

Are You a Wise or Foolish Virgin

by Corrie Ten Boom

Corrie Ten Boom challenges believers to examine their spiritual readiness for Christ's return and emphasizes the importance of obedience, faith, and repentance.

Duration: 1:07:23

Scripture: Matthew 25:1

Topics: "Readiness for Christ's Return", "Obedience and Surrender"

Description

Corrie Ten Boom emphasizes the critical distinction between being a wise or foolish virgin, urging listeners to examine their readiness for Christ's return. She shares personal experiences of obedience to God's call, illustrating how faith and surrender lead to divine provision and guidance. Corrie highlights the importance of maintaining a vibrant relationship with God, warning against losing one's first love and the necessity of being filled with the Holy Spirit. She encourages repentance and the cleansing power of Jesus' blood, assuring that anyone can be prepared for His coming. Ultimately, she calls for a heartfelt commitment to live in obedience and love, as the time of Christ's return is uncertain.

Transcript

Tonight I am going first to tell you a little bit about one of my books, that book that had that American title, Not Good If Detached, that I found on one of your Long Island train tickets. And I speak tonight about the obedience, and I will tell you one of the stories that I have written in this book. You must understand that two of the books here, Amazing Love and Not Good If Detached, are stories about what I have experienced going over the world as a tramp for the Lord.

And first, I went only to America and Europe. But once when I was in America, the Lord said to me, go to Japan. I would say, yes, but, Father.

But obedience says, yes, Father. Disobedience says, yes, but. And I had learned my lesson already, and I knew that I had to go.

So I went. I would say, yes, but, Father, I have no money for the plane ticket. No, that was very stupid, for the Lord is my treasure, and he is so rich.

He has the cattle on a thousand hills, and you know what I always pray when I need money. I say, Father, I think you must sell some cows from the cattle and give me the money. And God does.

And indeed, the money came one day before the plane left. The other thing was that I would say, yes, but, Father, I don't know anyone in Japan, and I don't know the language. But I went.

And when you had seen me on the airport in Tokyo, it was a quite different Corrie ten Boom than you see now here on the platform. I was scared. I didn't know what to say.

All these people around me with these Japanese faces and that impossible language. The man from the airport said, where do you send your luggage? I said, I don't know. He said, does nobody come to see you? I said, no.

He had pity with me and said, will I find a hotel for you? I said, yes, please do. And then a hotel where someone who understands a little bit Dutch or German or English. And he brought me in a hotel where the director knew a little bit English.

And now came the real testing of my faith. There I was. The enemy said to me, now here you are, and you don't know what to do.

I was so afraid that I did not dare to go in the street. Just imagine that I should lose the way. I couldn't ask the way to anyone there.

So I just stayed put. And the enemy said, I think it is far better to use your common sense and your brains. Now here you are.

What can you do? And really, I felt very depressed. Now I heard that word depressed when you take away the letters D-E-N-I. That is not depressed, but press on.

You can try it. But I really felt very downhearted. Now I needed a little bit of comfort.

And where can you find better comfort than in the Bible? And whenever you have such a moment that you do not see the way, that the visibility is bad, then just read 1 Peter 1. And if you can get it in the translation of Philips. I read, Thank God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in his great mercy we men have been born again into a life full of hope, through Christ's risen again from the dead. You can now hope for a perfect inheritance beyond the reach of change and decay, reserved in heaven for you.

And in the meantime, you are guarded by the power of God operating through your faith. Till you enter fully into the salvation which is already for the denouement of the last day. Can it be safer? The inheritance is kept for you, and you are kept for the inheritance.

This means tremendous joy to you. I know even though at present you are temporarily harassed by all kinds of trials and temptations. This is no accident.

I always think it is an accident when I come in temptations and trials. But Peter says this is no accident. It happens to prove your faith, which is infinitely more valuable than gold.

And gold, as you know, even though it is ultimately perishable, must be purified by fire. This proving of your faith is planned. Not only no accident, but planned.

Why? To bring you praise and honor and glory in the day when Jesus Christ reveals himself. Oh, it made me so happy. I said, Lord, I don't understand it.

But when this testing of my faith is a little bit of that great plan of you of the whole world history, what will have its climax in Jesus coming again, Lord, that is all right. I don't understand it, but Lord, just go on. And there was such a peace in my heart.

But then I said, Lord, but the least you must do for me is to tell me the next step. And the Lord said a name, Dave Morgan. Now, I had met Dave Morgan years before on the platform of Youth for Christ in Los Angeles.

