

Without Spot or Wrinkle

by B.H. Clendennen

The church is called to be a spiritual organism, functioning as the body of Christ, with the Holy Spirit as its mind, and to testify to the exaltation of Christ.

Duration: 49:54

Scripture: Genesis 28:16-17, Matthew 7:22-23, Acts 3:6-7, Ephesians 5:27

Topics: "Holiness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for a holy and genuine church filled with the Holy Spirit. He compares weariness and fear to the experiences of young soldiers in war, highlighting the importance of being refreshed and empowered by the Holy Ghost. The preacher also discusses the Great Commission, emphasizing that the main focus should be on discipleship rather than simply going out into the world. He encourages believers to be vessels through which Jesus Christ is expressed, operating in the same power that Jesus had through the measure of faith given to them.

Transcript

Chapter 5, verse 27, of the book of Ephesians, let's read it here, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. Talking about the church, we've been dealing with that factor in all of these afternoon services. And our whole thought and trend has been that it must be spiritual, that the great loss of the church is we've reduced it to a physical organization instead of a spiritual organism, instead of being an operation of God and the mind of God, it has become a device of man.

In the very first lesson that we taught here, message we brought, we've dealt with the mind of God, showing how that the Holy Spirit in the believer was the mind of God and consequently the ability of God. It, as we know, the mind is the seed of ability. Our ability to walk, to talk, to work, to move, whatever, is all a product of the mind.

You can injure certain parts of the brain and you can't walk or you can't talk. The ability to play that organ as our brother plays it, I can't play it, but I know one thing, it's more than the ability of the mind, because I have good hands, but I cannot play that organ. But if you were to put his brain in my head, then my fingers could play that organ.

What's true in the physical is also true in the spiritual. With the mind of Christ in the church, and as the church learns the leadership of that mind, then the ability of God comes with that. If we have his mind and learn to think his thoughts, then we can do what he did.

Now, the church that he's coming after is going to be such a church. He's not coming after a wore-out religious machine. He's coming after a living organism, as the very function of God upon this earth.

He is coming after a church that is functioning exactly like the Lord Jesus Christ functioned when he was on this earth. If we have any notion of what kind of a church he's coming after, we need only read the book of Acts. He said in Matthew 16, Upon this rock I will build my church.

Now, when you see that statement, then read through the 18th chapter of the book of Matthew, where he deals with that church. Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Whatsoever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

If any two of you agree as touching anything on this earth, it shall be done of my Father. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I will be there. Then again he says, If a brother sins, go to him.

If he won't listen to you, take another brother. If he won't listen to the two of you, bring him before the church. And if he won't listen to the church, put him out.

He'll be as a heathen and a publican. In other words, the function of that church becomes the very function of God when it moves in the realm of the Spirit of God. And that is the thing that God is saying to us that must be in these days.

That's the church he's coming after. You look at the church on the day of Pentecost. It's born.

They stand up Peter in the midst of them to preach. A whole city is astir. And as he preaches, 3,000 souls are saying, What must I do to be saved? They're seeing God among them people.

The next day, Simon, Peter, and John, on the way to the temple, be in the hour of prayer, is confronted with a man that has been crippled for 40 years. And Peter says to them, Him rather, silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. And a crippled man is leaping and running and shouting.

A crowd has gathered, 5,000 are brought into the kingdom of God. That is the church. The corn of wheat has fell into the ground and died.

And it springs up. It does not abide alone. And the Bible said they took knowledge that they had been with Jesus.

They are operating in the Spirit. As a result, Christ is alive wherever they are, whether it's Philip the deacon in Samaria, or Paul the apostle in Philippi, it is still Christ alive and well and moving by the Holy Spirit. And so this is what he's saying, that he might present it himself a glorious church, a church without spot or wrinkle, a church that God lives in.

The Bible says, Peter says it, that we are a spiritual house, that we are lively stones building up a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God. We are the house of God. We are where God lives.

Therefore, as a body is merely a vehicle through which a personality is expressed, then there's certain things about that church that I believe we ought to know. I've put together a whole series of lessons once

on God's spiritual house, and in them I listed four things that function of that spiritual house must be, if it is what God intends. Number one, it exists for the testimony of, in both what it says and does, of the exaltation of Christ.

