

Rivers of Living Water (video)

by Bill McLeod

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being rooted and grounded in love, forgiveness, and humility, drawing examples from powerful stories of forgiveness and transformation. It highlights the need for Christians to be strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit, to allow Christ to dwell in their hearts, and to comprehend the depth of God's love. The message encourages believers to seek revival through obedience, forgiveness, and a deep understanding of God's abundant grace.

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Description

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Transcript

Well, good morning. It's good to be here because the Lord is here. I want to read from Psalm 65, beginning at verse 9. It's telling us that God visits the earth and waters it.

He greatly enriches it with the river of God, which is full of water. I'd like to stop for just a moment and ask this question. If God's river is full, why is yours empty? We have no excuse to be empty when God's river is always running full.

He waters the ridges thereof abundantly. It goes on to say he makes it soft with showers. He blesses the springing thereof.

In the last statement in verse 13, they shout for joy. They also sing. I want to begin by talking about revival before revival.

I mean on a smaller scale. Things we saw happening, which you could call revival, before 1971 in Saskatoon. I was at a pioneer camp in Lake of the Woods, directing a camp there.

On the way down, I had to get down on a little train called a Tunaville trolley. On the way down, God pressed my heart to give out tracks on the train, which I did. I must confess I really wasn't that happy about it, but I did it and got happy doing it.

Then at the camp, God came. I've never seen anything quite like it before or since. Can you see in your mind a gang of teenage kids at dinnertime, many of them sitting at the table with their heads on their dinner plate, afraid to say anything.

I didn't know what was going on for a few moments, and I realized it has to be God. One boy raised his head and cried, my camp name was Shippee. He said, Shippee, can you really know you're saved? I assured him he could.

His head went bang down on the plate again. It continued through the week or more of the meetings. God was there in a very powerful way, and God made something plain to me that had I failed to obey him on the way down on the Tunaville trolley, this would not have happened in the camp.

There's always a connection between our obedience and his blessing. I started a Bible camp on a place called Bird River, eastern Manitoba years ago. We had a little time there with Christian workers, 40 men.

Great fishing country, so I prayed that God would make it rain the whole weekend so nobody would go fishing. We'd have time together, and that's what happened. It rained all weekend.

I never let them know that I was the author of this, but they didn't have to know. And Cecil Carter was the speaker. I don't suppose anybody here ever met him or heard of him, but he was one of the choicest servants of God I've ever had the joy of meeting.

You could never be with him and be the same that you were before you were with him. He was a missionary to logging camps in Canada. I don't have time to talk much about that, but greatly used of God.

He was our speaker, and the idea was now he'll speak, and then we'll start asking questions, but that's not what happened. Halfway through his message, I knew there was no time for questions. There would have to be a time for prayer.

And when he was through, all I said was, Brethren, let's pray, and everybody dropped on their knees and started praying out loud together, everybody. It was a visitation from God. Several of these workers afterwards crowded around.

They were saying things like this, I can never preach again. I'm too filthy. I can't preach.

I don't know how many now, but there were several of these men absolutely bombed by God. It was incredible. It went on for the whole weekend.

We had a male cook. He asked us to forgive him because he had been guilty of shedding tears into the soup. So we forgave him.

Revival before revival. In Saskatoon, in the church before revival, we had 10 deacons. We were having a deacons' meeting one Saturday night, and somebody said, I don't remember who it was, but they said, don't expect God to answer your prayer if you're living in sin.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. God moved in, and deacons began crying and running to one another, making things right with each other. One came and wept on my shoulder and asked my forgiveness.

It was a real work of God, but I didn't know what to do with it. I think had we gotten these deacons into the pulpit the next day, Sunday morning, we could have had a real awakening then. But we thank God for it.

Then one Sunday morning in the church, about two years before the revival, while I was speaking, I don't even remember what I was saying, but the power of God somehow came into the meeting. It was incredible to see what was happening. People were getting up and leaving the auditorium to find a room where they could be alone with God and pray.

It was an amazing thing. I sensed and felt the power of God. You don't always have to feel and sense the power of God to know that he's there.

But again, it was God moving, and it was a small revival, but that was before 1971. How did we prepare for the coming of Ralph Lucitaro? We did nothing but pray. They brought a big banner about three feet wide and 12 feet long with some stuff on that wanted us to stick it up on the church outside.

We didn't really need it, and the day they put it up that night there was a big rainstorm and wind, and it blew down in the mud, and we never, ever used it. We didn't need it. God had other ways of advertising the meetings from person to person.

There's a book called *Flames of Freedom*, which many of you have read. It's a good book but lacking in one respect. Absolutely nothing was said in the book about the way our church prepared in prayer, and I asked them several times to correct that, and it never happened in later editions.

I don't know why. When I moved there in 1962 from Winnipeg to Saskatoon, Saskatoon was a small city, 120,000. I had a Baptist church with 175 members.

The auditorium was C300. We had kind of a good church, I guess you'd say. Everybody believed in missions and evangelism.

