weigh more than about a pound and a half. That is, when he touches the earth, he touches it very lightly, ready to go in a second, ready to jump off like a condor, right into the air like a bird. We ought to live like that.

The fellowship of the new creation. Now, we have so taught prophecy that we have made what they call in Canada a schedule. I'm going to have to learn to say that if it kills me.

A schedule, a schedule. We have a schedule. That is, we have a day, we do this, tomorrow we do that, and the next day we do that, and we've got the Lord laid out like that.

And the Lord doesn't even dare do anything. It's not in our schedule. We have to have the Lord.

We say, Lord, now remember, remember, Paul had sent a telegram to the evangelist, and he said, Come at once. Revival has broken out. Be wired back.

Hold it till I get there. And we don't want the Lord to do anything. Our Lord tells with chuckles of joy and disgust that we had a Cheswick meeting one time.

You know, in Cheswick they preach for Cheswick very many places and times, and they work it out. You start on Monday preaching about sin, and Tuesday you preach about redemption, Wednesday you talk about death itself, Thursday you talk about the fullness of the Holy Ghost, and you know, and about, along about Thursday you have a crisis. And Redpath said that one time, he went to one of these Cheswick meetings and started on Monday preaching about the Holy Ghost, and a very serious-minded old Cheswick fellow came around and said, Now watch it so the Redpaths don't have a crisis before Thursday.

Don't get too soon, you know. Well, we've laid out our prophecy like that, and the result is, of course, it's become a mechanical thing. I was brought up on charts.

You know, a chart here. If a chart starts up here, it goes down to the bottom of the section, and coming out of there, it goes up here and around the corner, and showing up to the millennium. Then somebody goes up here and down there and use charts.

Well, Mussolini knocked the charts out of it, and thank Mussolini for that. He did one good thing before they hung him up upside down. He got rid of our charts, and we're just looking for the Lord now, and I've drawn so many pictures.

Some of us had a wonderful time drawing pictures, but you know what? That puts everything miraculous for far and away. What's all this time restoring the Kingdom to Israel? He said, No, you shouldn't ask a question like that. That's in the hands of God the Father.

You'll get filled with the Holy Ghost and be a witness to the end of the earth. That's your job. So, you and I have the fellowship of the new creation.

We've entered the Kingdom that's not of this world. The Church is not a religious organization. The Church is a religious organism, which is something else again.

An organization, not a mobile, is an organization. Say, you've got several thousand parts, and organize them, and if you organize them right, you'll have an automobile. Get some gasoline in the battery, and we can probably run down the highway 50 miles an hour quite safely.

That's an organization, but that can't propagate itself, you see. You never heard the two automobiles having a little third automobile if they don't work that way, because they're not organisms. They're not organisms.

You know, way back in the early days of automobiles, they told about the Pennsylvania farmers that saw an automobile go down the road raising dust, and right behind it came a motorcycle, and he said, Who do you thought it had a coal? Well, they don't have coal. Organized things don't propagate. Organisms propagate, and the Church of Christ is an organism.

It propagates. That was Blue Nose Mule down in Jordan. Oh no, excuse me, I've got a wrong illustration.

They don't propagate either, but these lovely mares here, these lovely mares that we used to drive around over the hills of Pennsylvania, they propagated. Every year they came through, and they were alive. They were organisms.

The automobile was an organization. They pulled a wagon. That was an organization.

They were organisms. They went ahead and pulled the organization, and organizations are good things. They've got some alive people to pull it, but it soon dies when the alive people die.

For the fellowship of the new creation is the fellowship of something that's an over-something. It's what you count all your members, and when you've counted all your members, you still haven't got it. You take their offerings and count the offerings, and when you count the offerings, you still haven't got it.

You get all their names and dedicate their babies and marry them, and then you haven't got it. It's all that pluck and overtone of something divine. It's that fellowship of the new creation.

He said, they tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. Did you ever go down to the ocean side and see a little boat tied up in a sandy lagoon? And there it was, tied up there, and you'd see it shake. And you went, what's shaking the boat? The whole ocean was shaking the boat.

Just a tiny little boat, not far out from the shore, but the undulation, the swell of that great ocean moved the little boat. And the Christian isn't aware of the detail. He feels the tug and pull and swell and rise and fall and undulation of the world come.

He lives close to it, so he feels it. But then, it's the fellowship of hope, too. We're all anticipating the coming of Jesus back to the world again.

And they that love the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord heard it and wrote it down in the book. And come down to see that book, and just notice what the Lord wrote down. Now, you've talked today to a lot of people.