The very fact of a church being alive testifies in what it is that Christ is exalted. The church never came into existence till Christ sat down at the right hand of God. Now, He said to those early disciples and Christians, and consequently to every one of us in this place today, that because I have overcome, you can overcome.

He said He is going to make the enemies His footstool. And when He sat down at the right hand of God's exalted, the Holy Spirit blew through that upper room, making those people know that He had got there, that the victory was theirs. They're no longer afraid.

You may kill them physically, but they have overcome. The victory is theirs. He's overcome, and the Holy Spirit blowing in that upper room made them know that they also, that Christ was exalted.

The enemy had become His footstool, and as the fact of His overcoming made them know they would. He was a part of the family, was there, meant the rest of the family was going to be there. Number two, the church exists by the glory and satisfaction of God.

God is satisfied in Christ. Amen. God is satisfied with Christ.

And you and I in Christ, be in the house of God, as long as we are what He wants us to be, then God is satisfied because He's satisfied with Jesus. Then number three, the church exists for the life and deliverance of the saints, to minister life and deliverance to saints through priestly intercession. How many people are lost because the church has forsaken that altar of intercession? You know there's an enemy set to destroy the life.

The devil's not after you personally. He's after the life of God in that church. What he's after is to remove the life of God.

He's not afraid of anything but life. It doesn't matter how much money we've got, how well educated we are. If there's no life, then we are no threat to the devil.

I think if the book of Job proves anything, it proves two things. One, God doesn't have to bribe men to love Him. And number two, it is only life that is a threat to the devil.

You know, God said to the devil, have you considered my servant Job? He's the wealthiest man alive, I suppose. Everything is going wonderful. God said finally to the devil, you can touch anything but his life.

With all of his wealth gone, health gone, he's in the backyard, boils from the top of his head to the sole of his feet, scraping the corruption with a piece of broken pottery. And he's as much a threat to the devil now as he was when he was a wealthy man. Because it's the life that the devil is after.

The devil knows he can't kill him anymore than he can kill a church. There's no way the devil can kill a church. The only way it can happen is for the church to commit spiritual suicide.

And the devil knew he couldn't kill Job, so he got in his wife and sent her to Job and said to him, in effect, why don't you kill yourself? Everything's gone. The devil's trying to get him to commit suicide. You see, the church exists, exists a minute to the deliverance and life of the saints.

That intercessory prayer. But fourth, it exists as a representation of Christ in every place. You know, if Jesus came to Louisville personally, can you imagine what would take place? There would be a division in the city.

There'd be those who want to kill him, just as sure as you're here. But those that didn't want to kill him would worship him. I mean, every highway would be blocked.

All across into Indiana, all up through here, six to five would be jammed, traffic jams everywhere if he came to this city and stood here personally. But yet think about how many churches there must be in this city. Hundreds and hundreds of churches, all of them should be exactly what he was when he was here.

Amen. But you know, for the most part, the only people that know that the people are here is the people that are in the church. There's no real stir.

Nobody's trying to kill us. They hate Jesus as much as they ever hated him. But the problem is, he isn't really being made known.

We are here as a representation of Christ in every place. And wherever the church is, then Christ is. If you see the real church, you see Christ.

And if you see Christ, you see the church. And we ought to do the same thing that he did. The fear of God ought to be in this city because we're here.

Because we're here. Now, Paul writing says that he's going to present that church to himself as a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. In the book of Zechariah, you have Zerubbabel said the angel waked him as a man out of a deep sleep.

He wasn't asleep as we talk about sleep, laying down. But he was asleep like most people are today. They don't even know what's going on.

People belong to churches and they think that's what God is after. They go to Sunday school, a little teaching. But Paul said, ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of truth.

Never really coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ as to what He is making Him alive. Amen. It's just a little ritual of religion.

I one day woke up. I taught a Bible class at home. I still do, but I taught, I taught, I taught.

I studied, I prayed, I taught. And what happened? Nothing. Ever learning, but never really coming to the knowledge of the truth.

You know, a disciple is one who learns and puts into practice what they learned. All of the discipleship, Jesus kept those with Him. He not only taught them in words, He taught them that men ought to pray.

But over and over again, He prayed. They saw Him pray. They watched Him raise the dead.

He's teaching them what they're supposed to do. He were disciplizing these people. And He said to the church, Go into all the world and disciple-ize, disciple-ize.