And now I remembered that he then had said, it is possible that perhaps God will call me to go to Japan. But I had never heard of him. I had really forgotten his name.

But now the Lord gave me that name. I saw that there was a telephone and there was also a directory. And I looked up if I could find the name of Dave Morgan.

And sure enough, there it was, Dave Morgan, Director, Youth for Christ, Tokyo. Oh, how happy I was. I took the telephone and I heard, mashy, mashy, mashy, mashy.

I put down that stupid telephone. I could not use that. I went to the director of the hotel.

I said, can you call that name for me? And he called that name. And there I had Dave Morgan. I said, hello, this is Corrie Ten Boom speaking.

He said, what? Where are you? I said, in Tokyo. With whom? Alone. Don't tell me, Corrie, that you are alone in Japan.

That is something of Corrie Ten Boom to go alone to a country where she doesn't know one word of the language. I said, it is not something of Corrie Ten Boom. I don't like it at all.

It is something of God to send me here. He said, okay, Corrie, you must always obey God. And even that okay was already a comfort for me, that good American word.

And he said, just come to the station and I come there with my car and I will take care for you. Now, you will say, why didn't he come to the hotel? But in that time, I don't know if that's ten years ago. I don't know if it is still so.

But the first house that is built in a street is number one. The second house, when it is one mile north, is number two. It is the third house, perhaps two miles south.

It is number three. And you can never find an address in Tokyo. So it was very practical that he said, just come to the station.

But I said, but how do I come there? No, come along. You take a taxi. I said, but what must I say to the driver? He said, Eki.

Oh. I called a taxi and I said to the man, Eki. And sure enough, he brought me to the station.

And there was David Morgan and he helped me. And I can tell you, I have had a time of my life in the ten months that I worked in Japan. I could speak for political prisoners.

And they were Japanese people in a Japanese prison, but sentenced by the Dutch government because they were war criminals who had been very cruel in Indonesia. That was then Netherlands, East India.

And after I had brought my message, one of these men wrote me a letter.

Will you please ask your queen if she won't give me amnesty, grace. She is the only one who can do that. When I got that letter, I didn't know what to do.

These people had been very cruel. And must I ask grace for them? I didn't know what to answer. Now, I don't know what you do when you have a letter that you don't know how to react on it.

I do always the same as Hizkaya. When in Jerusalem he got that mean letter from the Rabzakeh and he did not know what to answer and he put it down before the face of the Lord. And that is the best way to do when you have a letter that you do not know what to do with.

I said, Lord, here is that letter from that Japanese political prisoner. What must I do? Lord, he is guilty. But the Lord said very clearly, not only for this one, but for all 260 political prisoners that are sentenced by the Dutch government.

The next day I went to the Dutch consul. Well, I do not write every day letters to queens, so he had to help me in what form I must do that. And I wrote to the queen, these people are guilty, but they see in you a Christian queen of a Christian country.

And if you give them grace, then I hope that God will use it, that they understand a little bit more about grace by the Lord Jesus Christ. And so it will be to the honor of the Lord. And the queen answered me that she would do her best, but that was after a month that I got her answer.

But the same week I was called before a committee in Tokyo, and that was over all the prisons in Japan. And these men said, we are so thankful for what you have done for our political prisoners, so here is a paper, you are invited, and you may work in all the prisons in Japan. What a joy.

I have gone over Japan, and I have brought the gospel to these criminals. I can tell you it was such a blessed time. And the government even took care for the fare.

I could go with the train, but when I arrived in a place there stood a prison car, and in the prison car I was brought to the prison. My fellow travelers looked a little bit suspicious when I disappeared in a prison car. But how thankful I was that I had not said, yes, but, but, yes, father.

And this story you can read in this book, and you understand that every story is a message, but in a form that you can also give it to people who are not quite used, not yet used to theological deep messages, a story everyone can understand. Now you have heard this parable of the wise and the stupid virgins. Have you asked yourself what you are? Sometimes we read a little bit too easy a story that we have heard so often.

But in this time that we can expect the Lord Jesus any moment, such a story is a very serious challenge. And it was some time ago that I said, Lord, what if you come today? Will there be oil in my lamps, sufficient oil? Will I be filled with the Holy Spirit? And I found, and I felt really afraid. And then I tried to find in the Bible the answer, how to be ready for Jesus' coming.

