

The Bride Hath Made Herself Ready

by B.H. Clendennen

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of being spiritually prepared and submissive to the Holy Spirit to truly see and inherit the kingdom of God.

Duration: 59:23

Scripture: Matthew 5:5, Matthew 6:33, John 3:3

Topics: "Bride Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares his experience of preaching to a small congregation of 40 people. He describes how he felt a deep connection to God during his sermon and was amazed at the corruption that was revealed among the congregation. Despite his powerful preaching, when he invited the congregation to take communion, nobody moved or responded. The preacher reflects on the importance of seeking the kingdom of God and allowing the Holy Spirit to have control in our lives.

Transcript

A bride has made herself ready. I've said to you that history doesn't have any meaning apart from the Church of Jesus Christ. Every upheaval, whatever it is, has all had itself to do with that church.

And all things, not some things, work together for good to them that are the call according to the purpose of God. And this bride that we're going to talk about tonight, that has made herself ready, that line, John wrote it in the book of Revelation. He said, the wife or the bride have made herself ready.

Now, here in the 6th chapter of the book of Matthew, verse 33, I want to read this one scripture, then turn to John. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Now, over in the gospel of John, chapter 3 and verse 3, And Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

If you turn and read, if you want to, I'll just quote it to you. In Matthew chapter 5 and verse 5, Jesus said in the Beatitudes, That the meek shall inherit the earth. The 5th verse of the 5th chapter of the book of Matthew, the meek shall inherit the earth.

Now, in the two scriptures that I read to you tonight, one of them talks about seeing the kingdom of God, and the other talks about seeking the kingdom of God. Now, it is certainly evident that no man could ever seek a thing successfully if he didn't know what he was after. But here Jesus said that to the person that

could successfully seek the kingdom, the person or the church that could successfully seek the kingdom of God, would certainly see the fullness of God come to them.

All these things will be added to you if you successfully seek the kingdom of God. But I must know what I'm after if I successfully seek it. Because the Bible said a double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways.

Don't let that person think they'll receive anything from God. So the first question I'd like to ask tonight is, What does a man or woman really see when they see the kingdom of God? What do you see when you see the kingdom of God? Jesus said, except a man be born again, he cannot see that kingdom. There is no way that carnal men can see that kingdom.

But when you're born again, He said, He implied that you could see it. Well, what would I see if I saw the kingdom of God, or what do I see? The Bible said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, for the kingdom of God is within you. Then again, the Bible says, The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but joy, peace, and righteousness in the Holy Ghost.

Jesus said, There's some of you standing around here, to one crowd of folks, and He said, There's some of you standing here that'll not taste death until you see the kingdom come in power. Now, we know that He's talking about when that kingdom come on the day of Pentecost. Thank God the kingdom come in power.

What He's really saying is that whenever you see a person or persons under the absolute control of the Holy Ghost, then you see the kingdom of God. In other words, to see the kingdom of God is to see the Holy Ghost in absolute control. Amen.

Oh, how wonderful. I said to you the other night, I read Webster said that a word kingdom means a territory ruled by a king. That's a definition of the word kingdom according to Webster's dictionary.

Well, I read that, and I said how true that is spiritually. God isn't trying to rule Mississippi, Texas, or Georgia. He's not trying to conquer America.

He wants to rule in your heart. That's the territory that this kingdom encompasses. Amen.

Right now, after a while, the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of His Christ. But right now, it is God's purpose to rule in your heart. Amen.

To rule in your heart. Accept a man, be born again. That testifies to the reality of this new creation.

Here the Bible says you've got to be born again to see that. You know everywhere in this Bible there's implication that that new creation has faculties and can see things and hear things that the carnal world cannot see. Did you know they've got a whistle you can blow that a dog can hear that a human being can't hear? Amen.

And there's certain sounds that come from heaven that a man that's born of God can hear that this carnal world don't know anything about. Amen. There's certain things you can see that this carnal world don't know.

There's not a psychiatrist in Biloxi that wouldn't like to have me on his couch tonight. I have saw things, heard things that he don't even know exist. Oh, yes, sir.

Paul was struck down on the road to Damascus and he saw the Lord Jesus. Amen. The other folks didn't see him.

They heard some, didn't know what was going on. They thought it thundered. Amen.

John on the Isle of Patmos said, I was in the Spirit. On the Lord's day and I saw the Lord Jesus. Glorified Christ.

There's thousands of people on Patmos and none of them saw what he saw. Ezekiel down by the river Shibar, he saw God. He saw wheels in the middle of wheels.

That other crowd didn't see it because he had eyes they didn't have. He heard sounds they couldn't hear. Oh, the reality of this world.

That kingdom of God. What a tragedy that the church spends her time in this earthly, earthly world. Always.

About 95% of what we do, we could do if God died. It don't take any God to run a rummage sale or a Sunday school contest. Amen.

Or to carry on little religious deals. Amen. We spend our time in the mundane all the while God wants us to walk on the mountains of eternity in fellowship with God.

Hallelujah. Oh my. I wasn't made for this earth.

Let me tell you something. I know the rapture is going to be instantaneous. I know in a moment in the twinkle of an eye.