You know, one of the great errors of Christianity is we're always putting the emphasis in the wrong place. In the Great Commission, He said, Go ye therefore into all the world and teach or disciple-ize all nations.

Now, you know, we have put the emphasis on the go.

But if you properly diagram that sentence, you would find that the main verb is to disciple-ize, not to go. Man puts the emphasis on doing, but God puts it on being. And if we really be something for God, then we'll do something because He'll see Jesus.

The emphasis we put on go. So we went with a little bit of everything. I mean, we've run off here and run off there.

Two hundred and fifty major bodies in America. I mean, the splits and the splinters. Jesus, if He, if He would, if He said, Go ye, but He said tarry first.

And if He, when He left, had allowed those disciples to go, every one of them would have took off with his own version as to why Jesus came. But He said, You tarry until it's no longer a theory, but a living thing made real by the Holy Ghost. Amen.

And when they moved out from that upper room, they moved out with one mind, the mind of God. They knew why they were going. Amen.

Well, say, Rubabo was wake, like the people today need stabbed awake as to what the Church is, as to what it's really about. It isn't just to gather a bunch of people together for a Sunday school contest, but it is to disciple-ize, to learn Jesus, to become conformed to Jesus, to be what He is. And He said, He waked me as a man out of a deep sleep.

And when the angel awaked him, he asked him a question. What do you see? And he said, I see a candlestick all of gold. What is he saying? You know, candlestick is a church.

That candlestick's what the oil flowed through, isn't it? You know, it wasn't like we've got today something to hold a candle, but the oil flowed through that candlestick. The Bible said, We are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. I mean, we are that candlestick through which the oil of the Holy Ghost can flow.

That's our whole business, our being that God can live in us and flow through us. And so he said, he said, I saw a church all of gold. Gold in the Bible is a symbol of the divine.

He said, I see a church all of God. That's what he saw. And then he fainted.

Do you know why he fainted? When he waked up and saw what God wanted, and he already knew what he had, there was such a gap between what God wanted and what God had, that he fainted dead away. I tell you, if God give us a real vision as to what the church is really supposed to be, and then we analyze the best church in America, we'll find that there's a thousand miles between what God has and what God wants. If the church becomes what he wants, it'll shake Louisville to her foundation.

God help you to hear me today. You know Pentecost didn't come out of a full-page ad in the Jerusalem Post. It came out of God's terrible dealing with twelve men.

Amen. If God can deal with us, amen, if God can deal with us and become dissatisfied, rather, with our own status quo, amen. Somebody said, What's that? I said, That's a mess we're in.

Amen. If we can get dissatisfied with the status quo and get to looking and to see what God really wants, when he saw that candlestick of gold, he fainted. He saw that it was such an impossibility to ever have what God wanted.

And when he fell over dead, the angel waked him up again and said, It's not by might, nor by power, not by psychology, is what he's saying, not by the genius of man, not by the power of armies, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Hallelujah. There can never be a church apart from the Holy Ghost.

There can never be a church that God wants apart from the Holy Ghost. I say to you, that without the Holy Ghost, you've got a congregation. You don't have a church.

The first place that the church is mentioned in the Bible is when Jacob is fleeing from Esau. And he spent the night in that wilderness. He slept on that rock.

He saw a ladder, rather, that reached all the way from that rock to heaven. And he saw angels ascending and descending. And when he woke up, and the vision was real, he said, Surely God is in this place.

And he poured oil, which is a type of the Holy Ghost, on that rock and called it Bethel, which means the house of God or the place where God lives, testifying to all times that there is no church apart from the Holy Ghost. You take that, you run the reference of that, and you come to the Gospels where Jesus called Nathanael. And he said to him, I saw you when you was under the tree.

And Nathanael said to him that you must be God. And he said, You believe because I saw you when you was yet under that tree. He said, You will see heaven open and the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

Thank God. Now, if he had said upon God, it would have been one thing, but on the Son of Man. That's the church.

He was the firstborn of a whole new race. And when he said, You're going to see the heavens open on the Son of Man, he said, You're going to see the heavens open on the church of the living God. And what he said was, The Holy Ghost is that ladder that reaches from that born-again heart all the way to the throne of God.

Heaven is open on the church that walks in the Spirit. Hallelujah. Glory to God.

