

Clean Up the Place for God

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, fasting, and preparing for Christ's coming by purifying ourselves and occupying ourselves with God's work.

Duration: 51:51

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:14, Matthew 22:39, Romans 13:12, Romans 13:14, Ephesians 2:12-13, Ephesians 2:19-22, Ephesians 3:14

Topics: "Holiness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and experiencing true love, which is exemplified by God's love for us. He highlights how often we love for selfish reasons or only those who love us back. The speaker shares a story about a missionary who deeply missed his friends and emphasizes the need to love sacrificially. The sermon also discusses the power of prayer and shares examples of individuals who faced challenges in their ministry but persevered through prayer and reliance on God. The speaker encourages listeners to examine their hearts and remove any sinful behaviors or attitudes that grieve the Holy Spirit, in order to experience true victory and intimacy with God.

Transcript

Could I make a suggestion for these days? I'm sure that most of us are concerned. We love to see God do something new and deep and powerful. Why don't we perhaps pick a day and fast as well as pray? You know, the Bible has a great deal to say about fasting, New Testament and Old Testament both.

We sometimes think it's an Old Testament teaching only, it's not. Considering the fact that the Old Testament has 3.2 times as many words as the New Testament has, it's actually mentioned more frequently that if fasting is in the New Testament than it is in the Old. Someone has said that fasting is praying without words.

That's a good way of putting it because it's in the last chapter of Esther, you have this phrase, the matter of the fastings and their cry. In other words, fasting is a cry to God, it's praying without words. You might want to fast a meal, two meals, a whole day, two days.

I read some while ago about two men in one of the communist countries when communism was still in power. It was not a country that was as bad as Bulgaria or Romania under communism. I think it was East Germany.

But anyway, they were trying to get something going with youth. And they could rent a hall and discreetly advertise and never get more than five or six kids showing up. So then they decided on a radical program.

They decided to fast for seven days, both of them, these two men. Sixty-five kids showed up at the meeting. Then they realized they'd stumbled onto something and they kept doing this, not every week, but every now and then, another seven days of fasting.

Every time they did it, the numbers increased and increased and increased. And many found Christ as their Savior. Now, I don't want to embarrass anybody, but how many people took some time to pray specifically for this meeting before you came? Let me see your hands.

All right, I suppose about half. And if the other half don't get a good message, you know who to blame. I impose this on people everywhere I go.

Don't go to a single meeting in the house of God without praying somewhere, somehow, for that particular meeting that God will bless. Don't just expect that God's going to bless. Be part of it and pray.

Would you believe that Moody once held meetings in Theodore Cuyler's church, I believe in Boston, and would you believe they went for three weeks and the largest crowd they had on a weeknight was 35? Sunday they had a crowd. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, just 30 to 35 people. And finally, after three weeks of this, Theodore Cuyler said to Moody, Moody, this is awful slow work.

And Moody gave a classic answer. Here's what he said. You can't have a big fire until you have a small one.

At the end of the third week, two or three people got touched by God and a revival erupted. They moved from Cuyler's church to the biggest building in the city. They went for a month and a half.

I believe hundreds found Christ as their Savior. But don't forget, you can't have a big fire until you have a small one. I like the way Gordon was praying here about God perhaps calling some one person in this meeting or one of these meetings into full-time evangelism.

That would be great. I've been thinking along the same lines. As a matter of fact, God might touch some person that could be greatly used in his service.

When our brother this morning read the scripture from Ephesians chapter 3, I had a sinking feeling because God had led me to speak on that in this particular session. If you're not a preacher, you don't know how that is. Well, either he didn't get his message right or I didn't get mine right.

But it turned out he didn't deal with a portion of that scripture that I'm trying to deal on at all. And it wasn't a mistake. It was just the way God sometimes works.

I'm sure that some of you here have heard me bring at least, I won't say this message, but you've heard me speak from these verses before. I never did like warmed-up porridge. Actually, I never liked porridge warmed up the first time.

Because we lived on a farm, a very poor area in Manitoba, and my father went broke for eight or nine years, and then had the good sense to get off the farm and go back to the city. We lived a lot on rabbits and partridge and stuff like that. My main recollection as a boy was I was always hungry.

But we mainly ate porridge and macaroni. And I can't look a dish of macaroni in the face. All I can think of is, why are they wasting good cheese and good tomatoes on macaroni? I never could figure it out.

