

Forsaking God

by B.H. Clendennen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God and the consequences of forsaking Him, highlighting the need for conviction, separation, and repentance.

Duration: 48:57

Scripture: Exodus 20:3, Psalm 119:11, Proverbs 1:7, Hosea 4:6, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Jude 1:3

Topics: "Rebellion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having knowledge and understanding of God's Word. He quotes Hosea 4:6, which states that God's people are disturbed for lack of knowledge. The preacher warns against rejecting knowledge and forgetting the law of God, as it can lead to negative consequences, even affecting future generations. He shares a personal experience of being convicted by the Holy Spirit for watching inappropriate content and emphasizes the need for sensitivity to God's voice and the importance of allowing Him to probe deep into our spirits.

Transcript

I'm going to read from Hosea chapter 4 and verse 6, My Thought Forsaking God. Hosea chapter 4, verse number 6, Father, thank you for the reading of the word of God this morning. Thank you to anoint us to speak and to hear.

May this word find a lodging place in our hearts that we're here today. As we come to the final moments, perhaps, of these times, let us be the people through which you can work. Amen.

Hosea 4 and 6, My people are distraught for lack of knowledge. Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee. Thou shalt be no priest to me, seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God.

I will also forget thy children. What a frightening thought. I will also forget thy children.

You know, God, in some way, must find our life, that He may either reward it or punish it. Somehow or another, He has to find our life, who we are, what we are, and what our intention. Now, in this case, in Hosea's time, He'll get to the parents through the children.

My people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge. Now, there's a word omitted here that gives a force to the impeachment that God brought. That word should, I think, read literally, My people are destroyed for the lack of thee knowledge.

You see, the article is missing. There, in the translate, for the lack of knowledge. But they're destroyed for the lack of thee knowledge.

There's only one knowledge on this planet worth acquiring. Reject any information that attempts to take the place of inspiration. Has no place.

Information is useful only within limits. For information is a changeable quantity. It changes, it's easy, by the very fact of enlargement and self-correction.

It will change. Information, all of the while. A few years ago, they said eggs will kill you.

Now, they want you to eat them. It's just a constant changing thing of information. So, when information begins to take the place of inspiration, it's time to be rejected.

But inspiration is the Spirit of God. The genius, the Spirit is a genius that unites all things, interprets all things, and in a sense, governs and directs everything. The Spirit.

Now, the Bible is consistent with its claim. We forget that. But the Bible always, never moves a principle.

It is consistent, always in its claim. It never lowers the spiritual tone. For nobody, no one, doesn't matter who he is, what he is, it never lowers.

Under no circumstance will it modify its claims or the challenges of God. It doesn't matter. We have judges in America, they don't interpret the law, they make the law.

It's according to who's before them. But it doesn't work this way. Before God, all are equal.

And God never modifies their preachers that believe because of their importance, that God will look over certain things in their lives. But they have become fools in their own rights. If God is not first, then there'll be no settlement of the condition.

No time, no place, if God isn't first. But with God at the right place, that is, first in our life, all other considerations, all other ministries, all other actions assume their right relation and process. If you and I keep God in the right place, then everything else will fall in place and be right.

There's no question here that God is dressing His people. And there's no question to me it's not ancient Israel, but the 21st century Pentecostal church that He's talking to here now in Hosea. He's talking to us, having rejected the knowledge of God, the church of our time, and have changed that which meant to be the holy of holies, the dwelling place of God, having changed that into a purpose-driven, user-friendly, worldly religious institution.

No longer, no longer for the great part, as is it the dwelling place of God, it's become that that man has used for his own work. It has become the religion of Baal where man uses God, instead of God using man. Now because it is of the world, the world hears it.

That's most of the megachurches that you have today. They have reduced, amen. Dr. Cho himself said, I began to preach repentance and turning to God.

I got spit upon. I was maltreated. I went back and after much prayer, my message was God wants to bless you.

I can tell you God wants to bless you if you get right. But He has no blessing until we come under God to His place. Now because it's of the world, that is the institution called the church, the world hears it.

So we have the so-called megachurch, whose faith is not in God, but in the number of people that attend it. We'll do anything to increase the crowd. Whatever.