Heaven is open to that church. That walks in the Spirit of God. Just like Jesus.

He said, I don't do anything, but what I see my Father do. Is that what he said? How did he see? He's the Son of Man. He walked this earth as a man.

He's both God and man. But he worked his miracles as an example to us. He lived his life as an example to us.

So he lived it as a man full of the Holy Ghost. And he said, I don't do anything, but what I see my Father do. He has the ability to see into heaven.

How? By the Holy Ghost. He'd give us the same Holy Ghost. And the church that walks in the Spirit of God is under an open heaven performing with God.

A candlestick, all of gold. Think about it. A church, all of God.

A church functioning as the body of Christ, which means that the Bible said in Acts 10, 38, he went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth, who went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. How did he go about, folks? He went about in that body, that physical body that Mary gave him.

He went about doing good, healing the oppressed, delivering the demon possessed in that body. Well, he don't have that body now. That body was laid down at Calvary.

He has another body. What body is that? The church of the living God. And he would go about in that body, doing good, healing all that were possessed of the devil, if we would give him the lordship of his body.

There'd be no difference now than it was then, only it'd be multiplied because there's more of us. The corn of wheat fell into the ground. It's died.

And it's sprung up again now. And it is a mind and the will of God that the church be that body, that function, that vehicle through which Jesus Christ is expressed. And the church, as a corporate son, should perform with the same power, the same power that Jesus performed with.

It said he gave the Spirit without measure to his son. Is that what he said? He didn't give it without measure to me. He didn't give it without measure to you.

He said he gave us a measure of faith. Now, when you study the Bible, you discover that there are some terms that are synonymous. When you first begin to read, then you see four or five different situations.

You see the Word of God, the will of God, the faith of God, the Spirit of God. But as you begin to move in God, you find all of these are just aspects of the same thing, and that is Christ Himself. You can't walk in the Word of God without walking in the will of God.

And you can't walk in the will of God without walking in the faith of God. And you can't walk in the faith of God without walking in the Spirit of God. And when you walk in that Spirit, then it is Christ and not you.

Paul said, I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth within me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. And so he said, let us go on to perfection.

Let us go on until it's no longer you and I that are living, but it's Christ and each one of us, you see, given a measure of that Spirit. But as we come together, as we come together, he said, one foot a thousand, two foot ten thousand, as our faith begins to merge, as we come more and more to the unity of the Spirit and the unity of the faith, then more and more the full, total power of Jesus Christ is expressed through that living, corporate body, the Son of God. Hallelujah.

Now you notice here, we're talking about the church that he's coming after. Paul said a glorious church, not a wore-out religious machine trying to find out some way to reach the world. No, no.

He's got a way to reach the world. Make Jesus real, folks, and he'll startle every community where he is. You know, I am persuaded that if Pentecost came to the church in its fullness, like God wants it to come, half the church folks would say it was of the devil because it'd be so different than what we're used to.

Amen. That's right, it'd be so different than what we're used to. If it really flowed through in the fullness of God, in the way that God wants to be, it would be such a startling thing to the human and the ordinary religious mind.

But I can promise you that it's going to happen. I believe the best automobile has not been built. It's still in the mind of an architect somewhere.

The best home has not been built yet, folks. And the greatest revival is still in the Holy Ghost. And the end of this age is going to be a people that learn to walk with Him corporately and see the mighty motions of God.

He's coming after a glorious church. I look for the rapture every day. But I want to tell you, the rapture isn't something to rescue us from the devil.

A lot of people have the notion that they're going to come after a church hid in a corner somewhere, trying to stay hid till the rapture gets them out of here. That's not what He's coming after. We may be bruised a little, but it'll not be from running from the devil.

It'll be from storming the bastions of hell. Amen, saying to the devil, thus saith the Lord, let my people go. A glorious church.

Then He said, without spot or without wrinkle. Zerubbabel saw that church all of gold, a candlestick all of gold, a church all of God. Paul said he's going to come after a church, number one, without spot.

What spot? He said hating the garments spotted by the flesh. Spotted by the flesh. He's going to come after a church delivered of the flesh.

Oh, it's a tragedy, the way we learn how to imitate and to ape. Amen. I was in a church one time, and the preacher said to his wife, come on up here and prophesy.