What did macaroni do for Italy, you know? And anyway, that's all beside the point. But let me tell you this, no matter if I preach a message a number of times, I always pray over it, I change it, I add to it, I maybe take something out of it. It's not the same message, no matter how many times the person might preach it.

I felt a little guilty the first time I preached the message the second time. And then I read that Charles Spurgeon, he was talking about preaching a certain sermon 50 times at least. And he said, God bless it every time I preached it.

So I guess it isn't bad. Ephesians chapter 3 and 14 to the end. I'm not going to read it because it was read this morning.

In chapter 2, Paul was speaking about that time. He said, at that time, he's talking to Gentiles, non-Jews, At that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, without God and without hope. That's how it was.

But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. So later on in chapter 2 he says, Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, grows unto a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together for habitation of God through the Spirit. Now ignore the chapter division, because remember that the chapter and verse divisions were put in hundreds and hundreds of years, long, long after the Bible was written.

For this cause, that's the next statement in chapter 3. For this cause. Then Paul, he digresses for 13 verses and comes back to it again in verse 14. For this cause.

For what cause? Because of this great truth, dear people, that we are being built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. A place for God to live. And that place is on us certain restrictions and responsibilities.

Even now. And Paul was much aware of this and so he said, For this cause, I pray, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I suppose we could just for a second look at the thought of bowing.

Must I kneel when I pray? Well, Jesus said when you stand praying, and David went to the temple and sat before the Lord and prayed, and likely when Jonah prayed he was horizontal, you know. So the posture is not important, but as someone said, you must be kneeling in your heart. We don't want to ever become flippant or overly familiar with God.

He is on earth. He is in heaven. We are on earth.

And our words, it says, are to be few. Then, for a few seconds, to whom do we pray? God the Father? Christ the Son? God the Holy Spirit? Well, as we all know, there is no jealousy in the Godhead. God the Father is not going to be upset because you pray to Jesus Christ the Son.

However, Jesus Christ said in the Gospel of John, at that day, and he is talking about the day of his resurrection, at that day you shall ask me nothing. Whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give

it to you. So basically we should be praying to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But it is not wrong to pray directly to Christ. If it is, we are going to have to take a lot of hymns out of our song books. And if we can't pray to the Holy Spirit, there is a lot of little choruses and what not, we will have to quit some hymns.

Oh Holy Ghost, revival comes from thee. We can't sing that. So it is not an important point.

But I do think that in some circles, they pray constantly to Jesus only. When Paul said, for this cause I bow my knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And his prayer was this, before we come to that.

Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. God only has one family. God doesn't have a family of Jewish converts and a family of Gentile converts.

Ephesians chapter 2 makes it very clear that that distinction is totally gone. Totally gone. We have been grafted into that Jewish olive tree.

We are told that elsewhere. And so God broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile. And he made in himself of two, one new man.

So making peace between the Jew and the Gentile. That's what he did. And God is the God of the whole family in heaven and earth.

Now when we think, and we often think, about the coming of Christ. And the church being translated into the kingdom of God in the twinkling of an eye. As Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

And we say the church will be translated. Or we might use the word raptured. Have you ever stopped to think that most of the church is already in heaven? Them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Now I guarantee there will be a lot more come with him than will be caught up to meet him in the air. So it's not right really in one sense to say the church. If you put it this way, the church on earth.

That's fine. Them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Then the church that's left on earth will be caught up to meet him in the air.

And I say this because sometimes you hear people saying, well God isn't going to take a defeated church home. Are you telling me that all the Christians who have died over 1900 years. Have gone into heaven in a state of victory and praising God and all of that kind of thing.

Of course not. We understand that. So what about these? But they're part of the church too.

Certainly will be wonderful. I know when the church is finally presented to Christ. It will be a glorious church.

Not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But 1 Corinthians chapter 3 makes it very clear. That after death our works are going to be tried in the fire of God.

And some people are going to have their whole life as it were burned up. He will be saved Paul says. But he's got no rewards.

Now that's after death. So God will have to take us home the way we are. We may not be ready for his coming.

We're not ready for his coming. Because we have to know all the little things that are going to happen when Christ comes back. Maybe we did nothing but study prophecy for years.

There are people like that. They're prophecy hunters. I used to be one of those when I was first converted.