Nobody did it. They all believed in it, and quite a few of our people were Bible school graduates, mostly young married couples, a lot of young people, and there we were in 1962. Usually once a year we had a series of meetings with an evangelist or whatever, singers, a team maybe, and it was always the same.

After they had gone, you'd never know they'd been there. There was no difference in the church, exactly the same. We had one man who was a great musician.

He trained a choir of 45 every night prior to the meeting. He had great singing, and he was a great preacher, and maybe one or two got saved and two or three got revived a little. But after he was gone, it was like the others.

So finally I got to a place where I told God, I said, God, I'm not going to do it again. We're not going to have this kind of thing again. This is not revival.

It's not what we need. So I shared this with a missionary, and he said, contact Ralph and Lucita, who are they, he told me, and I contacted them. They couldn't come for two years, but they said they would come.

So we began to pray. When I went there in 1962, we had about 25 in the prayer meeting, 175 members, and I told the people things like this. Miss Sunday morning if you have to.

Miss Sunday evening if you must. But never miss the prayer meeting unless you're dead. Then we'll excuse you.

And the people began to take it seriously. We get up to 50 people. We get up to 75 people.

We get up to 100. We get up to 150. I remember one prayer meeting, and I counted.

There was 170 people there. We only had 175. And then we began, after we saw what was happening, that they were really responding.

God began to lead us to do other things besides, I mean, to pray, but another way. I remember telling the people, ask God to wake in you every night at some point just to pray. One o'clock, two o'clock, whatever.

And people started doing this. I remember people saying things like this. I used to be prayed out in three minutes.

I prayed 45 minutes last night. This was happening. Then we had cottage prayer meetings.

I used to tell the people, when you're asking a blessing over the food, don't worry about the salad getting cold. Pray before you eat. They began doing that too.

When people met, I told them when two Christians met, pray before you part. They began doing that. And there was other ways in which we urged them to pray, encouraged them as we saw what was happening.

The prayer meeting became the most exciting meeting of the week. Nobody wanted to miss it. Here's how it used to be.

I would preach 40 minutes. They would pray for 15 minutes. And we'd call it a prayer meeting.

We changed that. I would speak for 15 minutes. And we would pray maybe 40 minutes or longer.

We never had an ending time. You just went home and you felt like going home. And always the opportunity in a prayer meeting, tell us, has God answered some prayer for you this last week? Share it.

Even a small thing. Tell us about it. Is there anybody here tonight who needs prayer? We always had a chair out.

And people might need prayer. They'd come and share the need. And then we'd have a little group of people come, women here, a woman here.

Some women would come, a man here. Men would come. And we'd pray for people.

And it got to a place where nobody wanted to miss a prayer meeting. It was wonderful. That went on for about two years.

We didn't know what God had in mind. We don't have to know. He knows.

Then we started having children's prayer meetings. Jonathan Edwards tells of children's prayer meetings in his time, which ensued in great revival. The children would have their prayer time.

Adults would come and sit in the back queues and just listen to the kids praying. And numbers of times, powerful revivals ensued. So we started having children's prayer meetings in conjunction with the church

prayer meetings.

I mean, they sat there for the first part, and then they went to another room to have their own prayer meeting. Finally, we had 40 children or so attending. So we had two children's prayer meetings.

And we had an adult looking after each prayer meeting. But they weren't to dominate it. They were just to be there to kind of guide them.

And children led their own prayer meetings. And they loved it. And it was all part of what God was doing by way of preparation.

Now, you can't lay a lot of these things on a church like that all at once. You couldn't do it. They couldn't have carried it.

But when we began to pray seriously, God gave us a spirit of prayer. Everybody was praying. And praying it seemed all the time.

And then, of course, God came. There's a man called Calvin Colton. He was a pastor in the States back in the early 1800s.

And there was some powerful revivals going on. He wrote a book, which is called A History of American Revivals of Religion. I picked up a copy.

It was printed in 1832. I got a copy in a second-hand bookstore. Falling apart, I still have it at home.

I understand there's been a somebody has reprinted this book of his. I don't know where to get it. Anyway, it was really interesting.

He said things like this. We were never satisfied with ordinary church meetings. We weren't satisfied with insulated conversions.

By insulated, we would say isolated. Two or three finding Christ, that's fine. A family being saved, that's wonderful.

But he said we were never happy until God, the Holy Spirit, came and took the work out of our hands and made the whole community aware of God. Then hundreds would be converted. And then he said this.

This kind of revival never came to a church that didn't expect it and believed God for it. And it never failed to come to a church that believed God for it. It's quite a sweeping statement, but that's what he recorded.

He made much of the fact that revival was coming to churches that believed God for it. There was a human process here, mainly a divine thing, but there is a human element, Paul said. A gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost.