Amen, so she treks off up there and takes a microphone and prophesies. The Bible said if that gift of prophecy is ever perfected, then sinners are going to fall on their face and say God is among you of a truth. But if you can turn it on and off like a water hydrant, I'm not interested in it.

Amen. I'm not interested in the fleshly operation of the gifts of God. I'm interested in the Holy Ghost.

Whenever that gift worked, when it worked with Simon Peter, two hypocrites fell dead, fear come on the whole community. When Paul went to Ephesus and the gift operated, he said, come out, devil, out of that girl. A whole city is astir.

They beat him, they throw him in jail. God sends an earthquake, shakes the jail open. The city fathers are begging him to leave town.

It's not some little old hit-in-the-corner situation. There's a power in this thing. There's a power.

Amen. Wherever that church went, it was just like Jesus went there. They that have turned the world upside down have finally got to our city too.

Amen. The whole countryside is astir. Amen.

They're raising the dead, casting out devils, stirring up communities. Amen. The religious crowd.

Paul stoned to death on the road to Lystra. The folks gathered around him, ear knocked off, bones broken, every indication he's dead. And the scriptures don't tell us for what he's dead.

But then the stern, a lie from God, and it gets up and they say, what are you going to do now? I'm going to do what I was doing before. Stop right straight to the prayer meeting. Thank God the world is moved because Christ is in them.

Wherever they went, it's the same. And he said he's coming after such a church. Not one operating on the oil of the flesh, but the oil of God.

You know, I'm not old, but I'm old enough to remember. Now as a boy, in the rural community where I was, there was no electricity. That's right.

Mr. Roosevelt put the R-E-A and got it everywhere. We had lamps. You know, just burn coal oil.

And there's one thing about those lamps. You know, if you ever let the coal oil get too low and began to burn that wick, then it just smoked up the chimney and got dark. Isn't that right? If it ever could burn that oil, burn that wick, then all you had was smoke.

Well, if you ever could burn in the oil of the Holy Ghost and go to burn in the blubber of the flesh, all you got smoke going to smart your eyes. Amen. You'll never see God operate in it.

Though man learns how to talk in tongues, he may learn how to dance. They even teach him how to sing in tongues today. But there's no God there, no dead getting up.

Amen. I'll sit and saw one meeting where in ten days over 70,000 people passed through it. All they talked about was faith.

But then one human being got out of a wheelchair. Not one blind person ever made to see. And the only miracles I could find was people saying, I'm not claiming I'm sick.

They're still taking insulin for diabetes. Well, claim it or not claim it. You got diabetes if you're taking insulin.

Or you're going to die, I'll tell you that. You can't take that stuff unless you don't have enough sugar or whatever it is in you. I'm saying, he said without spot, he said, I'm not coming after that.

You know, you read the last book of the Bible and it's dealing with a church in decline. Apostasis is there. All the way from Ephesus to Laodicea.

You first find the loss of the first love at Ephesus. By the time you get to Laodicea, Christ is on the outside trying to get into his own church. And you know what his message is? You know what the Holy Ghost is saying to that church in the final analysis? Give me gold-tribe in the fire.

What he's saying, I'm sick of your gimmicks and games. Give me reality. That's what he's saying.

Give me the whited garment. Give me a holy people with the Holy Ghost in them. And give more with the mighty Spirit of God.

They have found it. They found it without spot or without wrinkle. That means neither old nor tired.

You know, I saw, I was just 18 years old myself when I joined the Marine Corps in World War II. I was born in Texas. I grew up in the Pacific.

Three years out there in the hell of that war. And I saw weariness and hate and those things turn 18-year-old boys into old men. Faces wrinkled, weary, tired, tired.

And one of the characteristics of being tired is you're afraid. Amen, you get afraid. You know, you may be ever so brave, but you wear down when you give out.

Then you become fearful. Everything becomes exaggerated, isn't that right? Amen, you know, I used to shoot a shotgun a lot and hunt birds. You know, you start out in the morning, that old 12 gauge, but long about dark, got things working on your shoulder.

And you're running from it. You can't hit anything, you know. You throw it up there and time or two, you've left it a half inch away from the shoulder.

And you're tired and the shoulder's sore. And you're running from it, so you can't hit anything. Well, the church, fighting the devil in the flesh.

You know, trying to win a city to God in the flesh. Trying to do the work of God in the flesh. Finally, you're tired.