Probably because I was converted by reading a little booklet by Clarence Larkin. On the second coming of Jesus Christ. And after this was the end of everything.

And I figured if a preacher didn't preach on the second coming of Christ. At least every second servant. He was either a liberal or a backslider.

I really thought that. Until I got to read the Bible for myself. And thought it was one of many great teachings in the Word of God.

So you're not ready for his coming because you know all about it. Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself. If you really have that hope in your heart.

You'll be busy purifying yourself. Like Paul said in 2 Corinthians 7. Having therefore these promises dearly beloved. Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. If you're not doing that. You're not ready for the coming of Christ.

The Bible doesn't say in the Gospel of Luke. Be occupied with my coming. He said occupy till I come.

If you're not occupied. If you're not busy in the work of God. Somehow, somewhere.

Then you're not ready for the coming of Christ. And obviously there are many other things we could think of. Relative to his coming.

It's high time to awake out of sleep. Paul said in Romans 13. For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

The night is far spent. The day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness.

Let's put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day. Not in writhing and drunkenness.

Not in sexual immorality and lustfulness. Not in strife and envying. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And make no provision for the flesh. To fulfill the lust or awe. You're not ready for the coming of Christ.

Unless you're casting off the works of darkness. Unless you put on the armor of light. This was written to Christian believers.

Now to get back to Ephesians 3. Paul's prayer. That He would grant you. Somebody once said.

If God doesn't do it. It'll never get done. In Ecclesiastes on the other hand it says.

Whatsoever God does. It shall be forever. Nothing can be put to it.

Nor anything taken from it. And God does it. That men should fear before Him.

That He. Why is it we keep looking to men for help? I remember a crusade one time. And a lot of people had responded.

It was in Winnipeg. I was counseling somewhere. And a fellow from my church.

Who had met God in revival. Saw a man sitting by himself. Went over and said.

Are you in need spiritually? Do you need some. Well he said. Bill McLeod is the only one that can help me.

He knows me. He's known me for years. He's the only one that can help me.

This guy says. Do you think Bill McLeod is Jesus Christ or something? Is that what you're telling me? He said. You don't need Bill McLeod.

You need Jesus Christ. He got the guy on his knees. And constantly prayed with him.

And he met God. He didn't need me. And sometimes people feel that way.

I remember during the revival in Saskatoon. Some preachers came from up in northern Thompson, Manitoba. Dale Kuypers was one.

Gordon will know him. And they came to Winnipeg. And then I've met Dale before you know.

And he told me how helpless. They all felt the same. Unless God did something in their life.

You know. They were just going to give up their ministry. So he said.

Bill we've got to get together. And I said. Well Dale as a matter of fact.

I'm leaving shortly to go to Toronto. He said. Oh you can't do that.

We need you. I said. You don't need me.

I mean. If I dropped dead tonight. It would be hardly a ripple on the water.

You think the work of God is going to quit. Because Bill McLeod dies. And I remember.

When I walked away. And I looked back. They were just staring.

They couldn't believe I wasn't going to be there. Who did they come to meet? Bill McLeod or Christ? Your need is not a counselor really. Your need is Christ.

And He can meet your need. He's able to meet your need. Whatever it is.

We're hoping sometimes. You know. That we can get a counselor.

That will pat us on the back. And make us feel good. In our sin.

That's why some people. Are always going to counselors. It's not because they really want an answer to a problem.

They want to be happy in their misery. If that's possible. It isn't really possible.

So forget about it. That He would grant you. According to His riches.

In glory. And you must remember. When you think of the Lord.

That His riches. Are infinite. That is.

They cannot be measured. Whether it's mercy. Or love.

Or grace. Or peace. Or truth.

Or whatever it is. His attributes. They are all of them.

Infinite. Which means of course. You can't have the kind of a problem.

That God can't meet. I mean that's totally impossible. If you want an illustration.

Let's take an ant. That's me. That's you.

And an elephant. That's God. Now even with that kind of a comparison.

We have to apologize to God. Because the distance between myself and God. No matter how you look at it.

Is far greater. Than the intellectual distance between. Or even the physical size between.

An ant and an elephant. Infinite. Means without measure.

So you never exhaust. God's resources. No matter how much you take.

Or how much you get. It doesn't go down. One one thousandth of an inch.

In a million years. Because it's infinite. Because he is infinite.

The riches of his glory. And Paul's prayer was. That of God's infinite riches.