And there's a human element in much assurance, as you know, what manner of men we were among you for your sakes. And you became followers of us and of the Lord. So the gospel, 1 Peter chapter 1, preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

That's what's lacking. There's much gospel preaching without the Holy Ghost. It's obvious from what we're seeing, not happening today in the majority of churches.

Stoddard, he was related to Jonathan Edwards, a pastor in the New England states. He had five revivals in his church in 35 years. Other churches were not experiencing revival.

So finally, a group of pastors came to Stoddard and said, what is the secret? Why is God favoring you? So he said something like this. He's not favoring us. It's just that you look at it differently than we look at it.

Well, what do you mean? He said, we pray for revival. We believe God for revival. We fast for revival.

And we preach about revival until God comes. Now he said, you brethren don't do that. You say, well, maybe God will do it and maybe he won't.

And you sit around waiting for something to happen. He said that's the only difference I can think of. Was he right? I remember reading an article.

The writer said, if you ever experience a revival, you go through the fire of a revival. You'll certainly never see a second one because most Christians never even see one. Well, Stoddard had five revivals, each of them resulting in hundreds of conversions to Christ.

Five of them, five revivals. And Envenor tells of churches in his many books on revival, where churches had as many as eight revivals in their church over a period of time. But faith, that element, as Stoddard said, certainly.

Then I read about a church. This was in the early 1800s also. The congregation was desperate for revival.

So what do they do? Listen carefully. They had three prayer meetings a day for two years. Can you believe it? Three prayer meetings a day for two years.

They determined that by the grace of God, they would have a visitation from God. Remember that parable in Luke? I send you that he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, but because of his importunity, he will give him as many as he needs. Importunity defined as shameless asking or asking that will not be denied.

That's what's needed. That's what happened. Pentecost, 120 people, 10 days of prayer.

And then Christ, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this, which you now see and hear. Christ was the author of Pentecost. He did it.

He does it again, Acts chapter 4. And again, Acts chapter 10. And thousands were being converted. The church in Jerusalem may have been a church with 50,000 converts eventually by the grace of God.

I came to Winnipeg from Saskatoon, 500 miles away, with a team. And the church was absolutely packed out. They wanted to hear what God was doing.

And there was a man called Howard Gardner, 6'2", a Baptist pastor. Young people followed him by hundreds. Great comedian and doing, he thought, quite well.

He was in the meeting. And when he knew that I was in the meeting, he said to himself, this won't be very emotional because Bill McCloud's running it. I don't know exactly what he meant by that.

Anyway, he was sitting there, and later on he told me what happened. My team shared, and he said, I had to admit grudgingly that something had really happened to these people. But he dismissed it.

And then he said, you quoted the verse, let each esteem other better than themselves. He said, when you quoted that verse, it was as if the congregation disappeared. And there's nobody there but the Lord and me.

And he said to me, do you live this way? And he said, I said to the Lord, yes, I think I do. So God said, what about George Bell? Now, George Bell was a pastor that Howard Gardner had no use for. And he said to the Lord, I don't know how you can bless him the way you do.

He's just a big windbag. That's what he said to God. And the Lord told him to go forward.

Now, I'm at the front. I'm preaching. I see him coming down the aisle.

His face is white as a snowbank. And he looked sick. He told me, Bill, he said, I was sick.

I've never been sicker in my life. And then he said something. And I'm just going to tell you what he told me.

You'll have to figure it out yourself. He was walking down the aisle to the front when he said, Jesus met me and put his hand on my head and reduced me to absolute zero. When I got to the altar, I knelt there.

I couldn't even find myself. There was nobody there but God. And he came to me and said, what about George Bell? And he said, I said to God, oh God, he's a thousand times better than me.

God said, now you've got it right. He became a song leader with me. One of the godliest men I ever met.

So tender and open to the voice of God. Completely changed by the power of God. I don't know what he meant when he said Christ reduced him to absolute zero.

So I say you have to figure it out yourself. I know it was real. And I know it was lasting.

We have to die to ourselves. We had a man in my church, a cattle inspector. His name was Gordon Bailey.

Very faithful to Christians six years before the revival. And always in church, never missed. And, you know, he seemed to be a very fine Christian.

But here was the real story. He never ever witnessed anybody. He really had no interest in trying to win people to Christ.

That wasn't part of his life. But during the revival, God got a hold of him. I'll never forget, he walked to the front with a communion table.

He stood by the communion table and basically, this is what he said. I've been back serving for two years. The reason I sit in the back pew is because I shoot arrows of hatred at the backs of some of your heads.

Some of you people, I just don't like you. Now, I've asked God to forgive me. I'm asking you to forgive me.

Will you please do that? I want to be right. So people were nodding their heads and some people were crying out to him. Then he went home.

His wife was not in the meeting that day. And so he went home. Here's what he did.

He got five chairs. He put his four kids and his wife on these chairs. Then he sat facing them.

He asked each child to forgive him for being such a poor father and such a poor Christian. He begged his wife to forgive him for being such a poor husband. And he said, Pastor, this is the hardest thing I have ever done.