Any kind of a game, a scheme, whatever. Because our faith is no longer in the God of heaven, but in how many people we have in that church. You ask a man, how's his church doing? He said, well, I had 150 last Sunday in Sunday school.

When we numbered Israel, we invited a curse. Because it was no longer God that we looked to. The church rose or fell on how many people were there in that service instead of the presence of God.

Now the driving purpose of the purpose-driven is not to produce saints of the Most High God, but religious people who never really come to know God in a born-again, sanctifying experience with God. It's just to fill the church, not with saints, but with people. It doesn't matter.

This is evident in the message preached. Today, you must not mention the cross. I was in California in a church not far from where I was preaching.

Refused you the right to bring a Bible to church because you might offend those that didn't bring one. The terror may be offended because you brought a church. This has become the normal.

The message preached, don't mention the cross or sin. This would be a terrible offense to the religious Ishmaelites. It would be a terrible thing if you preached the cross and preached sin.

Every message preached must be carefully edited. I read this article. They have committees, and the preacher gets his message.

Then they all sit down. He's only going to preach once a week. And so they all sit down, and each line is looked at.

I believe if you modify this, it might offend somebody. Now, if you would use a little different grammar, a little different emphasis here, I believe this is the way that it works out. You'd be surprised how large that occupies in the church.

It's not a man of God hearing from God. It's a committee telling the preacher. Now, you've got people out there, if you say this, you're going to offend them.

Don't deal with adultery because some of our deacons are kind of fooling with that a little. So we keep them. They put a lot of money in the tear.

And so be careful how you preach. This is not an exaggeration, folks. This is the way it has become.

Amen. This is how it is. Now, every message must be carefully edited.

Every word must be weighed. Lest some poor person be convicted of sin and leave the house weeping. Might leave there disturbed.

I was in a church. We had 150 people in a store building. I preached the message, a part of the school of Christ, the Trojan horse.

I've dealt with what's got into the church. And when I gave the altar call, out of that 150 people, there's 125 of them in that altar weeping. I'm down there praying with them.

All of a sudden, the pastor is holding that microphone. Everybody on your feet now. On your feet.

He got them all up. I don't want you to go home like this. I don't want you to go home disturbed.

Well, I just said I was going to be there three days. One night's enough of this for me. Amen.

You're not going to be able to deal with the heart of a human. You understand where I'm coming from. We are a people that I believe that God is going to use to bring that church.

But there must be something God can point to. There must be something. This is an example.

Christ was that. And there must be a body of people that present Christ, or you'll never be able to show men and women out of the wilderness into which the church has come. And they fortified Jerusalem into a broad wall.

Cities, as you know then, were fortified, had broad walls, and so had Jerusalem in her glory. Mr. Spurgeon, a hundred or so years ago, whenever he was around, preached a message along that line. He made this statement.

He said, way back then, this is what stirred me. See, every generation faces pretty well the same thing. The church goes through that cycle.

Mr. Spurgeon said, the new Jerusalem must in like manner be surrounded and preserved by a broad wall of non-conformity to the world, and separation from its customs and its spirit. Now, I don't know just what year that man lived, but that's when the great preacher said. He said, the tendency of these days, I said, Mr. Spurgeon, you could have lived in my day.

He said, the tendency of these days is to break down the holy barrier and make the distinction between the church and the world merely nominal. It will be a sad day for the church, said Mr. Spurgeon, and the world when the proposed amalgamation is complete and the sons of God and the daughters of men have become one again. Then shall another deluge of the wrath of God come.

Oh, you could have preached through our church, Mr. Spurgeon. You surely would have been on time to be in our time to bring that message from God. Though thou Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah fend, and come not you into Gilgal, neither go you up to Beth-Avon, or swear the Lord liveth.

Hosea, Bethel hath become Beth-Avon. You know Bethel means the house of God. Beth-Avon means a house of vanity.

It has become that, the transition from the house of God to a house of vanity. So the sanctuary becomes a stable. There is nothing so sad how quickly the pure can be corrupted.

That's one of the saddest things of history. The Reformation in 50 years had lost its force. In 30 years after Pentecost, the Apostle Jude wrote these words, earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

It was already becoming tarnished. How is the goal dimmed? How does it happen? All of these things. You see what a guard, as we talked in the last lesson, examine ourselves.