He would strengthen us. With power. By the spirit.

In the inner man. That was his prayer. Do you need strengthening? Well the answer probably would be.

Who doesn't? Who doesn't want strength and power from God. To stand up? I just finished reading a book that really. Fired me up a little bit.

It's called When the Wicked Seize the City. It's the story of a. Little Presbyterian pastor. In San Francisco.

He had a small church. About fifty. I think he had a hundred people.

And fifty left. When he got involved. And what he got involved in.

He decided. They were passing laws. Favoring the homosexuals.

He decided to challenge these laws in court. He won every case he had. But he paid.

A price. They vandalized his car. They burned his house.

They burned his church. They threatened his life. And it happened.

There were several homosexuals. Who did not go along with that. And these people would secretly tell him.

When they were plotting something against him. And several times. He had to get out of San Francisco entirely.

Until the heat was off. Sadly he said. People in the area.

Evangelicals in the area. Did not stand with him. They were all afraid.

Of getting the same kind of treatment. Although evangelicals from all over the United States. Prayed for him when they heard about it.

And they sent him money. One court case cost 120,000. He never had it.

But it came from Christians across America. There was a Christian radio station in the area. They would not stand with him.

Everybody was afraid. You know. The psychiatrist always said.

That homosexuality was a pathological disturbance. You know what the homosexuals did? How they got him to change it? A group of them. Stormed into a meeting of psychiatrists in the United States.

There were 3,000 psychiatrists there. These guys stormed in. Took over the podium.

And threatened these men. They screeched. They screamed.

They threatened them. And the psychiatrists bowed to the heat. And declared it was not a pathological situation at all.

That they were quite normal. And so they've been feasting on that ever since. We are not disturbed mentally in the slightest.

We are perfectly normal people. But some others in the meantime. They've gone into some areas.

I read of a recent report where they talked to 2,500 psychiatrists. And 78% of them said it is a disturbance. But we're facing militant.

They call them activists. Gay activists. They were making a lot of inroads into the American culture.

They had a recent meeting in Toronto. And there were 80,000 of them. They came from all over the United States.

They ganged up on cities to try and make the city feel that there's a lot of them around. There's not. These statistics are showing consistently across North America.

There are 2% at the very most. But they're claiming at least 10. Some cases throwing around a figure of 15 to scare the politicians.

In any case, I didn't intend to say this. But we need to understand people are going to have to stand up. They're going to hit your community as well as mine.

Eventually. What are we going to do? Be quiet. We're going to have to stand up.

There was a time, you know, when they hid under their rocks and down in their holes. Not anymore. They're on the street corners now.

Have you ever seen a video of one of their parades? Shocking in the extreme. Men going through homosexual acts. In the parade.

And making all kinds of obscene gestures to the people on the sidewalks. Thank God for the lady mayor in Winnipeg. When she was running for mayor, she said, If I get elected, they'll never have a gay day parade in this city.

Well, thank God she's not a Christian as far as I know. Anyway. That He would grant you, according to His riches and glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man.

And what's the result of that? That Christ may abide in your heart by faith. You know, years ago when I was a young Christian, I read that. And it threw me through a loop.

What in the world is Paul talking about? Christ already lives in my heart. Why should I pray for some deeper experience where Christ was going to come and live in my heart? It didn't make any sense. It really disturbed me.

I studied it up and down and sideways, and I couldn't get anything out of it. I didn't understand it. Well, Kenneth Weiss, he's a Greek scholar, and he's done a New Testament.

And I was reading that one day, and the light went on. Here's how he translated it. That Christ may settle down and feel at home in your heart by faith.

Oh, that's entirely different. He's already here in my heart, but He may not feel at home in my heart. May I ask you some questions? How can Jesus Christ, the One who's called the truth, live in a heart that's not truthful? That person is always telling little fibs.

They call them exaggerations. God calls them lies. How can Jesus Christ, the Holy One, how can He feel at home in a heart, a Christian heart, that thinks lustful thoughts? You tell me how He can feel at home in a heart like that.

When I preached in the logging camps with the Shanty Mounds Christian Association, I sometimes stayed in clapboard hotels, often bush areas. And usually in those hotels, I remember one place, I was sitting in my room, I was reading my Bible, and a man walked in, looked into my cupboard, looked under my bed, and walked out again. To this day, I don't know why he came in.