But I believe that that's only the culmination of something that started me when I was born again. Thank God he reached down that gutter and picked me up. And put within me a spirit that's transcendent.

It's said that the spirit wants to return to God. That's the reason sometimes we get to jumping. And the Holy Ghost wants to get out of here.

Thank God the rapture is just going to be the climax. Hallelujah. Oh, like that Mexican jumping bean.

Amen. Just something in me wants to get out. Yes sir.

Oh, but we spend our time, the church does, doing the things that anybody can do. While God wants us to walk in that world where angels live and where the miracles of God are everyday occurrences. He said to me, every miracle I've ever let you see, all I was doing was lifting you up high enough that you can look into a world that you can live in if you're willing to pay the price.

Amen. You know, Jesus always talked about a world outside of this one. He talked about a kingdom of darkness, where demons were, where there were spirit beings.

Medical sciences outrun God and tried to claim there was no such thing as demons. A lot of religious people say there isn't. But Jesus said there's a world controlled by darkness.

Amen. That there's a world of darkness and demons that torment the human race. But He also talked about a kingdom of light.

Thank God where God and angels live. And He told us constantly that that's where we were. We're on this earth, but yet our affections are in heaven.

We've been made to sit in heavenly places with Christ. You know something? God on some occasions has made me, the reality of this kingdom to me in such a way that impress upon my mind. I was preaching a camp meeting in Polk County seven years.

I preached the Polk County Camp Meeting. I was about 70 miles from Beaumont, Texas. We started with about 200 people.

And at the end of the time, we was having 1,500, 1,600 people a night up there in those woods. And I saw 100 people in a single night get the baptism. At 11 or 12 o'clock at night, 100 yards out in the woods, it fell out under the power.

Laying out there. Nobody taught them how to fall out. Wasn't nobody out there to catch them.

Just the power of God got so strong, fell out among the leaves and weeds. Throw them cam out of there. Load them up in the back of a pickup.

Haul them home. Out under the power of God. We used to get up there in the evening.

And the ladies would get under the tabernacle. And the men get out in the woods. And you could hear us for a quarter of a mile as we called on God.

You know, one night I got to preaching. I've never reached that place before that or since then. Brother Paul, I was preaching all night.

And somehow or another, I tuned in to that next world in a manner that I never had before. And for 40 minutes, I was totally lost, brother. I pulled a mic cord out of it and preached to 1,600 people without anything but a dead microphone.

But everybody in the woods heard me, mister. When I came to, I saw women climbing over them old broke-down pews. I mean, all sense of dignity was lost.

They were running over each other. They fell out in the sawdust. In between, all over.

Over a hundred people filled with the Holy Ghost. When I saw what was happening, it was frightening. I ran back to the platform.

And when I got back, the first man that got down, I discovered later, he was a nephew of one of the pastors. And when he ran up there, amen, I didn't know anything else to do. Just put my hands on his head.

And when I did, he began to speak in other tongues. Oh, the language, it flowed and rolled like a river out of him. And old, old Pastor Thomas went up by me.

I said, Brother Thomas, he's speaking in tongues. He said, He can't speak. I said, Well, he is speaking.

He said, Brother Clinton, that's my nephew. He was born deaf and dumb. Thirty-five years ago, he couldn't even say, Mama.

But for 20 minutes, he stood there and spoke in the most beautiful language I ever heard. Twenty minutes. When the Holy Ghost lifted, he couldn't hear one sound.

And he couldn't say one word. He wasn't healed. But the power of that new creation, it rose up, took a hold of that tongue and talked.

And when the meeting was over, Brother Thomas went to him. And he wrote on a pad, listen to this. He wrote down on a pad of paper.

And he said, Brother Thomas, somewhere in the preaching, my ears popped open. And I began to hear him. My God, there's a world outside of this world, folks.

You listen to me. Church, there's a world of God. That kingdom, mister, is more real than this one because it's eternal.

I said, It's eternal. Hallelujah. Oh, yes.

He never heard a sound. He wasn't healed. He couldn't even say, Mama.

But for 20 minutes, he spoke the most verbal language of tongues I've ever heard. Very articulate, Brother, as he talked. But then he wrote.

And he said, Somewhere I began to hear. That new creation reached out through that outer ear and heard sounds from another world. Oh, my God, I'm telling you, sirs, to see the kingdom of God is to see God in control.

It's to see a movement on earth of heaven. Hallelujah. To seek it then, to seek the kingdom, is to seek to be subdued and controlled by the Holy Ghost.

Oh, that's a far cry from what we've heard, isn't it? Yes, sir. That's a long ways from what we've been hearing. But to seek the kingdom of God is to seek the power of the Holy Ghost to make Jesus absolute Lord of my life.

You know, I have been, as I told you, a student of the men that have kept history together. I asked God, How come Genghis Khan could rise from a desert wave to the most feared man of the 12th century? And He said, Only one reason is the devil was his Lord. For Genghis Khan to live was for the devil to live.

That's what God wants, Christ to be our Lord, so that for me to live is for Christ to live. That's the whole secret of it. Yes, sir, that's what God is after, to seek you and I to be controlled.