We must always be careful that these things are not making an inroad into our lives. You know sometimes, the preaching, maybe it always, whenever you hear the Word of God, you're always judged by it if it's preached. You're found guilty or not guilty.

But we must always come under that of the Word of God. It is there that we discover, like I told you in the last, that man of God. He preached that night and I saw in my heart, that unforgiving spirit of that man.

And what a terrible time. On another occasion, I had a \$100 bill. I believe that may have been the first one in my life that didn't belong to somebody else.

That was really mine. And so I kept it. And that was a lot of years ago.

And a \$100 bill was a lot of money. And I kept it. And I said to God, You know it's so easy to drift along preaching.

You don't commit adultery. You don't go steal. But somehow or another, you just lose that edge.

You need somebody. Amen. To bring you under conviction.

And I said to God, I'd give this \$100 to a man just to preach me under conviction. Well, he came. He preached.

Oh, he preached. When we got through out of the altar and I'd wept, he used up a box of Kleenex. Amen.

And I shook hands. I left that \$100 bill in his hand. He said, What's that for? I said, Don't ask any questions.

Oh, just enjoy. All of us need, is what I'm saying, somewhere along the line for God to deal with our hearts. To open us up.

Because we become careless. We don't realize how we allow things to come into our hearts. When I went to Beaumont, started that church, we'd been there about two months and a family come in.

And they were fine people. They wanted us to have dinner with them on a Saturday night. Well, we were pretty skimpy along back in those days.

We was watching pretty close. There were no sponsors. We were very happy to go eat dinner with them at night.

Well, when we got through with dinner, the wives were in there cleaning up the kitchen. Myself and him and my two children sat in his living room. And he had a television.

We never had one until they were grown. We should have never had one. But I sat there and he said, Pastor, no matter who's here, on Saturday night, I watch gun smoke.

And for the next 30 minutes, that deal was on. There was no sex. Not a lot of violence.

Six shooters shoot 40 times. But that is just one of them things. Amen.

But I sat there. But on my way home that night, driving along, I was weeping so hard, I couldn't hardly see the road. And my wife said, What's wrong with you? I said, God said to me, Would you dare sit and watch that trash on a Saturday night and deal with my people on a Sunday morning? It's so easy to get careless.

You say, oh, that's nothing. It is something. Amen.

You're not going to come out in front of that trash and touch a man's heart on a Sunday morning. The sensitivity. But if you're not careful, listen, when He said, the Holy Ghost said, when you hear His voice, harden not your heart.

You harden that heart but listen to that trash. You get too many voices and you can't hear the voice of God. So we need God to probe deep into our spirits.

Amen. The sanctuary becoming a stable. The altar be sold for bread to minister the hunger of wickedness.

The glory is turned into shame. And over the door of the temple, there's Ichabod. The glory has departed.

Just a place to come. A place to play. A place to go through the ritual.

A place to appease our consciousness. Bethel has become Beth-Avon. A house of vanity.

Thus we lose our character and the names in which we were baptized become associated with forms of shame, debasement, and a lot of other things. The name of Jesus still used in that house of vanity, associating that wonderful name with that which has nothing on this earth to do with Him. Here God speaks to the priest.

How is the fine gold dim? Verse 7 tells it all. They eat up the sins of My people and they set their heart on iniquity. Think of that.

They eat up the sins of My people and set their heart on iniquity. You see, He's talking here to the priest. They live upon that.

They pander to the people rather than expose their sins. They do not deal with the heart because there's no love for people. You know, my dad, he used to have to work me over once in a while.

And he said, it's going to hurt me worse than it does you. I said, not the same place. It must be a little different.

But he knew, you know, he knew what he wanted. It's because he did. He loved me.

And he wanted me to grow up and be a decent human being. That was the purpose of life with him. And God said, whom He loves, He will chastise.

Whether you want to be chastised or not, if God loves you. And if you're without that, He said, you're illegitimate. You're not My son at all unless I deal with that heart.

Amen. They pandered to the sins of the people. The priest sees upon the produce, spins at their own lust.

I've watched it, everything, everything. Oh my, this prosperity message, nothing ever so corrupted. The church, the money has become.