And what happened? That night, now he had a herd of black Angus cattle, about 50 cattle, beef. He was in the barn working. And here's what he said.

While I was working, the Spirit of God filled me from top to toe. In the next nine months, he led 30 people to Christ. Then he took that path.

And then he got invitations to come and preach. He only had a grade 8 education and sometimes murdered the Queen's English. But nobody noticed that.

The power of God was so on him. It was incredible. He had meetings in Vancouver, Canada.

The power of God was so manifest in the meetings. He didn't know what to do. He just stood there and got out of God's way.

They had, you know, this big Calgary stampede. Some of you may have been there. And this particular year, they asked Gordon to be an evangelist to cowboys.

So they had a big tent, and hundreds of cowboys showed up. They had two tents where you could counsel people. And Gordon preached.

So many cowboys wanted to be saved. They couldn't even get them into these tents. It was incredible.

Then he started getting invitations from stateside to come down here and preach. And so he did. And going home, he had heart trouble.

And got home, he sat down with his wife and dropped dead. So he's in glory now. But, you know, it all started when he humbled himself before God.

And then before the church. And then before his family and their people. Some of us need to do this ourselves.

We spent hours together praying, talking about God. Gordon Bailey. Serge Nazarenko, he was in our church.

He had been in Russia. He and his father escaped. By the skin of their teeth, they got out.

He was only about 12 years old himself. He was a member of my church in Saskatoon during the revival. God touched his life.

And he started sending carloads. Well, I think they called them cartons. They're as big as a boxcar.

Loaded with food and clothes and stuff to the Ukraine, where he came from. That became his ministry. He never done anything like this before.

The last time I talked to him, he sent 18 of these cartons over. I think he said each one cost about \$10,000 just to transport. But it was a ministry that God gave him.

And many people like this, the Johnsons, they got into looking after children, foster children. They told me recently they have now been parents to 200 children since that time. But you know, at one time, he was my assistant in Saskatoon before the revival.

And the deacons and I decided we needed to ask him to go because he wasn't doing anything. And he was a little upset, but he didn't raise a fuss, and he went. And the years went by, and then during the revival, he phoned me and said, Pastor Bill, listen, last night I got saved.

God showed me I was not even a Christian. He had been involved in evangelism, a great song leader. But he said I knew the language, but I never knew the Lord.

So he flew to Saskatoon, and I got some men together. We prayed with him. I can still hear him.

He began to weep, and then he cried, God is real. God is real. And he's been walking with God ever since.

Well, I baptized him the next day, which was Sunday. He gave his testimony. And there's a number of people in our congregation that met with God who had the same problem.

They knew the language, but they didn't know the Lord. That's why revival is so badly needed. I was on a trip in South America.

There was a group of six Baptist churches, not six churches, but six groups, different Baptists, and they used to meet once a year just to get together and compare statistics and sing a little. So the year before I was there, now they knew nothing about me. I knew nothing about them.

When they compared notes, the average Baptist church had only led about two people to Christ in a 12-month period. So assessing that, they came to the conclusion, we need revival. And here's what they did.

They set up a committee to prepare a conference for the following year on a certain weekend. I didn't know a thing about them. They didn't know about me.

So here's what they told the committee. You're not to ask anybody to come as a speaker. We're to pray that God will give us somebody that knows something about revival.

And nothing happened. I was in Argentina. I spoke at a Southern Baptist seminary.

One of the professors said to me, what are you doing on, and he mentioned a certain weekend I got my book up, meetings in two months, and so on. It was the only weekend I had free. Praise the Lord, he said.

We need you as a speaker at this annual Baptist gathering in Rosario. So I went. But you see, God put this whole thing together.

I had nothing to do with it, nor did they, just that they prayed, and God answered them. I was there for a weekend, Friday over Sunday. In Rosario, a church seating about 1,000, packed to the doors, people standing, the walls, the aisles were seated.

I couldn't give an invitation for people to come forward because they couldn't move. So we preached, and God worked. And finally, in the last meeting, I said, if you need to be saved or you're a Christian, you need to experience God in your life.

When the others leave the building, just stay. There was about 700 people staying. The interpreter got so excited he was jumping off the floor.

But it's pretty hard to counsel 700 people from the pulpit, right? But God was there, and he did a lot of work. And we could tell you again, many people whose lives were transformed. The Plinus Brethren had a large group of churches in Argentina.

And two of their elders came to check out my preaching because we'd asked if we could rent a Bible camp they had for a conference. And they figured the preaching was okay. But here's what happened.

They picked up on Galatians 2.20, which they heard me preach. And these two elders traveled all through Argentina preaching Galatians 2.20 in their assemblies, and they had a revival. God is great.

God is good. I mentioned a while back that obedience has something to do with revival. Have you ever heard of Harold Stevens, an evangelist connected with Billy Sunday years ago? The first year I preached, we had him come to our church.