I looked at the Lordship of Christ, and I, for a classic example, so that I'd know what He's trying to work with me. And He took me through the Gospels. And I saw Jesus walking around in a body that Mary gave Him.

War one, just like this. Amen. He wore a body like we're wearing, and in that body He performed miracles.

He raised the dead, cast out devils, preached some of the most powerful truth, or the most powerful truth that the world has ever known anything about. Amen. But as I read through, the Holy Ghost said to me, You'll never see that body arguing with Him.

It doesn't say, If you don't give me a new car, I'm not going to go. It doesn't say, I'm too tired to go to Samaria, or I don't want to preach the gospel, or I don't want to do this. No, no.

That body existed for one purpose. That's to serve the life on the inside. Listen to me, neighbor.

He laid that body down at Calvary. But on the day of Pentecost, He picked up another body, the church, and it's to exist for one thing. That's to serve the life of God within that body.

It has no reason to exist except to serve that life. Amen. And to seek His kingdom is to seek to be subdued by the Holy Ghost.

That scripture in Matthew 5, 5, The meek shall inherit the earth. That word meek always bothered me. I read Moses as the meekest man on earth.

Yet he sent 250 families to perdition with their clothes on. On one occasion, he said, everybody on God's side, come over here. And when he got them over, he drew a line and said, get over here.

And when they come over, he said, now pull your sword and kill the rest of them. That don't fit into my thinking about meekness. I discovered, I knew that word has had to suffer a terrible connotation of our time.

You know, meekness today is a little Dagwood kind of a somebody. Somebody who don't have any backbone. Somebody that's afraid of life or something.

But here's a man, oh, that's never, Moses is mentioned in the Bible second only to God. Twelve hundred times. Twelve hundred times Moses is in this book.

Such a human. The meekest man on earth. I had trouble with it.

But one day I read in an old book of Greek mythology. And they're talking about how those Greeks trained those giant Arabian horses. And they said they have those horses to the point that if that master spoke one word, he'd be riding at a full gallop.

That master would speak one word. That giant horse would dig them feet into the earth and would never move. You build a fire under him.

You kill him, but he won't move until that master speaks to him. And they said that horse was meek. Meek.

Oh, I said, I know what you're talking about. Amen. Thank God, said Moses, was the tamest man on earth.

Thank God God had tamed him. That's what he's talking about. He said the tamed, the tamed, the tamed shall inherit the earth.

You hear me? Those that have been tamed by the Holy Ghost. Those that hear their master. And you may kill them, but they'll not move any direction other than that God says.

The tamed shall inherit the earth. I looked up that word inherit. It don't mean what we make it means.

You know, inherit to us. That means that our children inherit whatever we have when we die. But I want to tell you something.

If you didn't know it, God didn't go and die. No, no. No, that has with it this thought that it is the tamed that are going to tame the earth.

Amen. It is the tamed. It is the ruled that are going to rule.

All he's saying to you is, if you're not ruled by the Holy Ghost here, you're certainly not going to sit and rule this universe. You're either going to come under the authority of God now, or you will never be a part of that ruling church in eternity, mister. I want to say to you the reason that the church doesn't have any more power over darkness is because Christ does not have the power over his church.

He went about, he said, I don't do anything but what my father does. He was under absolute subjection to his father. He said, I don't say anything but what I hear my father say.

I don't pray anything but what he says for me to pray. I don't go anywhere but where he tells me to go. Amen.

He only moved with the father. And so when he said, devil come out, he come out. There's no arguing with him.

I want to tell you, church, if we'll come to the place that when he says to you, move, you move, you come, you come, you go, you go, then when you say to a devil, go, the devil will go. Our problem is we're not ruled by God. So we can't rule the darkness.

The whole situation. He said, the tamed shall rule with me. I'm here to talk to you tonight that unless God gains control of your life now, you're not going to be a part of that ruling church.

You'll be either subdued by God now or you'll be dropped out of that procession. There will not be one single rebel in that crowd. Everybody that's a part of that bride, it will have made him Lord here and now.

Heaven don't know anything about women's lip, mister. Everything that's a part of that ruling church will have made that bride groom Lord before you ever get to that wedding. Oh, I was telling the pastor one Sunday morning there at home, I was kind of like a rabbit hunting.

I was preaching with a shotgun, just shooting everything jumped up. I saw all kinds of things coming into that church. I saw three or four of the young people down the line waiting to get into a movie house.

Amen. They had slipped off and went to another Assembly of God church and the pastor got up and read the list of movies that he thought his crowd ought to go see. And so they thought that was all all right.

I said, well, that isn't the way it is. And I saw certain trends coming in. And I began that morning to preach and I just shot it, everything got up.

And when I got through a little committee, met me down at the altar. Amen. There was mostly women, couple of men looking around the skirt.

Amen. Wanting to know what's going to be said. And she, the spokesman said to me, we'd like to talk to you pastor.

I said, that'll be all right. Speak up. They said, well, we want to say first of all that we appreciate your personal convictions.

I said, before you go any further, that wasn't what I was preaching this morning. Amen. I was preaching the conviction of this church.