A friend of mine was in the service. They're going to take an offering. And he said, he was sitting on the front seat.

And his name was Rich. That was his last name. And he said, get out the biggest bill you got.

And the people, they did, because he didn't tell them how rich they were going to get. And he said, now you wave that up and you just cry, money coming, money coming, money coming. That's in the house of God.

Why, he stood up and he said, Rich, leave us. And he checked out. He checked out.

I'm not trying to be funny, but you have to laugh or weep, folks, when you see the things that take place in the house of God. Amen. God speaks of the priests here.

Supposedly anointed men living on the produce of sin. I mean encouraging the people in things. So the priests are made fat by the iniquity of the people.

And the Lord was moved in heaven in the direction of judgment. He shook heaven and condemned those people who He had called by the endearing name, My people. He brought condemnation upon them because of what He saw in that house.

You know, it's something to have a righteous God who ever invented Him. Amen. How wonderful.

You know, the prophets were accused of inventing that kind of a God. They were those that accused Him of it. But the inventors of a God, it was a noble dream they dreamed, the God that they invented, if that be so.

Amen. But His moral character disposes of any such theory. Amen.

It does not lie within the scope of iniquity to dream holiness, folks. It's not there. Wherever that flesh takes a hold of that holy temple of God, it will become death haven every time.

It will become that house of vanity where people come to exalt themselves. They believe somehow or another. It's not a broken-in-the-contrast spirit anymore.

It's a proud spirit that's come to exalt itself. It is something to have a righteous God. The Lord inquires about our gains, inquires about our produce, our enjoyments, and He'll not tolerate on His altar the results of sin.

We have in the prisons in Peru one of the greatest revivals, I believe, in that Luriganzo prison. They called it the worst prison in the world. In there, I was in there with this man, a drug lord.

He was one of the Colombian drug lords. He'd killed many, many men. And when the judge sentenced him to there, he said, my heart failed me.

He was really bored again when I'm talking to him, Bill with the Holy Ghost. He said, my heart failed me when he told me. I knew when I come in there that I'm going to be raped.

Everything I have is going to be taken. I just knew. But when I walked through the door, I met a young man with a necktie on.

And he said, you're assigned to my section. I'll be your pastor. And he led me to God Almighty.

He said, come to find God. And he told me, he said, you know, I've got millions of dollars out there, amen, that's tucked away. And he said, I wish I could give it to you.

I said, no, no. I would not want that. But you can't bribe the altar of God, folks.

Amen. We try that. We say, in justifies the mean.

That's the way AT&T operates. But not the church of the living God. I said, that's not the way.

That's not the way the church. He said, I wish I could give it to you. I said, no, sir.

I don't want that money. And you don't want it. He was so thankful that they put him in prison.

He had found God. He said, they need to keep me here. If I get out, they will kill me.

He said, because they know what's happened to me. They never lose touch of you here. But God had wonderfully saved him.

But yet, he was telling me that he had that. You know, man has gained wealth like him by evil means. He may bring it to the church.

The church would ease its conscience with those words that the end justifies. The means. But the Lord will not receive such a sacrifice.

I promise you. He loves righteousness, truth, honesty, reality. He'll not turn his head when men try to bribe that altar.

He will not turn his head. The church, what I'm telling you, has forsaken God in a religious line. They really believe.

They've followed that flesh out there. And they're so excited about their Ishmael, they believe that God has blessed it. They've come across America.

It may have got over here. People are having oil in their hands. Or just some of them had honey in their hair.

You know, just everything shows up. One gimmick after another. I preached 40 years ago.

I said, you can believe that deception will become more artful as the end approaches. I had a woman one night, she'd come running up there. She said to her hand, I said, oh, sit down, ma'am.

Don't run up here with that. I said, the Word of God has nothing to say about this. She hollered at me.

I don't care what the Word of God says. It happened to me. Oh, I said, a lot of things are going to happen to you if you don't care what this Word says.

You know, people praying for an angel to come. He'll come. Don't ever forget it.

They will one come if that's what you're looking for. But we just come to excuse and to allow. Amen.

Listen, and there shall be like people, like priests. There shall be. They will become.

They will follow that presumption into that desert. You know, sheep are colorblind. They don't know whether it's green or stubble.