And tonight I will tell you about one side, and tomorrow a little bit more about the surrender, but I can already tell you that the Bible gives the answer, and it is possible for everyone who is in this church to be ready tonight for Jesus' coming. Because we can be ready because Jesus is alive. And when we confess

our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us, and the blood of Jesus is available so that it can cleanse our hearts.

And yesterday I said already, what you give to the Lord, that he empties. And what he empties, he cleanses. And what he cleanses, he fills with the Holy Spirit.

And what he fills with the Holy Spirit, he uses. But a heart filled with the Holy Spirit makes that you are ready for Jesus' coming, that you are a wise virgin. It was some time ago, about two years ago, that I got ill.

And it was rather serious, and the doctor said to me, now there are two possibilities. You have now worked 18 years without really taking a good vacation, and you can go on, but then this is the last. Do you take a year of rest? Then it is possible that you may work another 10 years.

I talked it over with my boss upstairs, and my father said, yes, that is from me. You must take a sabbatical year. And I took it.

And I was eight months of that year in Africa, in Luisa, a house, a kind of Christian center near to Kampala in Rwanda. And it was not really 100% holidays or vacation, but I shouldn't have liked that. But it was so that I had every week three meetings, but every evening I came in the same bed, and I liked it.

But after about the 1st of November, my sabbatical year should be through, and Connie and I took a map of the world, and then we prayed. Now we always pray, Lord, will you show us your plan? And then we will give our signature. It is not so that we make a plan and then ask God's signature.

That's no guidance. And then I took the map of the world and invitations that we had had in that year, and then we looked it over, and we made a plan from three months in Africa, after that two months in America, and then three months behind the Iron Curtain, and then to Sweden. Connie wrote it all down, but in my heart I was not happy.

And I went to my room and I said, Lord, I don't like it. Lord, it was such a joy to be every evening in this very same bed. And, Lord, now to go again and to tramp over the world.

Lord, everyone will understand that when you are 73, that is a time that you can take it easy. And, Lord, of course I will be used by you, and I will work, but there are many universities and prisons and churches and clubs here in Kampala and Entebbe, and I'm sure, Lord, there is much work to do. But every evening in the same bed.

And when I was talking that over, and I thought that the conversation with the Lord went all right, but then there came someone and said, say, there's a visitor for you in the living room. And I came in the living room and there was a brother from Rwanda, colored brother, African. And he said, Mr. Bohm, I come to tell you that we in Rwanda are so very happy that you come to work in our land.

Five years ago you have been in our country and the Lord used you so much. You have told them that when you were in prison, that you experienced that Jesus' light was stronger than the deepest darkness. You told us that the Lord gave you love for your enemies.

And in the meantime, we have gone through very hard times. I myself have been in a prison. I must confess, when I heard you five years ago, I thought, oh, yes, but that is far away.

That's very interesting to hear, but I am not in a prison. But, oh, every word that you have told of how the Lord has carried you through that difficult time has helped us in Rwanda very much when we were ourselves prisoners. And now we are so happy that you come again.

No, I didn't like it too much. Now, the best way, when you do not like a conversation, is to ask questions, for then you cannot keep it in your own hands. So I said, what kind of a message do the people need in Rwanda? And without one moment's hesitation, the African took his Bible and he said this message.

And he read Revelation 2, where it's written, write this to the angel of the church in Ephesus. These words are spoken by the one who holds the seven stars safe in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands. I know what you have done.

I know how hard you have worked and what you have endured. I know that you will not tolerate wicked men that you have put to the test self-styled apostles who are nothing of the sort and have found them to be liars. I know your powers of endurance, how you have suffered for the sake of my name and have not grown weary.

But I hold this against you, that you do not love as you did at first, that you have lost your first love. Remember then how far you have fallen. Repent and live as you lived at first.

Accept your repent. If your heart remains unchanged, I shall come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. When that brother read that to me, I thought that is not the message for Ephesus only, not for the people in Rwanda, but it's a message for Corrie ten Boom.

I have lost my first love. When I think of 20 years before when I came from a concentration camp, almost starving, ill, very weak, but there was in my heart a love, a great love for the Lord that he had carried me through that terrible time and that he had not left me alone one minute. And I had a great love for the people to whom I could tell Jesus is a reality.

I've experienced that his light is stronger than the deepest darkness. And I brought the message of Jesus Christ in Germany. I lived between the ruins in that country.