He was in his late 60s then. And he told me one day what had happened in his life. He played the organ in his home church, and they had a group of people doing street meetings.

He didn't like that idea. He said, up in the street, oh, come on. And they tried to get him to come and play this portable organ they had.

He always had an excuse. He never, ever went. Then one night, he said God pressed him to go and play the organ, and it became just a wrestling match, he and God.

No, no, God kept saying, yes, yes. And finally he started off. And he was walking down the street, and here's what happened.

He said, suddenly, the Spirit of God filled me from top to toe. When he got there, oh, Harold. He said, no, forget the organ.

He said, I have to preach. And he began preaching, and a huge crowd gathered. Many were converted to revival and erupted, and he became an evangelist overnight.

But that's how it began. Willing to humble himself under the hand of God. If we're not willing to do that, we can't expect to see much of the blessing of God.

Have you heard of Nicholson? Ireland evangelist whom God has mightily used. He died in 1920-something, I believe. I never, ever heard him, but his story was like this.

He was a town bully where he lived. A boozier and a fighter. A terrible blasphemer.

A horrible expression of humanity. Then he got converted. But he couldn't stop the liquor and some of the other things that had been going on, and he didn't know what to do.

He knew he was a Christian. Then he heard of some deeper life meaning somebody was having, and he went there and found out about Galatians 2. And he experienced that to a degree. And people heard about it.

The Salvation Army asked him if he would come on a Saturday night and give his testimony on the street. Now, he didn't want to do that because he knew many of his old cronies had heard about his conversion. They thought it was just a big bang, you know.

And he knew they'd see him there and he'd have a hard time. So he said, couldn't we go on Wednesday instead of Saturday? Because Saturday night they'd all be there, you know. No, no, it's Saturday night.

So he goes. When he gets there, the Salvation Army had two teenage girls, and that was the whole team. Besides a man, they said he was so deaf, he didn't have enough brains to have a headache.

But he had one of these boards on, you know, walking up and down. He was part of the gathering. So Nicholson said, I said to myself, this is it? I've got to stand with this? What am I going to do? He felt like running, but he couldn't.

Galatians 2.20. So he stayed. And then one of the girls said, Brother Nicholson, the people aren't listening. Get on your knees and pray for them.

He said, what? On my knees? These guys up there in the sidewalk? But he did it. And then at one point, one of the girls said, well, Brother Nicholson, lead us in a parade back to the citadel. And he saw a parade, two teenage girls, and this deaf guy, you know.

He did it. You know what happened? He said, during that parade, the power of God came into my soul, and I was set on fire for God. Thousands were converted all over Ireland to his ministry.

Again, a case of humility and obedience. And that's, I'm afraid, where many of us are at. And as a consequence, that's why we are where we are.

We're not willing to take a chance to get outside the boundaries, to humble ourselves. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, I don't know, had he heard that Timothy was getting cold. I don't know, but he said, he besought him to seek the Lord for revival.

That's how you can sort of condense it. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, Paul wrote, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the affliction of the gospel according to the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Stir up the gift of God, he said.

One translation says, stir up the gift of God. That's one thing. I think that's what the KJ says.

Or the Spanish translation says, revive the gift of God, which is in you. God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a healthy mind. Timothy, stir up the gift of God.

We have to do something ourselves. We have to work with God as he leads us. In Saskatoon, you know, our church would feed about 300.

We started on a Wednesday night with 150. By Saturday night, we were packed to the doors. We couldn't get them in.

We had to move three or four times until we got into the largest building in Saskatoon, and we're crowds of thousands coming and hundreds meeting Christ in revival and going out. J. Edwin Orr was speaking in Minneapolis, and somebody asked him about the Canadian revival, and he said, it was not a genuine revival because it never moved out of Saskatoon. Well, he didn't know.

We stopped counting after 2,000 teams had gone out. He didn't know that. A team of Dutch people went, they chartered a plane in Winnipeg, and they flew to Holland.

A team of German-speaking people from various churches chartered a plane and flew to Germany, and other teams went here and there. I was in South America many times, in India twice, the Philippines three times, Romania, Scotland, South America. He didn't know that.

When he found out, he apologized to us for what he had thought. He was in the Canadian Bible College in Regina, Saskatchewan, Edwin Orr was, and he asked this question, how many of you people here could honestly say that God did something for you through the Canadian revival? Every hand in the place went up. I was not there.

A friend of mine was, and he said, Edwin Orr said something like this. I said, I see. I'll have to reevaluate my opinion.

Of course, later on he found out. Somebody from Dallas Theological Seminary came to Winnipeg just after the revival and had a meeting with pastors. He asked them this question, what did God do for your churches during the revival? The answer was unanimous.

Our people got fired up to insult Christ. It was one of the major things. So he phoned me and let me know what they had said and asked me to be sure and come down and speak sometime in their seminary.

We were never able to arrange that, so I didn't get there. But it was certainly a lasting thing. Today, I mean the last few months, I've been getting Internet messages from people all over the place that we're in meetings, 1975, 1981, wherever, whenever, and I'm walking with God.