Clapboard walls, everything going on here, everything going on there, everything going down here, you could hear the whole thing. It was like being in Sodom. Do you think I felt at home? There was such a hotel in Grandview, Manitoba.

I stayed there. The garbage I heard, it was so bad, I said, God, I said, burn this place down. And it burned a week later.

I never let them know about it. The insurance company might have been down on my neck. But, you know, I just couldn't stand it.

It was so rotten. And we wonder sometimes why our Christian experience is so bad when the real problem is that Jesus Christ, He lives in our heart. He doesn't feel at home.

He's got to listen to the garbage that goes on there, whether we're watching lustful programs on TV or renting videos that are salacious. And we watch those things and expose ourselves to them and excuse it and say, we're not under law, we're under grace. But the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

You've got grace by the wrong end if you think it allows you to do anything you want to do. The grace of God teaches how to live a pure and holy life, separate unto God and the gospel. How can Christ feel at home where the person is critical, always judging somebody else? How can Christ feel at home in a heart like that? And people, I've opened the door.

You can open it wider yourself. There's a lot of things we might think of here that grieve the Spirit of God. Remember, Paul said, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

The day of redemption is the coming of Christ, when our bodies will be redeemed, our souls will be redeemed, our bodies will be redeemed in the day of redemption when Christ comes back. We've been sealed to the day of redemption. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit.

Someone said, you can only grieve love. What does the context say? Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor seeking for personal attention be put away from you. He mentions malice in the context, that secret hatred in the heart.

And then he says, be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. Be you therefore followers of God as dear children and walk in love. Have you got hatred in your heart? Have you got bitterness in your heart? How in the world can Jesus Christ feel at home in a heart like that? He can't, people, and He doesn't.

And Paul in Galatians 5, he talks about the tension that develops between the flesh and the Holy Spirit. He says, these are contrary, the one to the other, so that you can't do the things that you would. As long as this conflict is there, dear people, between myself and the Christ who lives within me, I'll find myself totally immobilized, unable to work in the work of God.

Until, as someone said, I vote with the Holy Spirit against myself. They that are Christ have crucified the flesh with their passions and lusts. Have you done that? If you haven't, how can Christ feel at home in your heart? Gordon and I once counseled with a fellow.

Three weeks before, if I remember rightly, he and his wife had gone forward in a meeting and dedicated their lives to missionary service. But he came for counseling and his problem was he was hooked on pornography. He said, I watch this stuff, any dirty junk I know about, I get a hold of, I watch it.

He let his wife into it. They were doing some of these rotten things together. And so I said, alright, do you want to get out of it? He said, as a matter of fact, I don't.

He said, I love it. Now he knew he could not go into Christian work when he had this kind of a problem. So there was a battle going on inside.

I didn't really know what to say to him, and so I just shot up a prayer and the answer came down. This is what I said. I said, I want to tell you something now.

Jesus Christ, as you know, lives in your heart. And every time that you watch those dirty programs, you're forcing the Christ of God to watch them with you. I wish you could have seen what happened.

He fell on his face on the floor and he literally screamed, Oh my God, what have I been doing to you? He never thought of it this way before. But people, the reason why we don't have victory in our life is because the Christ within us is grieved by our bitterness and our anger and our lying and all these other things that come in, that we allow and sometimes enjoy. And what we have to do is clean the house.

Get rid of these things, whatever they are. Open up our heart totally to God. Give Him the key to every room in our life, holding nothing back.

He'll make it clean, sweet. He knows how to do it. To be strengthened with power by His Spirit and the inner man, that Christ may abide in your hearts by faith in you, being rooted and grounded in love.

You know, we talk a lot about getting new converts rooted and grounded in doctrine. That's fine. I had a friend in the Winnipeg area.

He was rooted and grounded in doctrine, but certainly not rooted and grounded in love. He loved to argue doctrine. Especially two things, prophecy, where he considered himself to be an expert, and then he loved to argue about election and predestination.

He had it all figured out. Argue, argue, argue. People avoided him.

But he was always looking for somebody he could argue under the table. Well, we had revival meetings in 1972 in Winnipeg. Spilled over, went for five weeks there, and many people were touched.

And one night he was in the meetings, and one night he phoned me, and he was crying, and here's what he said. He said, you know, I'm lying in pieces on the floor. God has torn me apart.