You get afraid of the devil, I'm telling you. You get afraid of the devil. It won't venture out.

All over this country, there's churches locked into a little situation and trying to hold their own for the rapture. That's the truth. Trying to hold their own until the rapture gets here.

Their whole situation, they're afraid to venture out. Afraid of the devil. That's because they're tired.

They're wrinkled. They even give up. Give out.

They're operating in the flesh. And so they're tired, but he's not coming after such. Get the Holy Ghost.

He's not afraid. The characteristics of the Holy Ghost, given to us in the book of Ezekiel, when he was there and he saw that vision of the wheel in the middle of the wheel, the lightning flashing, the going straight forward, and the cherubim with the four features. You remember those features? There was first the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle.

The four faces of that cherubim. You know, we used to wonder what that meant. But now we know we're seeing the counsels of God in action.

What Ezekiel saw in that vision is the first, the second chapter of the book of Acts. The Holy Ghost is coming. Amen.

And there you have the aspects of the Holy Ghost. There, the first feature of that cherubim was the face of a lion. Now, Solomon tells us in the book of Proverbs that when the lion starts, he never turns back.

The only thing that ever deters him, he's afraid of nothing. Not the elephant, nothing. The only thing that stops him is death.

That's the Holy Ghost, folks. You may be discouraged. You may despair.

You may lay down and quit. But I can tell you right now, the Holy Ghost is going on, thank God. And we operate in Him.

There's nothing going to make us afraid. No, no. The Holy Ghost is going on, going on.

People are discouraged, but He's not discouraged. He is going on. Then you have the eagle, or the ox rather.

Now, when Solomon built that temple, he built a laver that held something like 16,000 gallons of water. Now, folks, that's a lot of weight. Eight pounds to a gallon water weighs.

What did he put under it to hold it up? Oxen. He even got the oxen, the symbolic of the strength of the Holy Ghost. I can tell you right now, the devil, the world, the flesh, never going to break him down.

You're not going to wash his mind. You're not going to weary him. He's going on.

He's strong enough to bear every burden. And then you have the face of a man. You know what that means? Spiritual intelligence.

Thank God He's talking about the aspects of the Holy Spirit. The mind, the very mind of God Almighty. If we'll take time to wait in that altar until we can think the thoughts of God, until we know where God's going, and move with Him, there is not enough devils in or out of Hades to keep us from accomplishing.

And finally, you have the aspect of the ego. Have you ever watched the ego? I've watched them as a sword above everything. When I was a boy, I used to want wings.

I said, Oh, my, if I could just get out of the drudgery. You know, I used to lay awake at night and think about being somewhere, fighting the cowboys and the Indians. Wake up in the morning, all there was to fight was cuckoos and bull evils.

Amen. You know, but I wish I had wings till I learned that a squadron of fat men would make the sky dark. You'd have to have a hundred-foot wingspan.

But I used to watch that ego soar. You know what that means? Absolute freedom. Thank God there's nothing, no place, nobody can keep the Holy Ghost out.

We can affect every community in America. We can move the world for God if we really become the vessel of the Holy Ghost. If we really become that vessel, if we really become the church in the sense that He wants it to become the church without wrinkle, it won't ever, it won't ever get tired.

But it also means it's old. It's whatever you do. You can rub all kinds of creams and have a face lift every now and then, but it'll come back.

That old skin loses its elasticity, and it just begins to wrinkle and crinkle. Amen. But He said, the church I'm coming after isn't going to be old.

Thank God the Holy Ghost will spring up in it. It's going to make it young as a morning. Oh, hallelujah.

The old divines used to say that the number of heaven was four, Father, Son, Holy Ghost, and the church of God. Amen. Let me tell you something.

There was a time when there was no church, but there won't ever be a time when there's not one again. It's as much a part of heaven as God is. It's going to err in a joint error with the Christ set down on the throne of this universe to rule with Him.

It's as eternal as God. A million years when Bell Telephone and Chrysler and Ford and Exxon have been out of business, there's going to be a church. Thank God there's going to be a church.

A church of a living God. And the Holy Ghost keeps it that way. It's not going to get old and wore out and discarded, but it's always renewed.

He said, My grace is renewed every morning. God's going to renew it. You know, in the Bible, woman is a type of the church.