They can't have running water because that wool absorbs. They're drowned. They're led into that stubble.

They believe that it's green. The people do what they want to do, have what they like, and the priests say, you could not help it. You just couldn't help it.

The priest will reproduce what the people are doing, and the people's encouragement from the priest becomes more wicked all the time. Just move. The pulpit governs it all, all of the time.

However it stands, it's difficult to believe that the holiest institution can be dragged to such a degree of corruption. Corruption. California, one of the largest churches in California is a black minister.

The largest church. He put his wife away. Found her nothing.

And he put his wife away. And they had a big wedding in the church. I mean, there's no fornication.

Not just put her away. He said the Lord told him that they never were spiritually married then too. That five or six kids got spiritual sound to me like.

Amen. Here he put her away, got him another. And the church just bought the thing right on in.

Hard to believe that the thing called its church could ever become that corrupt. You understand. I'm talking just individually.

You tolerate willfully in your life that which God has dealt with you about. And I can tell you there will come a time you won't believe anything. There will come a time when that will become the driving force of that life.

There are priests, and when you talk about priests, you're talking about preachers, and you're talking about prophets, you're talking about them all. There are priests who have no consciousness of sin at all. While there are others who condemn sin generally, but never particularly.

They can always deal with it at a distance, but never when it's up near. When it's right there in the house, keeping God at bay. He'll only outgrow this though when he knows Christ better.

He'll never tell he knows Christ better. Amen. When he is enabled to complete his faith, and he comes to know it's not necessary that he lives, but it is necessary that he preach the truth.

Only then. I've watched in this 52 years of preaching the great Pentecostal church reduce itself to man-controlled operation. I've watched organizations destroyed because they've become a hierarchy of certain people and become a political thing.

I've watched preachers politic just like they are here now trying to gain an office. I've watched those. You know, Hitler was a very wicked man, but there's one thing he said I agreed with.

The only thing worse than not having enough help is having too much. Amen. When you create more offices, you're creating and inviting the inferior stuff.

When people begin to seek offices politically, then it's no longer a movement now. It's become an institution. It's no longer just a religious debating society, and they don't know what they're debating about most of the time because God is not present.

But I said all that to tell you, church, we can't redeem ourselves. We do not have to be a part of that. There is going to be a remnant of people that stand up and represent God in this final day.

There are going to be. When Mr. Taylor came back from China, he was in London for a short time, and they said he was speaking to a very large congregation of people, and just for a few moments he went into a trance. He just shut down and stood there transfixed.

And when he came back out of it, he said to them, I just saw a vision of a move start in Russia and swept down across Europe and across Europe, and Christ came back. I believe we are there, folks. I do believe.

God is preparing a vessel for that. God is awakening. You know that you live here.

I live in America. I see things that are happening. And you see it.

There's a stir. The cloud is not much bigger than a man's hand now. And you don't hear a roar in the mulberry tree, but the people listening for it are hearing it today.

People are looking for that cloud. The only man who saw it is the man looking for it. And I've been looking and I have seen that cloud.

There is on the horizon a move of God. And I appeal to you in this time, you be a part of that. Give your heart.

You can't be half-hearted in this. You have to give yourself to God and to redeem ourselves. Certain things have to take place.

We've got to come back and understand the value of the Gospel, the value of the blood of Jesus. Years ago when Pentecost was young in the state of Texas, a man of God felt called out way out in the west part of that state to build a church. And he did.

God began to move. And a rancher and his wife and young son, an 18-year-old lad, were the first ones to come in. They were fairly wealthy people, very prominent in the community, had thousands of acres of that land out there.

They came in, were saved, were filled with the Holy Ghost. But as the time went on, others come in. There's a young lady, beautiful young lady, a prostitute, came into the church wonderfully saved and filled with the Holy Ghost.

God saved her. She was broken coming in. Well, the inevitable happened.

That fine rancher's lad fell in love with that ex-prostitute. That brought the church into a state of division. There were folks who said, oh, he deserves better than that.

And they become this great battle inside the church. Finally a church trial was called. It got that serious that a church trial.

Now, they're going to make a decision on this. Well, the lad and his Mary, that was her name, weren't allowed. But right in the middle of it, he walked in.