He said, Bill, do you think that the Lord can put me back together again? I said, I'm sure He'll have no problem. Well, please pray for me. I said, I'll pray for you.

Do you know he came forward five times in that crusade? When I saw him coming forth that fifth time, I thought, oh no, not again. What's going on in the prayer room? But the next night, after he came forward the fifth time, we had sharing time. He came running up on the platform, literally running up on the platform.

He whirled around with a shiny face, and he said something like this. He said, five trips to the altar, and four and a half weeks later, I can now say I'm fully committed to my God. You couldn't get him into an argument on predestination of the second coming of Christ if you tried.

He's been winning souls ever since. He's one of the greatest witnesses I know. Everywhere he goes, he meets somebody new, it's only a couple of minutes.

You listen to him, you can see the way he works. Just great. Now he's rooted and grounded in love.

And that's what it says. This is what God wants, to be rooted and grounded in love. Some Christian, you're afraid to even talk to them, because they're just ready to snap about this and snarl about that.

You hear kids sometimes saying, boy, I sure wish Mom and Dad were as nice in church, or as nice at home as they are in church. It's not quite that way at home sometimes. I remember a preacher friend of mine, he was calling one of his parishioners in Ontario.

And just as he came up the walk to the house, he heard the mother screaming at one of the boys. And she was calling everything under the sun. And apparently she had a broom, and she was swinging this broom at him, and she missed, and she hit some lights, and he had all kinds of glass breaking, you know, and she was cursing at him.

And suddenly the kid got his chance, and he came tearing off the door, and she came tearing the broom over, and she saw the pastor, and she dropped the broom and said, Pastor, praise the Lord. Well, he said at that point he understood why the kid didn't believe in God, you know. But you know this kind of thing.

I know sometimes we can be provoked beyond our ability to currently, you know, react properly. But if we do react in a wrong way, confess it immediately. Make things right with the person if you have to.

But don't go moping around for weeks and say, oh man, I did it again, you know. Bring it to God, get forgiveness, and go right on. And God will strengthen you as you do this.

I struggled over that too until I read Job chapter 11. It says, What can you do? Deeper than hell, what can you know? He's talking, people, about the immensity of God. He's an infinite God.

And when we're rooted and grounded in the love of God, then we begin to comprehend something of the greatness of our God. Greater far than tongue or pen can tell, we sing about His love. That's one of His attributes.

His power, His mercy, whatever you think of. In Romans 15, Paul said, In the book of Hebrews, it says, The God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well, pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, who will be glory and dominion forever. 1 Peter 5, verse 10, But the God of all grace, who has called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you.

I might just add a word of caution here. It isn't all going to happen when you go to the prayer room. Some things will happen there.

A door gets open. Hopefully a door gets open that never shuts. I mean, a door to God.

So we don't shut that door ever again in the face of God. We let Him talk to us. We want Him to talk to us.

We want Him to change us. That's His work. But it doesn't all happen in five minutes or half an hour in a prayer room.

So we deal with what God shows us now, and maybe like this fellow I mentioned, I may have to go forward five times. Or maybe even more. What difference does it make? As long as we make some progress each

time, and we deal with some things.

I think if God was to lay everything on us at once, something would flake right out. We give up on the Christian life. He doesn't do that.

He knows exactly how far He can go at a given moment. Be content with that. Then what does He say? And to know the love of Christ.

Well, He talked about being rooted and grounded in the love of God. And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge. Why? He says that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

People, some of you have heard me say this before, I'm sure. There is no such thing as being filled with the Holy Spirit unless you're filled with the love of God. I don't believe in that kind of experience where the people are, you know, they'd say, I've been filled with the Holy Ghost.

And then you find they don't obey the speed laws, and they gossip. You know what happened to me when I was in Romania? I was flying, I was sitting next to a fellow who was raised Orthodox Catholic in Romania. He was a Romanian, but he knew English.

So he had a good talk. Talked about the Lord. He said, I'm born again.

I said, thank God. How did it happen? Well, he said, I was in an Orthodox Catholic church. And they never really preached this message.

And he mentioned a certain evangelical church that he heard about. And he said, he heard the singing was good. So he went over there.

Oh, he said, the singing was just lovely. He began attending there and eventually got saved. Then he got very disillusioned with these evangelicals and he went back to the Orthodox Catholic church.