I keep getting these phone calls just saying, thank you. Well, thank God I had nothing to do with it. You know what the Bible says? We are a mathematical impossibility.

Does it say that? Yes. It says that you're less than nothing. How can you be less than nothing? I don't know.

Try it. Less than nothing. Man at his best state is altogether what? Vanity.

Confusion. Nothingness. At his best state, are we ever at our best state? Dear people, we have to not only see ourselves as God sees us, but we have to see God as he is.

He fills the heavens and the earth. If God should gather unto himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would turn again into dust. If he took his spirit out of the world, everything would die.

The birds would fall to the ground. The fish would come up dead. Every animal would die.

There wouldn't be a living, breathing thing anywhere in the world if God should take his spirit out. He is everything, and in Christ, more than everything. If you're thinking of yourself and our need, that's how it is.

When Paul said, I am crucified with Christ, he really said I have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me.

That chorus? Christ lives in me. Christ lives in me. Oh, what a salvation.

That's it. That Christ lives in me. If you're a believer, he lives in you.

Let him bless others through you. Don't sit around waiting for something to happen. Give up some tracks.

Witness to people. Pray for people. We are supposed to be a river of life.

He that believes on me, Christ said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spoke of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. We think in terms at least many Christians do, well, that's for preachers.

That's for full-time workers. That's not for me. What do you mean? It's not for you.

That's wicked unbelief, and you need to treat it that way and be ready. God used me. He'll use you if you're usable, if you're humble.

At the time, I quit. You know, I was in a church one time. They told me I had 15 minutes.

Well, how in the world can you, you know, go for 15 minutes? Oh, I got rescued. I saw there was no clock on the back wall, so I told the people, I see you people are not conscious of time. There's no clock on the wall, so I think I'll spend about 40 minutes preaching, and I did.

Well, nobody got angry. The preacher even got a little softened, I think. If you tell a preacher he's only got 15 minutes, that's like purgatory.

Let's just pray. Oh, Father, our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Oh, God, forgive us our sloth, our unbelief, our sin. Forgive us. Wash us.

Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole. I want thee forever to live in my soul. Break down every idol, cast out every foe.

Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Dear Father, hallowed be thy name. Amen.

I just got a notice that I can preach a little longer. He didn't say how much longer. What time is dinner? In Ephesians 3, Paul said, For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do we have to kneel to pray? Not really. Christ said when you stand praying, it's okay to stand praying. David went in the temple and sat before God and prayed, so you can pray seated.

I think Jonah was horizontal when he prayed in the fisher's belly, so you can pray in bed. And Jehoshaphat prayed in a chariot, so you can pray when you're driving your car. What does it say? I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.

Men, when you get together, pray. Don't just gossip. Just pray.

I led a gal to Christ years ago in a place called Berto Manitoba. She was from England, an Anglican. And she told me she lived in Wales and there's a young girl.

She used to see men kneeling on the sidewalk with their arms around each other praying. And she said, I used to run around them. I was afraid of them.

But I could never forget that they had something that I don't have. So she said to me, I'm an Anglican. What do I need? And I had the joy of leading her to Christ.

Now those men kneeling on the sidewalk praying didn't know the little girl going by would become a Christian someday because she couldn't get away from the fact that she saw men praying on the sidewalk. For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. God doesn't have two families.

He doesn't have now a Jewish family and a Gentile family. It says there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And here's what he had in mind.

That he would grant you something that God does for me. That he would grant you to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man that Christ may abide in your heart by faith. You know, years ago as a Christian I struggled with that.

Well, isn't Christ living in my heart now? What is Paul talking about? Some deeper experience where Christ would abide in my heart. Moody said, if I read something in the Bible I don't understand, I read the Bible like I eat fish. If I come across a bone, I don't stop eating fish.

I put the bone on the side of the plate and I go on eating fish and someday I'll understand what that verse meant. I did the same thing. And years later somebody gave me a copy of Kenneth Weiss' New Testament.

He was a Greek scholar. And I was reading in Ephesians 3 and here's what he said. That Christ may settle down and feel at home in your heart by faith.

And I went on, of course, how can Christ settle down and feel at home in a Christian heart where this heart is filled with bitterness, an unforgiving spirit, a lying spirit, a lazy whatever. How can he? You know, I've traveled four and a half years preaching in walking camps in Canada and many times I was in an atmosphere that was absolutely rotten. I was in a hotel one time in that kind of an area and it was horrible.

There was a beer parlor below me and the fighting and blasphemy went on there. Do you think I felt at home in that hotel? I had a guy walk into my room one day. He looked under the bed.

He looked in the closet and he walked out again. I have no idea who he was. Crazy place.

You could hear all that was going on all around you. And I didn't feel at home there so I said, Lord, burn this rest down but don't take anybody's life. It burned a week later.