The fallen woman is a type of the fallen church. But the pure woman is a type of the true church of God. Sarah, no greater type in the Bible than Sarah is a type of the church of Jesus Christ.

Amen. You take Sarah, the wife of Abraham. God had promised them when they were old, a son.

And now years went by and Abraham's a hundred and she's a hundred. And the Bible said her womb is dead, but yet the promise is there that she's going to have a child. Amen.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, came down on the mountains at Mamre and said to Abraham, He killed a kid. And all three of them sat there and ate with him. Amen.

Then God told Abraham, said, Well, Sarah's going to have a boy next year. And she, back in the tent, laughed. And God said to her, What did you laugh for? Well, she got scared then and tried to tell him she didn't laugh.

But you'd laugh too. I mean, folks, she didn't have no oil of old age for that skin, a hundred year old in that desert. There ain't no wigs to put on now.

There's no beauty salons to decorate that. A hundred year old skin in that desert, it's just about over with. It's wrinkled.

It's dry. You can almost pop it. God is saying to her, She's going to have a baby.

Amen. Going to have a baby. Now, you know, she laughed.

Listen, she did. She was pregnant with Isaac, having that baby. And her and brother Abraham were walking along and going down to the Bimelech's territory.

He says to her, Tell him you're my sister. He'll kill me for you. Listen, something happened to that woman.

Oh, she's not an old woman no more. She's a beautiful woman again. She's the kind of a woman men will kill you over again.

Abraham said, Tell him that you're my sister. This hundred year old woman suddenly is beautiful again. Well, I saw it happen a thousand times to the church.

I saw the wrinkles wash away. I saw it stand up on its feet with a shout of an archangel, with a voice of triumph. I saw it stand up in the power of the living God, made whole, fresh as the morning, no longer

afraid, not tired anymore, but young and vigorous.

And that's the church he's coming after, folks. If you think he's coming after anything less than he started with, you're wrong. No, no.

He's not coming after anything less than took place on the day of Pentecost. If he does, he failed. He said, Upon this rock I'll build my church.

Is that what he said? Upon this rock I'll build my church. Well, if he comes after anything less than he started with, then I'm going to have to say he failed. Amen.

If he's going to come after what we see for the most part that represents the church today, then he's coming after a site less than he started with. That church born on the day of Pentecost by a sovereign act of the Holy Spirit. The Bible said first it's set upon them.

Amen. It's set upon them. And by setting upon them, it imposed upon them the will of God.

They become by a sovereign act of the Holy Spirit the vessel of the Lord. And then the Bible said he failed them. And from that day till now, if you deal with God, you're going to deal with Him through that church, mister.

There is no other way. I'm not talking about some religious organization. I'm talking about the church of the living God, which we are.

And if you deal with God, you're going to deal with God through that church. No. There's never been anything like it before or since.

History takes its meaning from the church. All wars, all the upheavals, all depression, everything has come about. But troubler is the church.

The troubler is the church. There's a people here that belong to God planted in the midst of a hostile world surrounded by enemies. Everything wants us out, one way or another, either to neutralize us or to destroy us, one way or another.

He said if you was of the world, it would love you because it loves its own. But because you're not of the world, it's going to hate you like it hates me. And the very fact that we're not hated just tells us the truth about ourselves.

We're so much like the rotten system that they've incorporated us into its thinking. And even the politicians, they can use the church for their own ends and preachers become politicians and make the church a political body. I'm talking about a church that's not of this world.

It comes from heaven. One of the principles of the church is that it is a heavenly thing. It never came into existence until Christ sat down on the right hand of God, exalted.

And the Holy Ghost came back here to gather out of this world a bride. Joseph, who is a type of Jesus, never got his wife until he's on the throne of Egypt. Amen.

Isaac wasn't permitted to leave the land, a type of Christ. Christ sits down now at the right hand of God and the Holy Ghost is in this world gathering out that bride. Lively stones digging us up from the quarries

of humanity, shaping us up, knocking the knots off of us, getting us ready so that when the day of the rapture takes place, everything will be ready to fit into its place.

No rocket then, folks. Amen. Everything is being prepared now.

I said here the other day, if you're not ruled, you will never rule. Only the rule will rule. If He can't be Lord of your life now, then you will not sit on that throne that will be Lord of this universe.