I was on fire for the Lord. And I had in my heart a great burden for souls and a love for souls and a great love for the Lord. And now, was I interested in souls or in the Lord? I was interested in my bed.

I was ashamed. But then suddenly there came a joy in my heart. There were three words that were the answer.

Accept your repent. And suddenly I saw it. The door of repentance is wide open.

And I did it. And I repented that I had lost my first love. And the Lord forgave me.

And he cleansed my heart. And then he filled me with the Holy Spirit. And the fruit of the Spirit is love.

The love of God shed abroad into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us, Romans 5.5. And that love, the fruit of the Spirit, was greater love than my own first love. And I can tell you, I went to the other countries in Africa, and you heard already how the Lord used me. And this month that I have been in America, it is as if the Lord has opened a new window, a new curtain that I see the light better than before.

And there is such a great joy in my heart. And I know that my heart is full of love, not my first love, but a greater love, the love of God, the fruit of the Spirit. And I tell you this story and this testimony, and I challenge you, have you lost your first love? You have not to tell it to me, but ask the Lord.

And ask Him to search your heart. And if the Lord says, yes, you have lost your first love, then don't forget that a door of repentance is open. This very evening you can be cleansed from your coldness of heart, because the blood of Jesus is there to cleanse you.

And the Holy Spirit is here to fill you and to fill your heart and life with the love, the fruit of the Spirit. And my friends, this is a very serious question in this time. Because you and I live in the time of what the Lord Jesus Himself said in Luke 21, because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

And if you do not repent, then you will be one of the many whose love will wax cold, icy cold. And I can tell you if that is the case, and the Lord Jesus comes, although you believe in His coming and you look forward to His coming, the stupid virgins also looked for His coming, but there was no oil in the lamps. And when your heart is cold, you are not ready for Jesus' coming.

And we don't know when He comes, which day or which hour, but we do not know one day or one hour that He cannot come, and that could be tonight. When He should come tonight, how will He find you? Oh, my friends, repent! The way of repentance is open. And the Lord is here and He says, Come to me and confess your coldness of heart and your sins, and I will forgive you and cleanse you.

I think that many of you remember the last year or two years ago that I showed you my torch. And I still have gone over the world with this torch because that has taught me such a good lesson, and there are some who have not yet seen it. This torch does not give light.

It is not broken, but there is only one battery in it, and there was no room for the second battery because it is full of rags. And only when I have two batteries, this torch can give light. Now you see that I could not get this battery in it because it is full of dirty rags.

And what I mean with this, that first battery is that what happened in your life when you made your first decision for the Lord Jesus. And if you have never done it before, I hope you will do it tonight. And when you receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior, then you make life's greatest decision.

There is no greater decision to make in your whole life than your decision for Jesus. And the moment that you say your first yes to Jesus, so really that you mean it, all the promises of the Bible are yours. All.

This is now your checkbook. The Lord throws wide the door of the treasure house and bids you go in and take with boldness. And God watches over His Word to perform it.

And now this book is your book. All the very same moment that you say yes to Jesus, that you ask Him to come into your heart or that you give your heart to Him. And that is so very important, but it is not the end.

It is the great beginning. Just like a wedding ceremony is not the end, but a beginning. And when you learn to act on the Word of God and you cash your checks, the bank account of the Bible is not frozen.

When you take all the promises, you will experience that God has meant business with all His promises. And one is that the Lord said, I will send you the Holy Spirit and I will give you power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And the Bible says, be filled with the Spirit.

The sweetest commandment. And the Bible has no suggestions, only commandments. And that commandments be filled with the Spirit.

That is that second battery. And the fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and generosity and fidelity and tolerance, self-control. You have not to make that yourself.

That is all the fruit of the Spirit. But these are sins. The Lord Jesus Himself in His last words in Luke 21, 34 says, Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with servitude and drunkenness and cares of this life, and so that they come upon you unaware.

When that is in your heart, servitude, drunkenness, cares of this life, fear, disobedience, then the coming of the Lord will come unaware. And you will experience what the stupid virgins experienced. The door will be closed.

But now the great joy is that a Christian knows what to do with their eggs. When we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive you. And the blood of Jesus will cleanse you from all the sins you confess.

But it has never cleansed an excuse. And when you know that your love has waxed cold, that you have lost your first love, my friends, bring it to the Lord. And I can tell you, I repeat what I said two years ago, when you bring your sins to the Lord, the Bible says He cast them into the depths of the sea, forgiven and forgotten.