All Israel had to do to go to hell is everybody do what's right in their own eyes. Everybody in this church, I'm talking about Beaumont, is not going to set how we're going to live. I'm going to set that from the pulpit of God.

Amen. You can set in that church, set there, do whatever you want to do, as long as you don't disturb it. But if you play in its music, if you teach in its Sunday school, if you sing in its choir, or you usher in its aisles, then I'm talking to you.

Yes, sir. You're going to come under subjection, or there's no way you can handle anything else. Amen.

I saw churches run by boards that only waved at God once a month. I held a revival meeting in the north, and I preached up there for two weeks. And we had over 50 people get the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The meeting was over on a Sunday. I couldn't get a ride home until Tuesday. And so that Monday night, they had the annual board meeting, and I met every board member.

They hadn't been there one time to a revival. I said to that preacher, I said, You mean to tell me that you're going to sit down and waste your time talking with a bunch of men on how to run a church when they don't even come to that church? Oh, brother, churches need to have elections. I mean, get rid of that kind of trifles, brother.

I mean, oh, we was buying campgrounds. And we had the meeting. All the men, \$35,000, one of the most beautiful pieces of property in southeast Texas.

I mean, it belonged to an oil company, and they'd done built a lot of stuff on it. And in the discussion, one man got up and said, I don't think we ought to spend that money like that. Oh, when I saw him got up, I said, Oh, I wish he hadn't got up.

I just wish he hadn't because I've got to do what I don't want to do. I got up and said to him, though, I said, Mr., you don't give a dime in this church. And you ain't going to tell the rest of us how to spend our money.

Oh, yeah, you're not going to tell the rest of us. Now, you just sit down over there, and you listen to us. We'll settle all this out, all right, without you.

Amen. Be all right. Amen.

Listen, what I'm talking about is there is a discipline. There is a being brought under the power of the Holy Ghost. And if He can't subdue us, if He can't bring us under the control of the Holy Spirit, now, then He'll reject us in eternity because only the ruled are going to rule.

You hear me? I said, only the ruled are going to rule. That rebel crowd that never come under the headship and the subjection to Christ. Amen.

Then, then that crowd could never, they'd abuse authority if they had it. I said, they'd abuse authority if they had it. There's a story in your Bible.

King Solomon, he built the house of God. He built that temple where the ark was come to rest permanently. Now, you have there a type of the Lord Jesus.

You have a type of the church. All of it can be read into that. David had shed too much blood.

He couldn't build it. But he'd gathered together much material for it, and he passed the responsibility on to his young son David, or Solomon. And when Solomon began to build that temple, the Bible says they dug the stones up outside of the city.

Now, if you've ever been there, you may have went. I went to that quarry once where they dug those stones up. And the Bible said every one of those big stones was shaped out there of the quarry.

When it was brought to that temple site, then it was already shaped and ready to be put into place, into that temple. There will be no racket there when it all come together. No fussing around, no hammers, no sawing.

When it got there, it's already been made to fit into the place in that temple wall that it's going to fit. Now, Peter, writing about us, said that we are lively stones building up a spiritual house. All over this world, God is digging up spiritual stones and is shaping those stones now to fit into that raptured church, mister, so that when we come together, there'll be no racket there.

Hallelujah! Thank God everything will be settled down here. Every stone that fits that wall, every lively stone that makes a part of that great temple, there's never nothing so magnificent as that church. And when it comes together, and all the stones fitly framed and joined in eternity to sit on that universe, throne of that universe with Christ, oh, hallelujah! But now in this life, God, God is dealing with us.

Amen, with the sword of the Spirit and the hammer of the Word of God, He's chiseling away at us. I mean, knocking off the knots, dealing with those things in our lives that are not pleasing to Him. God is shaping us up, folks, so that in that day, thank God, when we get home, we'll just fit right in.

You know, I've been there a lot of times in my spirit. And I saw that stonemason put that chisel, come with that big hammer and strike it, that old rock shatter, brittle, hard, push it aside, can't use it. You take an old brittle, hard stone, you see, under the continual weight of that wall, it may give way, it's fractious, and it may give way and endanger the whole wall.

I'm sure you don't have any of them kind of stones in Mississippi, but I've hit some of them Texans between the eyes with the Word of God, and they flew all to pieces. Oh, yes. My, my, my.

I've never seen the like. Oh, you talk about it. A fellow asked me, he said, Do you ever have a vote of confidence down there? One woman wanted to know how she could change pastors.

I said, Change churches, that's the best way. See, if you could get one of me. Oh, yes, sir.

Oh, listen. Oh, that old hard, fractious spirit. Amen.

That you begin to deal with. Amen. You preach the Word of God, and you come down the line on it.

You'll see it blow up. Oh, my goodness alive. I've had them to come at me.

Yes, you have no right to talk to me that way. Well, I didn't know I was talking to you. You know, if you'd have kept quiet, I never would have knew what was going on.

Amen. I preached one time on Peter talking about a busybody meddling in other folks' business. Amen.

A woman come to me and said, I want to tell you something. You ain't got no right to talk about me like that. I said, Didn't know I was talking about you.

She said, You know. They said, Bring them cookies up here. I brought them up here and put them where nobody could find them.