He just pushed the doors open. It was small. The church wasn't much bigger than this.

Very young at those times. And walked right down to the front of the platform. They told him not to come.

But he came, shut everything down, and said to those people, I do want to tell you that my Mary is not on trial in this house this morning. It's the blood of Christ. If it didn't cleanse her, it cleansed nobody.

But if it cleansed her at all, it cleansed her totally. No matter what you say, I will marry her. Amen.

This is where we are. Come back to the value of what this is all about. The blood does cleanse.

It does continue to cleanse. If we walk in the light of it, we don't have to corrupt folks. You can live for God in the midst of this corrupt, evil generation.

We can be a light that shines beyond our ability if we'll just come back to God and believe in the principle. Be filled with the Holy Ghost. Every morning, pray your way back to the presence of God.

He said they're renewed every morning. That's what God, those mercies are renewed every morning. Don't talk to anybody until you talk to God.

Let Him be the driving force of your life. Dr. Joy, one of the great praying men of all time, he got up every morning at 4.30 to pray. He prayed in his home on this particular morning.

His testimony of his wife, he'd got up, he always went down the other part of the house to pray. His wife never got up at that time. But she heard him when he hit the floor.

And he was weeping and crying and groaning. And she ran, Daddy, what's wrong with you? What do you mean, what's wrong with me? Did you hear that paper hit the house? She said, what's it got to do with you? He'll worship his God earlier than I'll worship mine. He'll get up at 3 o'clock to make a dollar.

We're too lazy to get up to talk to our God. Then we wonder, He's secondary in our lives. An hour or a little more sleep, a little more slumber, and you'll find yourself outside.

They that seek Me early, I will be found in them. I know what that means. I don't mean when you're a teenager.

That means early in the morning. All of Belfast is drunk last night. I can tell you, 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, they woke him up outside the door.

But they're snoring this morning. I can tell you, get up about 5, you won't have much interference with the devil. He's been drunk all night.

You can pray, it's better to get ahold of God early. They that seek Me early shall be found to Me. I want to suggest to you here this morning in what little bit of time there is left here, we have to be back at 7, so I've got to get you up by 5. Amen.

We've got to get on with this. First thing, there's certain things we can do. Number one, you can live for God.

That's the key to everything. You can live for God. If you're not going to live for God, don't talk about Him.

If you're a church member, if that's all you are, don't talk about Him. Don't insult Him. Amen.

Don't insult God. If your life doesn't measure, if there's not a real desire to be the person of God, then don't. If you're not going to live for Him, what I'm saying, don't talk about Him.

I've had people try to talk to me about God, but I couldn't hear a word they said because of what they were. Amen. What they were was louder.

They never walked with God. They had no regard for God. They had people in the church.

They were meaner than junkyard dogs. If you crossed them, they'd tear the whole house up. Yet they wanted to be very spiritual at times.

Amen. That's a disgrace to God. The first thing, let's set our hearts to be full of God, to walk in the Spirit of God, to be holy people.

Amen. Everywhere. All of the time.

It is within the power of God's Spirit to make us holy early in the morning even. Amen. Anytime.

Anywhere. We can be Christians. We can be Christians.

So you can live for God. That's the first thing that the church has to do. We that love God is to let our light shine everywhere we are.

In the marketplace, wherever we are. We don't have to react. I read a testimony of two men.

They grew up together all of their lives. They were not brothers, but they went all the way through school. When they graduated the university, John separated them, but they were closer than brothers for the most part.

And so every year, they spent their vacation together. One would go visit the other. The next year, they'd turn that around.

Well, during the year, one of them was wonderfully born again. He found God. And he went to be with his friend for his birthday and said they were there.

And he witnessed to his friend about Christ. But that evening after dinner, the women were cleaning up. They went out to the newsstand to get a paper.

And all he had was a five dollar bill for a 25 cent paper. And he gave the man. The man cursed him and said, Is that all you got? Stupid.

Made all kinds of remarks about him. But he never said a word. Never said a word.

If you don't have the change, he said, I'll just do it without the paper. But when they left, his friend that wasn't saved said, I've known you all my life. You never would let him talk to you like that.