I want to ask you, do you think any of it would be worth writing down in the book, particularly with the Lord writing it down? Mostly, it isn't. It isn't worth writing down. I think how much I've said in my day that the Lord wouldn't write down.

I hope he doesn't write it down, because I never want to face it again. Well, they spoke about things, and God wrote it down in the book, and God said, they'll be mine in that day when I come to make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a father spares his children. That's the fellowship of the saints.

Now, that's quite different from this modern church, which is an evangelical church, and only fundamentalists. We're full of gospel people. We haven't got churches nowadays.

We've got religious vaudevilles. The old vaudeville they used to have in the symbol theater and the bijoux, they don't have it there anymore. It's dead, but we've taken it over now, and we have it, and we have big signs saying so-and-so in person.

In person. Dear God, what do we expect? His ghost to come, or would he just send his suit, you know, or his shoes, or a picture of himself? So-and-so in person. Where do we get that abomination? We got it from the old theater.

We got it from that old theater that is now gone. We took it over. The church is only one generation behind the world.

First generation opposes the world. The second generation goes over to the world, and the world in the meantime has left that position and gone on. Then we're always about 25 to 50 years behind the world, coming along, plodding faithfully along, imitating the world.

Carmichael grieves at all this. Why should a prophet call to God, who so sees heaven opened and sees visions of God, and hear God say through him, speak the words that I tell thee? Why should he put his ear to the ground to see what old Adam's talking about? Old Adam isn't worth listening to. He's long ago proved that he doesn't know the way home.

There is a new Adam, another Adam. He speaks, and we're sent to say what he tells us to say. So, that's the apostolic fellowship.

That's what we need, brethren. We need to bring back again to our local churches and such gatherings as this, the apostolic fellowship, the sharing of the word, the sharing of worship, the sharing of the presence, the sharing of spiritual obligations, the sharing of that sense of heaven bending over earth, the sharing of that sweet anticipation of the Lord's coming again. Now, all this we share.

This is the church, you see, and nothing else is the church. Anything else is just a religious organism put together with screws and nuts and bolts and more nuts than anything else. But now there'll be some people who won't feel at home in the church like that.

I want to name them briefly for this time. There are those who put on religion as a pleasant Sunday garment, and there's still a lot of them, brethren. They come to church faithfully on Sunday, but that's all you see of them, and they won't feel at home there.

And they who keep religion disengaged from practical living, they won't feel at home there. Some people want to keep their religion carefully in one department. They compartmentalize their lives.

They have a place for their insurance policy, and a place for their, I'm sorry to say, secret service. I mean, social security, and a place for the very, very other side, and then a place for religion. And they never meet, you know.

There's another church where they can live on something else. And those who refuse to endanger them, or interfere with them, or cost them anything, or control them, or contradict them, they won't be at home there. The minister is supposed to preach very sweet, soft sermons in order to console them.

Churches are fixed up for their psychological effect. There was a day in the United States when you could garden a goat mine, or anywhere, you know, and they'd almost, the old Quakers had a meeting house

made of logs, and the lions used to meet in tabernacles, and they used to say, if you want to go to a town and say, where's the lion's church? The tabernacles say, you know where that liver stable is? Yeah, in the barbershop. But they knew God in those days, and they had a sense of sharing, and a sense of fellowship.

And the world helped them to have it, because the world looked down the nose at them, and the big old church said, they're a bunch of fanatics. When we cease to be known as fanatics, we cease to be taken seriously. We're not taken seriously anymore.

We're a fifth-rate denomination with very little more to market out than you'd find anywhere else among the Church. Nobody's saying amen, but it's so anyhow. And they don't respect religion to be fun, and they don't want to be around a place like that.

So I came to a church in Chicago, a young man, and he stayed around a while, and he left it. And I said, what happened to so-and-so? He said, he joined in and named another church. I said, why didn't he rest and go over there? Oh, he said, he wanted to dance, and he said, he didn't, they didn't dance in the lion's church, so he said, he went where the young people had to dance every once in a while.

I said, all right, we're good riddance of bad rubbish. Paul wants to dance. You can't dance in the house of God unless you dance for joy.

Some of the old saints used to get up and do a little two-step, you know, down the aisle, shouting glory to God. But they don't do that anymore. Well, they expect religion to be fun, but you don't know that Jesus never had much fun after the Holy Ghost came on him at the River Jordan.

He had joy in the Lord, and he lived in the heart of his Father, and from the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross. But the cross was never any fun. Never any fun to die, particularly when you're dying on a cross.