Them ants got in them. I didn't know nothing about it. I was preaching there and said, I said, You know, folks, you put fifty dogs out there on that parking lot, throw a rock out there, and only one of them dogs that hollered would be the one you hit.

The man said to me, You call me a dog. You call me a dog. Oh, I'm talking about that old spirit that we can't control.

The Bible says, A man that can't control his own spirit is like a city where the walls broke down. Amen. That old explosive, burst out, unrestrained temper.

You know, in those days, the wall was only protection against those marauders. Amen. That wall broke down.

Them thieves overrun that city every morning. And if you can't control your spirit, the devil will overrun you every morning. I mean every morning.

He'll walk all over you, make footprints all over you. Amen. That old, hard, fractious spirit has no place whatsoever in the kingdom of God.

No, no. God isn't going to put up with it. One woman said to me and my wife, she's a blind woman.

We hauled her to church all the time. We was a little late. She'd scream at us and holler.

And she told me one time, said, God, give me the gift of telling people off. I said, that's one gift we can do without. Yes, sir.

But that old spirit. Amen. You've seen it.

You know what I'm talking about. Oh, my. You begin to deal with that human spirit.

It don't never, it don't never do any good until you touch where it hurts. Amen. I told the pastor, I said, we'd hang around here five or six weeks, we'd have revival.

Yes, sir. Listen. Oh, listen.

We've got the sensational and somebody's going to tell us what's wrong with us and we'll gather out and you've got the toe-tapping quartet. But it takes a while to plow. Amen.

As far as trying to have revival. We kicked off on a Sunday morning and I began to preach. And I couldn't believe I was saying what I said.

You know, I just, God was preaching to that 40 folks. And I have to say this about them. They come every night.

All 40 of them. They didn't move. They'd come in, sit down.

I'd get through. They'd go out. Amen.

One man told me about the middle of the week, he said, there's one preacher come here and preach like you. Preaching. And one of them fellas sitting there and I used a rubber hose on him.

I got where when I'd look out on the street I'd look both ways to make sure there wasn't nobody out there with a rubber hose before I slipped out to leave. I couldn't believe, you know, but all week I preached. I plowed.

Oh, man, I was dealing. I said, I can't believe I'm saying. My wife said to me, said, you sure are preaching mean.

I just never heard you preach like this. Amen. But on a Saturday night, next morning's going to be Communion Sunday and I preached hard going in that night.

Amen. I said, well, in the morning I'm going to preach on a communion. You know, somebody said, why don't you pour a little oil in the wound? I said, I haven't wounded them yet.

That old alligator heart, I haven't broke through it at all, brother. Amen. Just been hacking around.

No, just bouncing off of it. Amen. You can't pour any oil in any wound until you wound somebody.

Isn't that right? I said, I've just been chopping away and the axe are bouncing back at me. Amen. But you know, I said, in the morning I'm going to preach on communion and the pastor told me that night, said, now in the morning when I turn it to you, don't turn it back to me.

You just go ahead and call the folks in for the communion and just go right on through with it. I said, all right. But about 4.30, Sunday morning, the Holy Ghost woke me up and when I woke up, my eyes woke up.

He said to my heart, don't break bread with anybody until you break it with me. I knew what he was saying. I don't want you eating nothing.

I told my wife, I said, I'm going to the church. I'm going to dress. You come on down with the pastor, you and the kids.

We're staying in the parsonage with the pastor and his wife. I said, you and the kids, come on. I'm going on down to the church to pray.

I showered, cleaned up, went to the church, got down there around 5 o'clock and I began to pray long about 7. The Holy Ghost gave me my text, took me plum away from that communion, took me to 1 Peter 4.17. Judgment must begin at the house of God. This really wasn't the way I intended. Them folks, them folks haven't paid me no mind.

I've come near breaking the pew than them. But I got up there that morning and he gave me that pulpit about 5 minutes after 11. And at 25 minutes after 12 I closed that book and it's just like Brother Hayes, you

turned the hydrant on.

I'm in for an hour and 20 minutes it flowed out of me and I'm just like I'm on the side listening to it. I can't believe I'm saying what I'm saying. I said, if I was out there I'd be mad at me.

Amen. That's the truth, Brother. I couldn't believe I was saying what I was saying.

But the Holy Ghost is plowing down through that. You know, just turning up all kinds of rottenness. You know, 40 folks been in Pentecost all their lives.

I couldn't believe there was as much corruption that finally come out. Amen. When I finally lanced that board, Brother, it exploded.

Amen. But I got through preaching 25 after 12. I said, now you ushers, you come on down here.

The communion is setting here. You ushers, come on down. The 40's right there.

Amen. Just like always. I said, you come on down.

Be ready to serve them. And the pastor told me not to give it back to him. But you folks, come on down here.

We're going to take communion. Nobody moved, not one twinkle of an eye. I said, maybe you didn't hear me.

Now, you ushers, you come on. And you come on down here now and be prepared to serve them. And you folks come kneel in the altar and we'll get right on with the communion.

I'm looking over at my wife to see if maybe we can get out the side door. Maybe she can get the babies and meet me out there. He can mail my check to me.

I mean, it looks serious, folks. I'm telling you. I mean, they just sat there.