Why don't you pull him across the counter? He said, If I react, I'm no different than he is. If I allow him. If that devil can provoke me to strike back, I am no different than he is.

We can live for God. Then we can talk. You never know when you really talk.

You never know what will come out. If you really speak for Jesus, they may not even pay you any mind, but you don't know if in your heart, if you're really walking with God, and you speak to people about themselves, you never know what the outcome of that will be. Just that testimony.

You know, all of those people I told you about in that war, they were nothing. They were religious. I'm sure some of them Pentecostals.

They were Baptists. They were Methodists. But they drank like I drank.

They chased women. They did it all. They were no different.

They went to church. That's the only difference between me and them. They went to church.

I had nothing. But when we come back to that island, we'd come off of Peleliu, we were decimated out of my battalion. Only 80 of us were able to walk back aboard that ship.

So they took us back to the islands where we were gathered, and they began to give replacement. They gave me a young man. He was 18 years old.

One of the finer looking young men. About 6'1". You couldn't have shaped him better with a chisel.

He was absolutely everything. Just to look at him, fine, fine looking young man. He had a Bible in his pocket.

New Testament in his pocket. They gave him to me. He said, he'll be in your gun.

I took him in and introduced him to the six men in the tent. He's going to be there. I said, he's going to be one of our ammunition carriers.

Give him his name. They come around the government and give us a ration of beer. You know, always.

They brought around a ration of beer. And so they brought it in there. He said he didn't want his.

I said, well, I'll take it and keep it for him. I'll keep it for him. I'll just keep it.

He'll want it after a while. But at any rate, I left him in there. It wasn't long until one of those fellows in the tent came where I was.

And they said, Sergeant, we've got to do something about that boy. You give us over. What's wrong with him? Come out here.

Well, I come out there and he's two tenths down by the hearing. He's calling on the name of the Lord. I mean, it's echoing in there.

They said, what are we going to do with him? He said, he read that Bible a little when you left. Now he's down under that cot. You can hear him all over the camp.

I said, well, we don't have any law against praying then. Today we can put an end to it. But we didn't have it then.

Well, the next day I lost \$200 in the dice game. When you're making \$70 a month, your whole life's on the line. \$200, that's three months' salary.

So I'm very, very upset. And I'm walking back mad, angry. And he's sitting under a coconut tree reading that Bible.

I said something real smart to him about being a religious fanatic. You get over that, I told him. But he stood up, all six foot one each of him.

Put that little ribbon in that Bible he'd been reading. He's sitting there reading it. Put it in his pocket.

Buttoned that pocket. Then put that finger on my nose. He said, Sergeant, not you, not this Marine Corps, will separate me from the love of God that's in Christ.

Never forgot him. He lived. He talked that day.

I never, till I was born again, two things happened to me. Him, one night I was home. My wife and I lived in a little trailer, 18 foot.

Eight foot wide, 18 foot long. Three foot of that was a hitch. That's where we lived.

A man had just come to be born. Cold, cold night. Knock on that door.

Open door. There stood two fine, fine young men. About like this young man here standing there.

Said, Sir, we're looking for somebody who don't know Jesus. I said, ain't nobody here like that. I told him, oh Lord.

Scared me to death. They're not out there trying to win a bicycle to get you to Sunday school. They're out there in that rain looking for somebody who didn't know the Christ.

I got saved. I've never forgot those two incidents in my life. One of them said you can live, and if you live you can talk.

You can talk. Bishop Ashbery, head of the Methodist Church in America. One of the chapters of his book was the greatest sermon I ever preached.

The man didn't listen to me. Said he was crossing a bridge, looked down. There's a black man down there fishing on a log.

He's a slave, fishing, sitting on a log. God said, you go speak to him. He said, my church won't let me.

See, they didn't believe they could be saved back there in those awful times. He said, church, I don't care what your church want. I'm telling you, you go talk to him about his soul.

So he went down and staked his horse. Said he sat down on the log behind him. He said to him, I'm Bishop Ashbery, head of the Methodist Church.

I want to talk to you about Jesus. He said, he never even looked at me. He said, you don't want to talk to me about Jesus.

You won't even let me come to your church. He kept fishing. He kept talking to him.

The man never even looked at him, asked him what his name was. He said, my name is Moe. He told him what he is.