And He put a sign, no fishing allowed. I told that some month ago in Africa. And it was really a little bit of blunder because my interpreter had never seen a sea.

And he did not know what to make of that, no fishing allowed. So he said, I believe that she means that when you bring your sins to Jesus, He cast them into the Lake Victoria. And that is so deep that even the fishes may not bring them back.

I thought that was very good. I thought that was very good. That is true.

The fishes may not bring back your sins when you have brought them to the Lord. Isn't it a joy that the Lord tells that as far as the east is from the west, so far does He our sins away from us. He blot them out like a cloud.

Did you ever see a cloud again after it had disappeared? Never. That cloud comes after it is a different cloud. And that is what the Lord does with your sins.

So my brother, my sister, do it. Don't go home before you have brought all your rags to the Lord. And you can be sure that there is forgiveness and cleansing.

And then when you are cleansed, there is the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit, love. One of the things that was in my heart was bitterness. I told it this morning to a smaller group, so I will tell that again.

Because it is so important. That one of the things that the Lord Jesus has made very clear is that when you do not forgive those who have trespassed against you, that the Father will not forgive your trespasses. That's what Jesus said.

And that is so clear. And it is true. I could tell over the whole world about the great miracle that when Jesus tells us to love our enemies, that he gives us the love that he demands from us.

Like I said this morning, the little poem of John Bunyan, Run, John, run, the law commands, but gives us neither feet nor hands. Far better news the gospel brings. It bids us fly and gives us wings.

The Old Testament, the law says do so, be so. But it does not give us the power. But the gospel tells us even to love our enemies.

But it gives us wings. He gives us the love to forgive and to love our enemies. Far better news the gospel brings.

It bids us fly and, hallelujah, it gives us wings. Now, it is really one of the great miracles of my life that I could forgive the murderers of my family. But some time ago, there were some Christians, friends of mine, who did something very mean to me.

And now I had difficulty. I felt bitterness in my heart. They were my own friends.

And I was really full of bitterness, but I brought it to the Lord. And the Lord forgave me and cleansed me. And I could love them again.

But do you know what happened? In the midst of the night, I awoke, and I thought, how in the world is that possible? That friend of mine, just imagine what have I done for her. And now she, I said, Oh, Lord, it is there again. Oh, Lord, take it away.

Forgive me. Cleanse me. And the Lord forgave me.

He cleansed me. And the bitterness was gone. But do you know what happened? The next night, in the midst of the night, again I awoke, and I thought, how is it possible that she could? I said, Oh, Lord, it is again.

Please forgive me. Cleanse me. And that came several times back.

And then I was very discouraged. Then I got from a German friend, a doctor, a record as a Christmas present. And the children sang a Christmas carol, and everyone gave a little story or message.

And the doctor himself wrote, Corrie, I had a rather sad experience. There was someone who did something mean against me, and I was very bitter. But I brought it to the Lord, and he forgave me.

But it came back. You cannot understand that. But it happened with me.

But I brought it to the Lord, and it was gone. But do you know what happened? It came back, and it came back, and back. And it made me so discouraged.

Of course, Corrie, you cannot understand that, but I had a difficult time. But then, he said, an old minister came to me, and I told it to him. And he said, Now, don't worry too much about this.

It is like ringing the bell of a church. Now, in the little villages, you ring the bells of a church with your hand. Bim, bam, bim, bam.

But there comes a moment that you are through, and then you stop it. But after you have stopped, there comes another bim, and a bam, and another bim, bam, perhaps another bim. But you don't worry.

You have stopped, and it comes very soon an end. And now, this coming back of bitterness that are the bim, bams, and you just surrender them to the Lord. Now, I can tell you that record made me, that tape made me very happy, and I understood the doctor very well from experience.

Have you a bim, bam? Bring it to the Lord. And that's a great joy. You know, we are attacked by the enemy.

We Christians over the whole world are more attacked by the enemy in a subtle and in a brutal way more than any time before. But we need really the whole armor of God to stand in the evil day, and even when we have come to a standstill, still stand our ground. You can read it in Ephesians 6.10. But it is a very dangerous time.

The enemy knows that his time is very short. And he is not omnipresent, but he has a very good secret service. And he knows how to find you and me.

And he knows exactly how to attack you and me. But don't forget that those who are with us are stronger and more than those who are against us. At our side is a mighty high priest and legions of angels.