I take no credit for that. I hope the insurance companies didn't know about my prayer. But anyway, I didn't feel at home.

How can Christ feel at home in your heart or my heart if we're living in sin? Secret sin, whatever. He has set our sins before His face, our secret sins, in the light of His countenance which means, of course, there is no such thing as secret sin with God. He knows it all and He is grieved by it.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God whereby you were sealed to the day of redemption. The day of redemption is the day of the coming of Christ. We're sealed to that day.

Don't grieve the sealer, the Spirit of God, evil thinking, pornography, this kind of garbage. We hear statistics that Christians, well, I know beyond statistics, I spoke one time in a church and afterwards, a fellow wanted to see me, a big fellow, about 35, whatever, and he said, my wife and I went forward in a missionary meeting a month or two ago and we gave ourselves to God for full-time missionary service, but we can't go. I said, why can't you go? Oh, he said, we're hooked on pornography.

I got into it first. I got my wife into it. We do it together.

He said, the raunchiest stuff we can find, we watch. And he turned to go away and I said, just a moment, are you really born again? Well, as far as I could tell, he was. I said, before you go, let me tell you something.

If you are a Christian, Jesus Christ lives within you. Do you think he feels at home in your heart when you watch that raunchy stuff, that garbage? You're making Christ to live with you in that kind of sin. And people, I'm not exaggerating, he fell on the floor and began to weep like a child and he was crying.

Oh God, forgive me. God, forgive me. And he met with God and was completely changed.

Not long after, he and his wife were in Bible college. They were going to the mission field. He couldn't before.

So I say again, it's something we all have to consider. How can I be angry with somebody? How can I have an unforgiving spirit? How can I tell the lies that I tell? I was in a meeting one time and I'm preaching and two ladies came down the aisle while I was preaching and they came up on the platform and asked permission to speak. And one was a little old lady, the other was a normal size.

And this little lady, she said to the people, now, you people, some of you know who I am, but you probably don't know that I'm the biggest liar in the whole country. And she said, I've lied about Becky here. I've told many of you people lies about Becky.

Anything I said about her was an absolute lie. As a matter of fact, she said to the people, everything I say is a lie. I've been doing it all my life.

Can you forgive me? Then she turned to Becky and said, Becky, can you forgive me? And Becky forgave her and they wept. And they went back to sleep and I continued on my sermon. Then two men started down the aisle, big fellows.

Came up on the platform and asked for, okay, I stood aside. And it turned out they were rival contractors, both Christians, but each had been running the other guy's work down in order to get more business. And God had dealt with them.

They dealt with it between each other before they came forward. Now they were asking the congregation to forgive them. So, back they went to their seat.

I picked up on my sermon again. It was getting kind of difficult, you know. Then a man came running to the altar and he knelt down over here and started praying out loud as if he was the only one in the room.

And a son who was standing at the back saw his dad at the altar. He came running down and knelt beside his dad and went like this, Dad, forgive me, I've been a rotten son. No, son, it's me, I've been a bad dad.

And they're arguing together as to who's the worst. Kneeling at the altar. Well, how could I carry on? I couldn't.

So then I gave him an invitation. I said, if you need to be saved, come and stand over here. If you need to meet with God, just kneel anywhere here at the front.

And I think there were seven people who came forward to accept Christ and others came wanting to meet with God. But boy, it's hard to preach when people are coming in the middle of your sermon. But that's all part of the story.

When it's revival, God can do what he wants. Just don't get in his way. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love.

We root and ground new converts in doctrine. They need to be rooted and grounded in love. Or with the doctrine, they may become just a doctrine fighter, you know, as many are.

There's a doctor and his wife, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. And they went to China on holidays and left their poor children with Blanche, his wife, her mother. So the grandparents had the children and the parents of the children were in China.

And a drunk teenager ran into them one day. They were walking in the highway and the grandma was killed on the spot. The grandpa died the next day.

None of the kids were hurt. They couldn't find their parents in China. They finally got them back.

And it was a difficult time. The funeral, a son-in-law of mine conducted the funeral. I knew the family.

I couldn't be there. Blanche, whose mother had been killed and father, how did she handle this? She asked where the teenage kid was that killed her parents. She found out.

She went to the jail. She got permission to visit with this man. She told him who she was and she said, You killed my dad and mom and I just came here to tell you I forgive you and I love you in Christ and I hope that someday you'll come to know Jesus.

She fell on his face and wept his way to God and she led him to Christ in the cell. It's that kind of thing for people to be rooted and grounded in the love of God. No matter what they say, no matter what they do, so what? Christ said, Rejoice and be exceedingly glad.

They will say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Pray for them. If they curse you, bless them.

Peter called it contrary wise blessing. Not rendering evil for evil or railing for a railing, but contrary wise blessing that you should inherit a blessing. If you practice it, you'll be blessed by God.

We've seen over the years literally scores and scores of cases where people have been sinned against and by the grace of God were able to forgive to the uttermost. Christian parents in Winnipeg where I live now and two of their sons got a girl pregnant. She wouldn't have an abortion so they murdered her.