So if you think that Christianity is another form, a pure, better form of entertainment, you might just as well quit the Church, because you're neither hot or cold, and the Lord will still love you by coming out. Don't give any more money, because you're wasting it. Don't go to waste any more Sunday mornings.

You're wasting that, too. If you think Christianity is an entertainment, a fantasy, it's a serious matter. It's a committal.

As the man will, he probably won't come back. I suppose they'll send a hundred of them, tell them, before they get one there. But the man who gets in there, he says, he says, goodbye.

And the Christian is not somebody who is going out, and the tongues are waxing, and the wounds, well, they won't be at home, I say, and their culture of preaching to some educated people, and to chase an artist. Oh no, I won't tell that story, excuse me. I will use up my time.

The Lord bless you, and you will be at home there. Everyone whose leading ambition is to be rid of their sins. Everybody wants to be rid of their sins.

If you hate your sin as you hate a cancer, you'll be at home in the Apostolic Fellowship, because they're specialists in getting rid of sin. They know where the blood is, and where the lamb is, and where the fire is, and they know how to get them out of sin. If your leading ambition is to know that and to walk with God, if your leading ambition is to follow the lamb wherever you go, you'll be at home in the Apostolic

Fellowship, but you won't be at home there unless you can do.

And there are those who have learned to recognize the voice of the shepherd, that wonderful voice of the shepherd. Did you ever hear Jesus speak to your inner heart? Ah, it's ravishingly beautiful, wonderful beyond description. To have Jesus whisper to your inner heart.

He wasn't whispers through the words, but to have him whisper to your inner heart. Ah, if you love the voice of the shepherd, you'll come, and if you're sensitive to the invisible presence and have tasted the good word of God, you'll come. May God grant that we restore to the Church again the concept of the Apostolic Fellowship, that we know why we meet together, and there we go to spread that kind of Christianity around the world.

Let's beware of assuming that if we take the gospel to a part that hasn't been reached, we have done God's service. Not necessarily so. Our first obligation is to be worthy to go to that tribe, spiritually worthy to go.

And when we are spiritually worthy to go, and our concepts and standards are New Testament, then we go, we will take them a higher level, New Testament, Spirit-filled Christianity. But don't forget, you can be missionary-minded and still not be right with God. All over the world, right back.

I feel that we must get right with God here in our own country. We must get our churches right with God. We must shovel out the dirt.

We must take all the mules and cows and cattle and money changers and dump them out in the alley. We must get rid of all unscriptural and cultivate the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. And then we'll go to the ends of the earth, and we'll take a pure, scriptural, Spirit-blessed Christianity to the end of the world.

Now I want to pray. Listen. God reveals his presence.

Let us now adore him, and with awe appear before him. God is in his temple. All in us keep silence, and before him bow with reverence.

God himself is with us, whom angelic legions serve with awe in heavenly regions. Holy, holy, holy, sing the host of heaven. Praise to God be given.

Lord, come dwell within us, all on earth we carry. Make us thy blessed sanctuary. Grant us now thy presence, unto us draw near, and reveal thyself still clear.

Where we are, near or far, let us see thy power every day and hour. Brethren, this is what our churches must have us pray. Oh, O Father, we pray that thou will grant that all our local churches may become fellowships.

That we're bold and reject all that's been lugged in over the past years, and ponder upon us as biblical. That we purge ourselves from it, and go back to the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus, so that power may come. Again, power.

The power of another world shutting down over this world, so that we can see heaven opened, and see visions of God, so that we can see the mountains filled with horses and chariots. Oh, God, cleanse us, we beseech thee, from Adam. Cleanse us from the entertainers.

Cleanse us, we pray thee, O Lord God, from the compromisers, and give us revival where it comes. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Amen. Save us from empty words, and fill every word with golden content. Prepare every heart to receive the word, and prepare the speaker to lay the emphases where they belong.

Inspire, illumine, enlighten, and empower, we pray. May it be said, they could not repeat the wisdom and the spirit. These we beg of thee, to give us wisdom and spirit.

Lord, I know it's not much religion, but many religious things are at stake. It's often for the next hundred years, they'll not be run out. God has something to say to us now.

Say it, Lord, say it. May thy servants hear thee. Amen.

Now, I want particularly to take that verse they continued, said vastly, in the Apostles' Doctrine and Fellowship. Inasmuch as I can't preach everything at one time, I'm going to still like it, and talk about the Apostles' Fellowship.

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