But he never listened. He preached to him. Finally said, I give up.

He said, I had my Bible. I said, Moe won't give you this Bible. I've got to go.

So he left the Bible on the log and just left him. But come Saturday night, cold, rainy night, knock on his door. When he opened the door, there stood a black man.

And he said to him, do you know who I am, sir? And he said, no, I'm Moe, he said. I'm the man you talked to down there. I come to the plantation over there.

There's 500 of us. We want you not tomorrow. It will be Sunday.

But Sunday we come, preach to us. God said, you go. He said, I'll be there.

Went there, they had a little makeshift platform. 500 beautiful black people sitting there. And he said, I've never preached in my life like that day.

Never felt such anointing of God Almighty. And he said, when I got through preaching, I said, I want every one of you dear friends that want to know God stand up. Nobody moved.

Nothing. I said, I couldn't understand. I never felt such a power.

So he said it again. Every one of you want to know this Christ I preached to you. Stand up.

I want to believe with you. Nobody moved. And he said, I stood there just totally confounded.

And the young man that had introduced me behind me touched me on the shoulder. He said, Bishop, you don't understand. He said, Moe couldn't read that book.

But we found a man who could read it. All of us done born again. The greatest sermon ever preached was to a man that didn't listen.

You never know what will happen when you talk. It may not come up there. But if you are right, I said, if you are right, if you are walking with God, if you truly walk with God, then you never know when you speak to them, whoever they are, wherever they are.

Open it up to them. Talk to them about this great God. They may totally reject you.

In fact, the woman, she didn't want any part of it. But when the trouble hit, she'd come a-looking for us. She'd come a-looking.

You never know. But finally, you can pray. If you don't do this, you won't ever be anything.

He that's not a praying man or woman is not a Christian man or woman. Back in those early days of Pentecost, one out of every ten Assembly of God churches in America is in the state of Texas, plus thousands of others. We're covered up with them.

Most of them have lost their heritage. But they're there. But way out in the west again, a man, an evangelist went out.

The church had begun. They wanted him to come. The superintendent at that time, who was the superintendent at that time, now he's a very old man, told me this himself.

He had to hitchhike to those churches. That's how it was. Superintendent.

He was superintendent of all of Texas. When you come across the Louisiana line, it'll tell you there'll be a sign that says 900 miles to El Paso. Him is further to El Paso than he is back to New York.

And so he had the whole thing as his parish. And he said out there, he had this church and evangelists come. The pastor told him, he said, I'm going to let you stay with the deacon.

His wife died two months ago. He's got two teenage daughters that are not saved. But he said, he needs comfort.

So you'll just stay in the home with him. So after church Sunday night, they went to the home. And those houses, very simple, had a living room, dining room, and bedroom.

One room. Then another room over there they had was a girls bedroom. Then a kitchen and a path that went out the back of it.

That made up the whole thing. So there were two beds in the room. And the deacon took him in and said, you and I, this will be your bed.

This is mine. Well, he went to bed. He was very tired, he said.

Woke up at 12 o'clock, nobody in that bed. And he wondered where the deacon is. Well, he woke up at daylight still, and the bed never had been.

So he was kind of concerned, but he never said nothing. Next night, the same thing. So he confronted that preacher, I mean that deacon.

He said, look, I've come out here in great trouble, tribulation, getting out here, everything else, to have revival. Here I'm staying in your house. You out running around somewhere at night.

You haven't been in bed a night, amen, since I've been here two nights. Now please tell me what's going on. He said, two months ago, my wife died on that bed where you sleep.

The last words I'm holding are her hands. The last words my wife said to me, John, don't you come to heaven without those daughters. Don't you come without those daughters.

And when the pastor said that we was going to begin revival, I said to him, said to God, I will not rest until those daughters are saved. He said, I've been out in the back in the woodshed every night. That night there was two of them in the woodshed, and the next night, two beautiful daughters came to God.

You can pray. We can live. We can talk.

We can pray. We can redeem ourselves. We don't have to go the way of all flesh.

We can be God's church as powerful as any generation ever seen if we just come back to the reality that we belong to Him. Let us stand. Hallelujah.

Let's just praise Him for this wonderful day. I love You.

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