They got cocked, facing now 25 years in jail. The parents, they almost gave up on God, but by the grace of God they didn't. They were able to accept it, forgive their kids.

You never know what's coming down the road, but one thing we do know. God's grace, he said to Paul, my grace, is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. You read the list in 2 Corinthians 11, the things Paul went through, had never lost faith. Sometimes you meet people, some little thing happened, they got unhappy and stayed unhappy for years maybe, blaming God or blaming somebody else.

Listen, get with it. Get out of it. Rooted and grounded in love, we're called on to be like Christ.

How did he handle it? He cried on the cross, Father, forgive them for they know not what they're doing. They don't know what they're doing, God, forgive them. Somebody put it this way.

When he created the world, he held the dust of the world between three fingers, that's indicated in the Hebrew. He held the waters of the world in the palm of his hand, right? The oceans, the lakes, the rivers, all the water of the world he held in his hand. And the one who did that, dying on the cross, he cried, I thirst, I thirst.

He did that for us. What are we doing for him? For this cause I bow my knees, Paul said. Oh, dear people, you need to be strengthened, empowered, you need to be rooted and grounded in the love of God.

And he goes on from there, that we might 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. You know, when Mao was in charge in China, and the Red Guards went through the country killing intellectuals, wealthy people, and evangelicals. Thousands of Christians died.

They burst into one home and plunged the whole family to death. The children, the dad and mom only, she happened to live. A year or two later, she found out that the man who led that gang into her home and murdered her family and left her for dead was living just two blocks from her place.

How did she handle it? She went to see him. She didn't say anything at all, no reference made to what happened that awful night. But she'd heard he had a sick son.

That mean he happened to have no money. He couldn't get a doctor, go to hospital. So she offered to nurse his son back to health for free.

He couldn't believe it. But gave his son to her. She took him home.

Three weeks later, brought him back. He was well. And then she told this man who she was.

And when he heard this story and realized, why, this woman I left her for dead on the floor, I clumbed her. And he fell on his face on the floor and found Christ as his savior. But dear people, these are things that happen.

Do they speak to us? How do we handle it? Somebody said something against you, you can't forgive them? Woe unto you, Christ said, when all men shall speak well of you. If everybody speaks well of you, you're not doing it right. Because all that will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

That's what we're told. That's what it is. So, Ephesians 3, For this cause I bow my knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to his riches and glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all faithfulness 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. Now, unto him that is able to do, in case there's any unbelievers around, able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, he is able to do exceeding abundantly above. We need to clue in to the abundance of God.

I'm not here to preach myself, but listen, you're looking at a person who, at one time in my late teens, I was a shy... I don't know what word to use here. I was the shyest person on God's earth. If I was walking down the sidewalk and people were coming this way, I crossed the street to avoid meeting them.

It didn't matter who they were. I had a horrible time. Just totally embarrassed by nothing.

And then I became a Christian, and the embarrassment was still there. I was finally asked... I remember I surrendered to God. I said, Lord, I'll do anything you ask me to do.

But I knew he wouldn't ask me to preach. I was sure about that. About a week later, somebody asked me to preach in this little church in Winnipeg.

And I thought, how am I going to get out of this, you know? Oh, I'll tell you. It was awful. And when I get up to the front, there's 30 people there, all of them had two eyes, you know, staring at me.

I almost lost it. But I picked 1 Corinthians 12 because it was a long chapter, and that's how if I'm persecuted in one verse, I can flee to another, you know? So I kept it going for 20 minutes. You know, on the way home, I'll never forget it.

So I was walking down the sidewalk. I didn't say, hey, God, I did it. I said, hey, God, we did it.

We did it. We did it. Then there's a second time.

It was almost as bad as the first. But God took care of all that. You don't have an excuse.

There is never an excuse for saying no to God. Don't ever try. You're wasting your time.

Don't try. Say yes, and let God flow through you. He wants to.

You don't have to have a gift of expression. You just have to let God have his way. I knew an evangelist.

He couldn't speak sometimes. He'd stop speaking. In order to speak, he'd have to kick his foot like that, you know.

And after he kicked once or twice, he could speak. He didn't let that get in the way. He just kept on speaking, winning people to Christ.

Dear people, you don't have an excuse. There is never an excuse for disobeying God. Never, ever.

Let's just pray. Father, thank you again for the Lord Jesus and the wonderful example he gave us, and then the wonderful example of the apostles, then other people down through church history, Father, who have forgotten themselves and died that they might live. Thank you for their examples, Father, to us today.

But dear Lord, as we wait on you for revival, we must not forget the human element, willing, obedient, seeking the face of God. You're awaiting, you promise, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Thank you for those times.

Dear God, may there be many more in our day. The need, Father, now is so great, it seems as if the devil has taken over in many countries. Be merciful to us.

Father, deal with all of us as you wish in your plan and will.

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