Nobody said one word. When I started preaching, the pastor was sitting behind me in the chair. And when I turned around, I startled.

The chair was empty. You know, but I looked and he's down there and he's under that chair. He's got his head down under that chair.

And he's groaning. Oh, oh, oh, I got down under that with him, boy. I'm telling you.

I've only been preaching a little while. I got down under that chair with him. I said to him, I said, Jim, Brother Jim.

I said, my God, what's the matter with these people? What's the matter with these people? He looked up at me. I never saw a man crying like he was crying. I mean, just, you know, just tears of flowing and flowing.

But he looked at me out of them tears. He said, my God, son, you have killed every one of us. You have killed every one of us.

I said, well, what are we going to do? He said, I ain't going to do nothing. I mean, that's just all. I ain't going to do nothing.

Well, I said, I'm going to get out of here. That's what I'm going to do. I got back up there and I said, I'm going to try it one more time.

And I said, now, folks, it's communion time and I want you to get up and come on into this altar. Well, there ain't nobody moving. Amen.

I mean, nobody. Not an usher, not a human. And I'm standing on that pulpit and I'm thinking to myself, I'm going to just go down there without any fear of anybody and I'm going to get that lovely little old lady of mine.

She's going to get them two babies and we're just going to walk out of here and pay no attention to nobody. But about the time I'm about ready to leave, there's an old man jumped up in the back and I'm here to tell you you'd have to go to hell to hear sound like it. I've never, heard anything.

He come down that aisle and it was coming from way down in here. My God, it was horrible to hear it. And he ran and the pastor went in and he threw nine, ten dollar bills and he said, I swore I'd starve you to death.

And he turned and hit that floor and began to scream for mercy. I thought he would burst his bowels as he screamed. And about the time all over that building, I've never, corruption began to belt.

They put over five hundred dollars on the altar. They began going to one another and the sweetest woman I ever knew was that preacher's wife. They come to her, we've talked about you.

We've said the awfulest thing. We've robbed God of His tithes. There was corruption and adultery and filth and lying until two o'clock I stood there.

Oh my God, I said, I've never seen anything like it. But at two o'clock we went home. We come back, my wife was sitting on the back here tonight, I'll tell you.

We come back that night without one ad, not one ad in the paper, not a spot on the radio. That church is full, brother. I mean it's full.

And when we began to sing, there's a cloud come down out of that roof just out of reach of a man and everything was filled with the Holy Ghost. I'm telling you God moved into that vacuum. Yes sir.

Oh, let me tell you. Your sin, He said, separated between you and your God. Isaiah said, God ain't deaf.

He's senile. He's not crippled up with arthritis. He can still reach you.

He can still hear you. But it's your sin. If I regard iniquity in my heart, David said, God Almighty will not hear me.

Listen, to seek the kingdom is to seek the Lordship of Jesus Christ. That means I shake off everything in this world. My little old petty feelings don't matter.

It's the will of God I rise up as a man or a woman that in honor I can perform my brother. Oh, listen. When we realize what's keeping the flow of God out of our churches, amen, is that He's not Lord of our lives.

And to seek the kingdom is to seek that absolute Lordship of Jesus. The Bible said that bride made herself ready. And the only thing that bride had to overcome to make herself ready was herself.

Amen. She had to realize that to be married now I am giving up my own self. I'm going to give myself to that bridegroom.

When a woman marries a man they're trying to change that now. But she gives up her name and takes that man's name. That's the way God intended that to be.

When I married Christ and in a spiritual way it's now one day it'll be judicially consummated. Amen. I gave up my name and I took on His name.

Amen. And when the Bible talks about blaspheming the name or profaning the name of God it just simply means that we commit spiritual adultery by fornicating around in a spiritual way with a world that's His. I'm married to Him.

That world must not have any hold upon my life. And for that bride to make herself ready is that she has now made Him Lord. He tells her now what to do.

Yes, sir. There is no more independence. That's the reason divorce rates soars and soars and soars.

There's too much independence in a marriage. Amen. We give ourselves one to another and that's forever.

Amen. Very limited way you can get out of that, mister. That's the reason there needs to be lots of thought and lots of talk.

But to marry Jesus, I'll tell you there's nothing worse than spiritual adultery. He said to Israel about her whoredoms, that means she's fooling around with those nations that He said you can't fool around with. And He says thus, the world is enemy of God.

And if you're a friendship with the world, it's enemy to God. If you love the world, you don't love God. Somebody asked D. M. Patton a hundred years ago, how can you measure the spiritual pulse of a generation? He said, you can measure the spiritual pulse of any generation by the horror they feel at the mention of the word world.

We, by implication, have taught our young people that it really isn't an enemy, it's a misunderstood friend. Yes, sir. We put the big wigs of Hollywood as superstars in the pulpit to sing on a Sunday or to talk in tongues and on a Monday they're back out in Las Vegas somewhere.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and we talk about them being Christians and wonder why our kids are inconsistent in their lives. Wonder why. The bride made herself ready.

In that betrothal time in that Old Testament in those Old Testament times in the times of Jesus that betrothal was as binding as the marriage. That woman was his and he was hers and there was no mixing up. When they become betrothed then all of the women are set aside and all of the men they're not to look at anybody.