You know what happened? He said, every time I was in an evangelical home, he said, they spent most of the time criticizing other evangelicals or criticizing some other church. He said, I heard it again and again and again and again. There were people, by the way, with a strong claim to being filled with the Holy Ghost, but full of criticism.

And it turned this young convert off and he went back to the dead Catholic church, the Orthodox Catholic church. He was reading his Bible. He was praying.

He was still trying to walk with God. But people, what happened? Well, here were people who claimed they were filled with the Holy Spirit, but they're not rooted and grounded in love. And when you're rooted and grounded in love, you're going to have it tested sometimes, and possibly many times.

It's not what happens to me. It's my reaction to what happens to me that shows whether I'm really dead with Christ or not. You know, praying Hyde, and here's an example, praying Hyde, a famous missionary from India, was invited to speak at the most prestigious deeper life conference in the world.

I'm referring to Keswick in England. They only got the best of speakers. They didn't know when they asked him to come that he was a very slow speaker.

It took him 15 minutes to get warmed up even. Well, he was introduced, went to the podium, began to speak very slowly, measurably, and so on. And the crowd got restless.

They were not accustomed to this kind of thing. He preached about nine minutes, and a lady got up and announced a hymn, and they sang him down, and he never spoke again at the conference. Let me ask you a question.

If that happened to you, what would your reaction be? Embarrassed? Angry? Try and find a hole to crawl into? Give up on God? These are things that would happen to the average Christian. Do you know what happened to praying Hyde? Afterwards, a friend of his went to him and said, Oh, Brother Hyde, that was a terrible thing they did to you. And he said, Brother Hyde smiled at me so sweetly and said, My dear brother, it is the Lord.

Let him do as seemeth him good. All I can say is, dear people, he knew what it meant to be crucified with Christ. And Dr. Washington Carver, an American Negro scientist, people, listen, he developed 300 commodities from the lowly peanut and 150 from the sweet potato.

The Russian government, knowing he was an evangelical believer, they asked him to come and direct their whole agricultural program for the whole of Russia. A chemical company asked him to come and work. They said, We'll give you a salary of \$100,000 a year.

He wrote back and said, It's not enough. So they offered, they actually finally sent him a blank check and said, You fill in the amount. And he wrote back and said, You guys don't have enough.

He was working for \$100 a month. That's all he would take from the institute. He wasn't married, didn't have a lot of financial expenses.

And this famous scientist was walking down the street in the village where the institute was and a new lady had moved in. And she didn't know who he was. She saw this black going down the sidewalk and she called him over and she said, If you'll mow my lawn, I'll give you \$2.

Certainly, he said, Where is the mower? So she gets him this push mower and he mows the whole lawn. She gives him \$2. He thanks her very much.

He goes on down the street. But a neighbor lady saw the whole thing, Don't you know who that was? No, who was that? That was Dr. Washington Carver. Well, the lady fell over in a faint almost.

Now, he could have said, Don't you know who I am? I am Dr. Washington Carver. I mean, that's the way some of us would have reacted. But, dear people, dying with Jesus by death-wrecking mine, death isn't pleasant no matter how you look at it.

I heard about a fellow, you know, and it kind of illustrates the way we handle it. He had to cut the tail off the dog. He didn't want to hurt the dog, so he cut it off an inch at a time so it wouldn't hurt so much.

And, you know, we do the same thing. We cut off a leaf, a leaf here, a twig there, a branch there, trying to get rid of the old man. But the New Testament begins with John the Baptist saying, And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the tree.

Remember, they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with their passions and lusts. By the grace of God, do it to them, that he would grant you, according to his riches and glory, to be strengthened with might by

his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may abide in your hearts by faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all things what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. And, people, we can never be filled with the fullness of God unless I say, as I said before, I am filled with the love of God.

People forget when Moody had the dynamic experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit, he said, I was so filled with the love of God I felt I could take the whole world into my heart. That aspect is being forgotten. Then he had his dynamic experience of being filled with the Holy Ghost.

What did he say? He said, I felt as if I were being fanned with gigantic wings of love. That's what he said. It was a love experience.

The verse our brother dealt with so ably this morning, I conclude just by touching on it very briefly, because there's always Christians who say, well, I've gone forward 16 times now and nothing ever happens. Unto him that's able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. People, he can meet your need if you'll be totally honest.