And when you surrender to the Lord Jesus, he puts you on victory ground. It is still a battle, but a victorious battle. And the victorious overcoming life is the normal life for a Christian.

It goes from power to power, from victory to victory. But we must be quite sure that we are very active in bringing our sins immediately to the Lord. And don't do it after a long time.

Do it on short notice. For it is so dangerous when you have kept in your heart a little decent sin. We are all very decent sinners here.

But when you leave that in your heart, then it will be a foothold for the enemy. And I can tell you, last week I was very impatient. And it was in the morning and I had many things to do.

And there was someone visiting me. And I don't know some people you like from the first moment that you see them. But some people are very, very difficult to be.

I don't know if you have experienced that. To be above with the saints you love, that will be joy and glory. But to be below with the saints you know, that can be another story.

And that was another story. It was difficult and I was impatient. Now, suddenly I saw that, I felt that I was impatient.

And immediately, it was ten o'clock. And at ten o'clock I brought my impatience to the Lord. I said, Lord, will you forgive me my impatience and my lovelessness for this saint below.

And the Lord did it. He forgave me. And I had a very nice conversation with her.

Now, why did I say at ten o'clock? Because we have an accuser who accuses us night and day. A full-time job for the devil is to accuse the Christians. Did you know that? And he accuses us for God and he accuses us to our own hearts.

And we do not discern that. And because we listen to the accusations of the devil, so many Christians are always defeatistic. Is that English? You know what I mean.

They are always worrying about sin and looking at their sins and saying, oh, what a miserable sinner I am. But we must understand that when we look unto Jesus, we know that we are sinners, but we are saved sinners. And when the devil accused me, perhaps five minutes after ten, and said to me, no, you were not very kind to that Christian lady that visited you.

Then I was not at all afraid. I said, oh, that's already gone. That's in the depths of the sea and you are not allowed to fish.

But he also accused me for God. And it is very possible that at five minutes after ten, he came to God and said, no, God, that's not your servant. She tells people about forgiveness and being full of love.

But did you hear how unkind and how impatient she was? But I am sure that God said, I know it already. Five minutes ago, Corrie was here. And I have nothing to fear.

I hear the accuser roar of sins that I have done. I know them all and thousands more. My father knows none.

Does he? No. He himself has blotted them out. So that's what I will say immediately.

Bring a sin to the Lord and then don't ask forgiveness for a second time. But that doesn't honor the Lord. Just imagine when I should come to your house and you should offer me a cup of coffee.

You should put it in front of me. And then I should ask you, I have a little bit of dry throat. Couldn't you give me a cup of coffee? That should be terrible.

When you have put it in front of me, then I honor you as my host that I drink it. And perhaps I say, boy, what a good coffee. It is almost as good as a Dutch coffee.

But to ask for coffee when it is put in front of you, that is not an honor for your hostess. And when you have forgiveness from the Lord and you ask again forgiveness, then it does not honor the Lord. And I did it some time ago that I in the evening had brought a sin to the Lord.

And in the next morning, I had been very unkind to a lady. And the next morning in my quiet time, I said, oh Lord, and then I must ask you forgiveness. Mrs. So-and-so was yesterday with me and I was so unkind.

Oh, thank you, Lord, that you forgave me last evening. I had almost asked for a second time forgiveness. That doesn't honor the Lord.

He means it when he says, I am just and faithful to forgive you and my blood cleanses you. Oh, my friends, if we only could understand how really we belong to God. He is our father.

It is not difficult for him to do what he has promised in the Bible. We belong to him, his own children. Of course, I had to do something else.

That lady that had suffered under my own kindness, I had to go to her and ask her forgiveness. Be right with God and be right with man. Now, I showed you that when we bring our sins to the Lord, then the

fullness of the Holy Spirit is for us.

And the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the birthright for every believer. Every child of God must and may obey the commandment, be filled with the Spirit. And when you are filled with the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit makes you the light of the world.

He doesn't do it. I think I've overlooked a little egg. Yes, sometimes there is in our heart a very little decent sin, just a little bit of self-pity, a little bit of worry.

But in God's eyes, self-pity and worry are not little sins, they are great sins. Worry is unbelief. And self-pity is a very thick and fat self.

I find a rag. You know, when we do not make a clean deck with our decent sins, we can never be filled with the Holy Spirit. But this is not a rag, this is paper.

You see what it is? Ten dollars, there's nothing wrong with that ten dollars. That's no rag, that's no sin. It is only in the wrong place.