It's just that betrothal period and we're betrothed to Christ right now and he says you don't have anything to do with that world that's an enemy you're in it but not of it and this is the whole thing to make ourselves

ready he becomes the Lord of that life so that I live for him it doesn't make any difference what that rotten world thinks about me the attitude of the world that we're so afraid they're going to think we're eccentric we've got to dress like them talk like them laugh at what they laugh at let me tell you something folks they're not in here enjoying the blessings of God they're not ashamed to tell you about their exports over the weekend you work with them on a Monday they'll blow that whiskey breath in your face tell you about their encounters with their women I tell you it's time we stood up and said I belong to God he's my Lord the bride made her separate I've been a pastor of that church 25 years and some of the most blessed time of it is marrying it's young yes sir there's nothing more beautiful I have one time I married a girl the boy wasn't saved I told my wife I am never gonna do that again he said don't you don't you be unequally yoked together she'll get somebody else to marry her if she's gonna marry an unsaved boy or he's gonna marry an unsaved girl they just have to get somebody else because most of the time it ain't gonna work out he's gonna either you see it can't light and darkness can't share the same place you turn these lights out darkness come in but you turn these lights on the darkness outside and you get a girl that is light and a boy that's dark he's gonna either have to turn to light or she's gonna have to turn to the dark or they're gonna tear that apart there's no other way that can work mister amen there's no other way that can work I've seen it I've saw it over and over again I've watched girls I've played with them lose them to a world amen over some unsaved somebody no I'm gonna change him change him now get him right with God let him pray through get him full of the Holy Ghost But there's no more blessed, wonderful thing than to stand down here and wait on two young people that know God, love God, come to unite their lives together in God. That's been some of the most blessed time. And you know, in that church, we have a beautiful church, it's a pretty large church, and it's got a big center aisle, red, you know, wall-to-wall carpet, like this red carpet, and the pews, and it's just a beautiful place.

But it's never been more beautiful than Wednesday. I'm telling you, when they get through decorating, we, one time, we had trees that's 29 foot high, we had trees nearly as high as it was. Had a gazebo up there on the platform.

Amen. Made it look like a garden. Over on one side had a fountain and a bird singing in it.

I mean, just chirping and going on. But everything, you know, there'd be a bouquet or a candle on the end of every pew, in every window. A row of candles.

The place is sharp, beautiful carpet, not good enough. Roll a white streamer down. Roll it up on there.

Amen. Oh, my. Everything polished.

Everything is ready, man. You come in there and you say, is this the place? Everything, oh, everything's moved. They'd carry all that out, turn them chairs down so you can't see them.

You know, everything. And then comes time. Now, Mama, I laugh.

For years I told folks it cost me \$700 to get our daughter married. I was in Africa. After we got my granddaughter, my wife told me what it cost.

Amen. Didn't matter then. You know, after I got my granddaughter, it really didn't matter.

You just can't pay too much for that. Amen. Is that right? Amen.

But I'll tell you what. You know, when you get time, time's come for that wedding night, that mother. She got that hairdresser out there to pat that hair in place.

Oh, I mean, straighten that gown up, get that girl. Me and that boy, we come out over here and we walk around. He stops here with the best man behind him.

I go on up the platform. Oh, he's got my eye down on him. I see that heart.

You know that Adam's apple running up and down. Oh, boy, that's a moment in history. In a minute, she's going to come out of there.

And that's going to be the prettiest he'll ever see her in his life. I'll tell you that. Because everything that can be done has been done right there.

I mean, she's being made ready. And that papa's going to come out of there. Amen.

Reaping what he's sown. Twenty-five years ago, he stole somebody else's daughter. Now somebody's getting his.

Amen. He's going to come out of there crying. You've got a day of coming, boy.

I'm telling you. Amen. George, you sit on that platform.

I know. I cried all night when my daughter got married. That house got so big.

Amen. That little old thing is at home. I never woke her one time.

She wasn't laughing. Amen. She was the most pleasant human.

Still is. Amen. But, you know, I see him there.

Finally, all the bridesmaids are out of the way. Amen. Out of the way.

Then that old organ accentuates itself. And there they come. And did you know, I have never saw one come out in tennis shoes.

She is made ready. I'm going to tell you something. Every curl is in place.

I mean, everything is just right. They've got that train stretched out so everything is just right. And when she comes down that aisle, I'll tell you what.

Whatever man could do to make her pretty, he's done it now. Amen. And as she comes down that aisle, she has made herself ready.

I want to tell you what I believe tonight, folks. I believe heaven has been polished, if it needed it at all. I believe there's a thousand million angels gathered in the tiers and balconies of that world.

Everything is polished to perfection. I believe that standing down at that great altar is God's Son. Watching those doors, that wing to sweep open.

And God the Father to step in with that church on His arm. That bride, made herself ready. Everything is held in abeyance.

I believe He stands there tonight waiting on that bride to be ushered down that aisle. To sit by Him for eternity on the throne of this universe. And when they come out and down that aisle, there'll not be a rebel in the crowd.