It is now that we're conditioned and made ready for our eternal purpose. Amen. The judgment seat will convene during the time of the tribulation and the church will get its orders for eternity.

That's all being determined now as to how we're conforming to Jesus, how we're coming in life. What an awful waste it's going to be. You arrive there at the judgment seat of Christ and see how you've lost such a place in eternity.

You've lost such a place because you're more interested in things than you are in the spiritual. You know, I settled it one night. I came out of the church.

I've been praying Saturday night. It was a cold, crisp autumn night. I prayed until about 11 o'clock.

God had dealt with me about Sunday morning. As I came out, there wasn't a cloud. There wasn't anything between me and heaven.

And I looked up and those stars, those stars, those worlds up there that the Bible said were a part of the inheritance of God's Son for whom He made the worlds. And that scripture says that I'm an heir and a joint heir with Him. I said, I own more real estate.

It'll take eternity to look it over. Why should I be greedy and clamorous for things now? They're counting our money. They're the squatters.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. One day they're going to be moved out of the way and you and I are going to move in on it. We can struggle and fight and lose our reward of eternity over things now, or we can set our mind to things spiritual.

And one day we'll sit on top of it all. Seek the kingdom, He said. Seek the kingdom.

Seek the Lordship of Christ. That's what He's talking about. The word kingdom means a territory ruled by a king.

He doesn't want to rule Kentucky. He wants to rule your heart, lady. And if He can do that, that's what it means to seek the kingdom, that He is absolute Lord here.

I told a story I'm going to close with here today. Concerning this, church without spot, without wrinkle, that means you and I come to the place that we live only to do the will of God. We work on jobs that we can keep ourselves healthy, that we can do the will of God.

Lord Jesus said, it's written in the volume of the book, I've come to do Thy will, O God. And He said that you and I, as my Father sent me, so send I you. He's saying, you are here to do the will of God alone, nothing else.

Whatever else you do, you do on your own, but you are here to do the will of God. And the rewards of that eternal world will be given at that judgment seat entirely upon how much Christ has been formed in us while we were here. Years ago, in the church at home, there was a mongoloid, 43 years old, same age as me, one day different.

One day, I'd lived on this earth 24 hours longer than he had. That's all. He was a mongoloid, little boy in a big body, just a little bitty one-year-old boy.

He'd come to church, he hugged all the ladies. Amen. You couldn't let him out on the street by himself.

He'd get run over. He was just a little boy with a great big body. God showed me something about him.

He said, Junior, as we called him, don't know one millionth part of life that you know. You've only been here 24 hours longer on this earth than he's been, but he doesn't know one millionth part of life. He doesn't know what it is, is to have a lovely wife and family and grandchildren, be able to ride an airplane and talk to lovely people like you.

He knows nothing about that. He's happy in that little old bitty world, but it's a limited world, isn't it? I said it's a limited world. It's nothing more wonderful than a baby, but nothing more tragic than one that doesn't cease to be a baby.

Amen. To grow up and to become a full grown human being. And he said to me, he said, that boy has lived as long as you have, but he knows nothing about this life that you know.

And he said, there's going to be like that in eternity. People who have spent their life running after things of this rotten world, trying to accumulate, neglecting the good things, of waiting in his presence with his word and in prayer to know him. And in that world, there's going to be people that that's going to be an expansive world beyond dreams, but to some, it's going to be limited.

Some folks are going to be worse off in hell than others, and some folks are going to be infinitely greater in eternity. It's all going to rest on how we give ourselves to him now, where our priorities are now. If it's just a quest for things, what a tragedy.

If you're saved as a vampire, built on a wood head and stubble, and you arrive there that day, you see him and you're ashamed because your whole life has been spent on this little parenthetical thing called time, when we border in the middle of eternity. The church he's coming after is a spiritual body. He's not coming after a flesh pot.

He's not coming after a war-hop religious machine, but a living organism with a heartbeat, full of the Holy Ghost, making Jesus real. Let us stand and worship him here. Glory to God.

We're going to sing that old course, to be like Jesus. All that I ask is to be like him. That is the purpose of life.

That's the reason we're alive, and the reason that we're here, that we may be conformed to the image of Christ. I want us to sing that this afternoon. I want you to sing it as a prayer, not just the words of a course that somebody wrote, but a prayer to God.

I want to be like Jesus, folks. I want to be like Jesus. Amen.

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