The problem is, so often we're not totally honest. In the book of Job it talks about a person, it calls him a hypocrite, and it talks about him having a sweet morsel, that is a candy, under his tongue. And the candy represents secret sin.

Nobody else knows he has this. Nobody else knows he's enjoying it. The Bible talks about the pleasures of sin.

There's a certain amount of pleasure in some kinds of sin. But somebody said, champagne Saturday night, real pain Sunday morning. That's the way it's going to be.

Anyway, he's got this sweet morsel under his tongue. Secret sin. He's a hypocrite.

And you know what it says? He'll not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. John 7, 38 will never be real in his life. Out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

He'll not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter. He'll never see the full tide of God's Spirit in his life. He'll never see that because he's got secret sin.

And the Bible tells me in Psalm 90, Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, Our secret sins in the light of your countenance. People, we can't really get away with anything. People come to me and they say, Brother Beale, I've got a rotten conscience.

Would you pray for me? And I say, no, I won't. Because in Hebrews chapter 13 it says, Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience in all things willing to live honestly. If you've got a rotten conscience, deal with it, brother.

You know what's wrong. Deal with those things. I'll pray for you afterwards when you have a good conscience.

I mean, that's Hebrews chapter 13. For this cause I bow my knees, Paul said. And it's in the Bible because, you know, God wanted it for more than just the church at Ephesus.

We are being built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. And God wants us to be clean and right, right with Him, right with each other. There's some people, and we excuse, you know, some people walk into church, they take a quick look around to see what Mr. So-and-so is saying.

You just make sure you don't sit in the same queue. I remember in a Pentecostal church one time, the preacher told me, he said, Bill, this church is absolutely dead. Give them the works.

You know what my text was? Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, that was my text. The preacher amen-ed me all the way through. I gave an invitation.

Forty people came forward. They got into the back room. And the preacher said, Now look, brother Bill's going to tell you what to do, and you do it.

So I told him what to do. After we'd gone through the three steps of renewal, then I said, Now there may be some here that feel the need of further personal counseling. Just raise your hand.

The lady raised her hand right away, and the preacher whispered in my ear, he said, She's the best Christian I've got. So I went to talk to her, and then we got to the point of prayer. She told me, first of all, she said, You know, my problem is this.

I don't love anybody. I tolerate people. I can put on a good front.

I can smile and give them a little hug and all that kind of stuff. I just tolerate people. I don't love people.

See, the Bible says we're supposed to love one another with a pure heart, fervently, because we're born again, 1 Peter 1, 22 and 3. So we went to prayer about this, and suddenly she burst off into tongues. I didn't say anything. I just waited until she was all through.

And when she was all through, she turned to me and said, Oh, I should never have done that. She felt badly that she had done this. I thought to myself, Well, now if the Holy Spirit inspired this, why would she feel badly about it? In any case, she met God on the issue of love.

Instead of tolerating people, to love people with the love of God. And we can do it. I was all set to quit something else God put in my mind.

I think first, I don't know, I'll quit after that, I think. I had a crusade in Great Falls, Montana, in an Alliance church. And the pastor, I didn't notice until I got there, the pastor said, We have a missionary from Africa here.

He's a wonderful person. And we're wondering, Would you mind if we gave him a half an hour every night? He'd take the first half hour and we'll give you the rest of it. I said, That's just great.

I love missions. I pray for countries every day around the world using the book Operation World. Anyway, I'm so glad that he had to settle there.

This fellow told us, When he gave his life completely to God, and God called him to full-time work, Do you know what he asked God to do? He said, God, You send me to the country in the world where nobody else wants to go. Give me the hardest, dirtiest, poorest country in the world. And God did.

In the heart of Africa. I forget the name of the country now. He showed some pictures of people.

There was nothing. The men wore loincloths. They had nothing.

And the odd tree in the sea looked like it was just about to die. And one night, he showed a slide of about 20 men. You know, such an unkempt looking crew.

And the slide was on, the picture was on the screen. And suddenly he burst into tears, this missionary did. And he just stood there weeping and finally said, They're my friends.

Those are my best friends. I miss them so much. I thought, Hallelujah.

You talk about the love of God, see. And we've got our love on the wrong things, dear people. We love those that love us.

We love people so we can get something out of them, you know. We don't give the way God gives. We don't really understand what love really is.

And we'll never know it, dear people, until we let the Christ of God have his way in our life and live his life to us. Let's pray.

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