You see, when you have too many dollars or no dollars enough, then the devil brings the dollars into your heart. And my friend, when there are dollars in your heart, you are not ready for Jesus' coming. That is true.

And we have here, as far as I know, three pastors here in this church tonight. And if you find dollars in your heart, all three of them are very willing to help you. Be filled with the Spirit.

What is the joy? I will speak more about this. I will hope to speak tomorrow about the absolute necessity of the total surrender. And I have also found in the Bible, when I was really concerned about my being ready for Jesus' coming, and when I read that message of the virgins, I was afraid.

And I said, oh Lord, when I look into myself, Lord, when you should come now, I don't know. And then I found in the Bible several texts that the answer for the problem of being ready for Jesus' coming is the surrender. He who has started the good work in you will finish it until that day.

And the only thing that you have to do if you know that you are not ready at this moment, surrender to the Lord, and He will do the job Himself to make you ready for His coming. Peter says, we are near the end of all things now, and you should therefore become self-controlled men of prayer. Above everything else, be sure that you have read for each other, that you have love for each other.

Remember how love can cover a multitude of sins, that you have deep love for each other. And that's possible. I don't know if you have all such a character like the pastor who has been singing for us.

Can you also say, I love everyone? Perhaps you do not love everyone, but you can. Not because you can produce that love, but when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, He will give you deep love for everyone. And also when you are filled with the Spirit, it makes you so calm, because you see things as they are from God's point of view.

I was some time ago in West Berlin. I hope now to work three months behind the Iron Curtain and work in East Berlin and East Germany, the rest of East Germany. But then I was in West Berlin.

But some of the people from East Berlin, that is under the Communists, were able to visit for one day to us, and then the same day they had to go back. And there came a lady to visit me and she looked like a nervous wreck. She was so afraid.

And she said, oh, will you please be very careful? For every word that we say will be taken on a tape or a microphone, and the Communists will hear every word that we say. I said, no, we are not in East Germany, we are in West Germany. Oh, she said, it doesn't matter, the Communists are everywhere.

And I looked at her and I saw that she was just so nervous, in such a tension. And I knew when I tried to persuade her that will not help her, then she will remain afraid. And then the Lord gave me, through His love, an idea.

And I suddenly turned away from her. And I said, now, Communists who are listening, I have a message for you. I don't know if you read your Bible, but do you know that God has so loved the world, that's also you Communists who are listening, that He has sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever, that's also you who are listening, whosoever believes in the Lord Jesus will not perish but have everlasting life.

And I gave a nice little sermon to these Communists who were listening. And then I looked at that woman and oh, her face was one broad smile, all the tension was gone. You know, love takes away fear, and that is the great joy.

And my friends, I believe that we will have very difficult times in the future, and perhaps in the very near future. When you have your eyes open and you have the discernment of the Spirit, you know that the Antichrist is taking over more and more of the world. Atheism is in the churches.

And we live in a horrible time, not only in Africa, but also in America, you know it. And then it is so good that you are calm and self-controlled men of prayer. And that's possible because of the Holy Spirit.

But be filled with the Spirit. Now, there was a lady in Holland who said to her brother, I will have a house meeting. I will invite my friends and I will have every Tuesday morning a Bible group.

But her brother said, oh, don't do that, the people do not come. But on Wednesday she told, my whole room was full. He said, now wait till the next week.

And the next week he told, my room was fuller. And the next week he said, now my room was still fuller. Her brother said, that's nonsense, that's impossible.

When your room is full, it can't be fuller. He said, oh yes, every week I have removed some furniture out of the room. Are you filled with the Holy Spirit? There's a next step to make.

Not before asking more of the Holy Spirit. For he is willing to fill your heart like the light is ready to flood a room that is open for its brightness. But you must give him more room.

And just have a talk with the Lord. And ask him, is there perhaps something in my heart? A little habit that's not good? Something, perhaps something very good? Some righteousness of myself? Just remove it. And the Lord will fill you with his righteousness.

Now you understand that love and obedience belong together. And it is not a risk to trust the Lord. I told you about my trip to Tokyo, to Japan.

But when the Lord told me that I must go to Russia, many people said to me, how will you do that? I said, I don't know. I know only one thing, God calls me to go to Russia. And then they said, but now just imagine, now you come in Russia and you are there on the airport.

What are you going to do? I said, I don't know, but God knows. And I was not afraid. And do you know that today I got a letter from a lady, a Russian lady who lives here in America.