Everything that's there will have made Him Lord here. Amen. Everything that's there will have made Him Lord here.

If He's not your Lord now, you'll not be a part of that bridal company, mister. No, no. There'll be not one rebel there.

Everything that's there, the eyes will be turned toward Him. And life will have been placed in the proper perspective. And that bridegroom has been made Lord.

Because what constitutes your readiness is subjection to Him whom you're going to marry. Let's stand and lift our hands and love Him tonight. Hallelujah, hallelujah.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Come on, let's love God tonight. Let's love God, let's love God, let's love God.

Oh, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Oh, glory, glory, glory. My God, might I might apprehend that which I've been apprehended for.

Oh, glory, glory, glory, glory, glory. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

Hallelujah, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Glory to God, glory to God.

Glory to God, glory to God. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Oh, I intend to be a part of that rapture church.

Thank God, I intend to be a part of that bride. Hallelujah, not the bridal company, but the bride. Hallelujah.

Oh, I intend to march down that aisle to be a part, thank God, of the greatest event of this universe, married to Him, to sit with Him on the throne of this universe forever and forever. But if I ever sit there then, He's going to rule me now. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God. We're going to sing an old song here tonight. Do you know that song, Oh, Holy Ghost, Revival Comes From You? Amen.

Send a revival, start the work in me. Do you know that? Amen. It might be in the book.

Amen. Search me, oh God, that's the name of the song. Search me.

I want you to listen. Serious things are in the balance tonight. Your place in that bride is on the line.

You and I are deciding now whether we're going to be there. Our hearts, in our hearts, did you find it, brother? Yes. 260? 216.

216. Just before we sing it, listen. This is one of the great songs for a service like you and I. You sing this song, this is a prayer.

Whoever wrote this song was saying to God, Search me. I don't want Him to search brother Hayes, I want Him to search me. Brother Hayes is not trying to get God to search me, He wants to search Him.

Amen. I want God to search me. Brother Paul, if there's anything, if I have wounded any soul today, if there's anything in my life that would bring an imperfection on my church, if I've got ought against one human being, I want that out of the way.

I don't want anything in my life that would hinder Him from being Lord. As I sing this song and you sing this song, make it a prayer. You're praying.

You're praying, folks. Amen. You're not just singing a song, you're praying.

We're talking to God. Let Him look down deep in the recesses of your heart. Is there bitterness there? Are there things there that are not like Him? If it's so, they must be dealt with.

They must be dealt with. Search me, O God, and know my heart today. Oh, make that a prayer.

Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray. See if there be some wicked way in me. Cleanse me, set me free.

Now sing it to Him. Search me, O God, today. Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray.

See if there be some wicked way in me. Cleanse me, set me free. Oh, Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee.

Send a reviver in me. She shall supply our needs. Do you really mean that tonight? Hallelujah.

Do you really want God to search that heart? Do you want a separation from everything that doesn't please Him? Do we have that desire tonight? Listen, folks, revival only awaits on us. I said revival. The only barrier to revival is those things in our lives and our hearts that doesn't please Him whom we one day hope to marry.

Amen. God tonight, I believe He wants us, listen, I believe He wants to search that heart. Oh, He wants to search that spirit.

My God. He wants us to be honest with ourselves. He said if we judge ourselves, we'll not have to be judged.

Isn't that what He said? But if you won't do it, ladies and gentlemen, one day God will judge you. If we're not willing to look ourselves, one day He will. But He said if you'll judge yourself, then you'll not have to be judged.

We have the blessed privilege of hearing the presence of God tonight to judge our every action, our attitudes, our desires, our likes, our dislikes in the light of the fact that we belong to God. The liberty that we demand, the pastor and I was talking, Charles Finney, in his systematic theology on the attributes of selfishness, he said liberty was an attribute of selfishness. You don't have any liberty.

No, no. You're not your own. You're free only to do the will of God.

Amen. Free only. I joined the Marine Corps for seven weeks.

Seven weeks. They kept me locked in. Midnight.

Two o'clock in the morning. We run. We swam rivers.

We crawled the beach. We ran off. We must one hop read for you.

Fall in. Fall out. Seven weeks.

No liberty. You went to bed when they said. You got up when they said.

But at the end of seven weeks they gave us one night liberty. You know what that meant? Do anything you want to do. There's no such a thing in this.

No, no. There is no such thing in this. He don't say to you ever do what you want to do.

He says you do what I want you to do. Tonight, we're going to sing that last verse again. Oh Holy Ghost.

Revival. If you mean business with God, you really want a revival. Hallelujah.

I want you to expose yourself to God. In this altar tonight. Amen.

I want you to expose. I know today's revivals are based on some kind of attention getting thing. But I want God to get our attention.

I want us to be willing to expose our hearts to lay it open at this altar tonight. If there's anything in there. If you've not been what a Christian ought to be in any instance.

Be man or woman enough to make it right. Go to that one you've done wrong. Or to the one that's done you wrong.

Get it all straight. Get the conditions right. Oh, it'll come afloat.

Hallelujah. You sing this on the way to this altar tonight. If you mean business with God.

Oh Holy Ghost. Oh Holy Ghost. Revival.

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