She has had a mother who did not know English. And she has cared for her mother and always all the radio sermons she translated, she interpreted for her mother. So she got a very great skill in interpreting messages.

But now her mother has died, just a month ago. And now she's all alone. And do you know that lady is willing to go with Corrie ten Boom to Russia? And the church is willing to sponsor her.

It really pays when you trust God. I don't know if you can imagine how happy I am. For now, I go together from America to Russia with a friend who knows the language, and that is very important.

Is there disobedience in your heart? In your life, I will just close with a little poem that I have learned in your country. And what had really given me, it was a challenge for me, and I hope it will be a challenge for you. I wanted to go to God.

I climbed the steeple. He said, go down. I dwell among the people.

I said, let me walk in the fields. He said, no, walk in the town. I said, there are no flowers there.

He said, no flowers, but a crown. I said, but the sky is black. There's nothing but noise and din.

He wept as he sent me back. There is more, he said. There is sin.

I said, I shall miss the light. I said, but the air is thick and fogs are veiling the sun. He answered, yet hearts are sick and souls in the dark undone.

I said, I shall miss the light and friends will miss me, they say. He answered, choose tonight whether I am to miss thee or they. I pleaded for time to be given.

He said, is it so hard to decide? It will not be hard in heaven to have followed the steps of thy guide. Then I cast one look at the field and set my face to the town. He said, my child, will you yield? Will you give up the flowers for a crown? Then unto his hand went mine.

And into my heart came he. And now I walk in the light divine, the path I had feared to see. We pray.

Now, Lord, we must give an answer. O search our hearts, O God. Show us if there is a little decent sin in our heart or perhaps a great indecent sin.

If there is a wrong habit or a little bit of self, perhaps our own ambitions and righteousness that take the room of the fruit of the Spirit, your righteousness. Search us, O God. We praise and thank you, Lord.

When we confess our sins, you are faithful and just. And that your blood will cleanse us this very moment from all the sins that we confess. O show us, Lord, every one of us, if we perhaps have lost our first love.

Lord, it was so very clear in Revelations 2. You will take away our lampstand. That is very clear, the same as the virgins who had no oil in their lamps. But I praise and thank you, Lord.

When we bring our coldness of heart, our lack of love to you, you will forgive and cleanse and fill with the Holy Spirit. And you, O Holy Spirit, will fill us with God's love greater than our original first love. Hallelujah.

O Lord, it is possible that there are people here who have never made that first decision I spoke about, to say yes to you. They have not even that first battery in their torch. And Lord, when you should come today or tomorrow, they will be surely not ready for your coming.

But Lord, listen, who says, Lord Jesus, I receive you as my Savior. I need a Savior for I'm a sinner. I know it.

Will you come into my heart and cleanse it with your blood? Thank you, Jesus. That those who come to you, you will in no wise cast out. And Lord, help them now also to go on and take all the promises of the Bible.

And Lord, when there are some of them here who need help, when I give an invitation, Lord, will you speak to them that they must come forward? Just to have a talk with these children of yours who know so much about you and love them and can help them and show them in your word what they need. And Lord, I ask also that you will make your children here tonight very faithful in prayer. That they pray for the sinners who have never been saved here.

And Lord, give it also in their hearts to pray for the meetings of tomorrow and the coming days. For Lord, I felt that you were working with your spirit this evening, and I thank you, Lord. And Lord, if you have touched the hearts, I know that you will do the follow up work when everyone goes home.

And Lord, if there is anyone here who knows that he is not ready for your coming, oh Lord, make that they also come forward. They can be Christians, but they know that they have lost their first love. And Lord, then we can pray with them.

And Lord, what a joy is it that it is possible that everyone in this church can be ready for your coming, prepared. And joyful looking forward for your coming. Because you are here and you will cleanse us with your blood and fill us with the Holy Spirit.

Hallelujah, what a Savior. Amen. I would like to sing with you, Have Thine Own Way, that is 404.

And when there are some of you who have seen this night that you were not obedient, then let this just be an answer for the challenge. When the Lord tells you must be obedient, that you sing with your heart, Have Thine Own Way, Lord. Thou art the potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me after thy will, while I am waiting, yielded and still. 404. And may I again ask the counselors to come forward.

Also, at the first stanza of what we are singing, and everyone who needs help, when you are a sinner who has never said your yes to Jesus, also the children who are there, just come forward and the counselors will help you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31610.mp3>

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