

# Born to Raise the Son's of Earth

by Fred Tomlinson

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**Scripture:** Ephesians 2:1, Luke 15:17, Matthew 10:34, Isaiah 8:14, Ezekiel 37:1, Amos 4:12

**Topics:** "Awakening to Truth", "Surrendering to Jesus"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Nevertheless, there's this tendency always, this almost a gravitational pull for things to deteriorate. And sadly, this has an application in this whole area of man's comprehension and understanding of God. And we've come into the understanding of the scriptures and so on through one means or another.

Some of us early in our lives, some of us later in our lives. And we've listened to people who at that particular time have helped us a few weeks ago. I talked about doorkeepers, people who've opened doors for us and we're grateful for that, certainly.

But again, perhaps unwittingly, we've tended to, I hate the expression I'm using really, but to buy into this concept of who he is that is so inferior to the reality. What we've done, we've embraced a more comfortable Jesus. A Jesus who is perfectly suited to our self-absorbed culture of which I am a part.

And so our concept of Jesus, it's as though it's been conditioned by this and many other things, no doubt. But nevertheless, he's a comfortable Jesus. And by that I'm meaning, we've perhaps come to a stage in our lives where as the result of hearing what we were told, we have, to use the expression that's familiar to us, we've accepted Christ as our savior.

And we've recognized that in the stories of Jesus, there is a life that is so wonderful that is presented to us and leaves us with this impeccable role model of a godly man. And in this sort of reimagined image of Jesus, we have a Jesus who makes no real demands upon us so that we can continue to do our own thing and live the way we please. We've not rejected him, but we have him, as it were, in a compartment where he's safe, we think, and where we can call upon him when we're in trouble.

He's always there to help us. We've got some scripture texts which are our sort of favorites that we can bring in from time to time as appropriate, and so on. And if this is true, what I'm saying, this is very serious.

And surely, as God may alert us to this fact, there is a desire that begins to be kindled in our hearts to rediscover him or to discover who he really is. That's my heart. Even, to be honest with you, when I was out in my car earlier this morning, and as I was just close to home here, I prayed and I said, Lord, please do not allow me to just give a talk this morning.

I don't want to give a talk. I don't want to be a person who just talks about these things. I pleaded with God that I may know his anointing upon me, and that I may preach the truth to men and women.

I'll pause here for a parenthesis. For those who were not in the men's meeting on Tuesday, Thursday morning, please consider going on the internet, onto our website, and listen to what Peter Boyle had to share on that occasion. Because it was a word from God, and I felt to myself, this needs to be a word that is preached beyond the scope of the group of men that were together.

And I encourage you to do that. Maybe that you'll think of someone that you can recommend it to as well, as Peter addressed his message to the younger men there. His opening words, this'll make you want to listen to this, his opening words were, he said, I want to tell you men something this morning.

I'm dying. There was a pause. And then he said, and so are you.

And we moved on from that point in time. But really, his appeal, and it's certainly in my heart this morning again, that we can encourage one another to come out of our safe, cozy, comfortable, religious little places we've found for ourselves, and to stand, as it were, or kneel, perhaps better, before God and say, Lord, speak to me. Reveal yourself, or as Moses on one occasion, show me your glory.

I want to know you, Lord, for all the peripheral things, and all that's helped us to become what we are, where we are, and so on. We thank God for that which has been of him. But today, we're saying, Lord, I must step further.

I must go beyond where I have come to. I long for you. Isn't this the way so many of the outstanding men and women, both in scripture and through the ages, have approached God? I'm thinking of Jim Elias, who said, pour upon me the oil of your spirit that I may be aflame.

He said, God, deliver me from the dread asbestos of other things. And pour upon me the oil of your Holy Spirit that I may be aflame. Do you remember this? And then he said, but aflame is transient.

He's talking to God. Aflame is transient and often short-lived. And he asks himself, can you bear this, O my soul? And then he responds with, when I perceive to be such strength and faith and trust and burning desire, he says, make me thy fuel, flame of.

He said, in me there dwells the fire of your spirit. He said, in me there dwells the spirit of the great short-lived. Make me thy fuel, flame of God.

Amen. Let's be a company of people who are hungering and thirsting for a true knowledge of God. He's made himself available to be known.

Amen. So let's look again with these thoughts behind us. And I'm seeing Simeon speaking to Mary in verse 34.

And he said, this child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel. And I've already said to you, we're not gonna limit it just to Israel. We're going to see some application of this that applies to ourselves this morning with whatever else it means.

But in this statement, you'll notice that Simeon saw two particular categories here. Though he speaks about the fact that he, this little child here, he's holding in his arms. He said, he's appointed for the fall and for the rise again of many in Israel.

He's appointed for the fall. There will be those who, as the result of him, will fall and indeed will fall eternally. And there are those who, as the result of him, will rise.

There's the two category labels, if you like, put before us at that particular point in time. Now, having noted that statement, it seems to me that Simeon could just as well have said, I'm not improving on what he said. I can't improve on what he said.

But as I look at those words and these categories and the significance of this, I think he could have said, this child will grow to be the most divisive human being in the entire spread of world history. And I believe that. And I believe the scriptures bear this out.

There's the song that many of us learn a long time about gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon this. I think it was Charles Wesley who wrote that, if I'm not mistaken. You can check up on that, but not now.

And gentle Jesus, was he gentle? Was he meek and mild? Well, yes, he was, but he was more than that. That's the important thing. And if we ignore the more, then we'll end up with a concept of Jesus that is far less, seriously less than who he truly is.

I'm interested in this text where it says here that Jesus' parents, as they're referred to in the text, they were amazed, verse 33, his father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about him. So that includes that which has just been said, and I'm sure it applies to what is yet to be said, which is recorded here in our 34th verse and so on. They were astonished at his words.

That's interesting, isn't it? Especially when I think of the way that the angel Gabriel had come and spoken to Mary, and he'd spoken to Joseph as well, of course, and then how Mary had conceived this child as the result of this word spoken, which was embraced by Mary. And then I'm thinking of Elizabeth's response. Do you remember all the story? In her own response, in her own outpouring of her own heart and so on.

Everything was so astonishingly amazing, and Joseph is a bystander watching the whole thing as it's unfolded and so on. But nevertheless, the full weight of what was happening clearly had not dawned, and perhaps you would say could not have dawned fully upon Mary. Notwithstanding these miracles and appearances and so forth.

But then when they're standing there on this occasion in the temple, and they're listening to Simeon as he's speaking and he's praying, and they're amazed, what is this? When they're listening to Simeon say, for example, it's been revealed that he would not see death before he'd seen the Lord's Christ, and so on. Then he makes this statement in the next several verses concerning him. But then let's just take a step forward as far as scripture is concerned, and listen to what the Apostle Paul said.

Listen, I'm quoting from Colossians chapter two in verse nine where we read, for in him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. This child he's holding, for an old man on the verge of leaving the scene with his weakened physical body, if it's even worth mentioning in this context, but he's holding, to all intents and purposes, a little tiny baby. And Paul, under the inspiration of the Spirit, he wasn't directly and specifically aiming these words at this moment, but nevertheless it plies here with certainty that he was none other than him who is the embodiment of the very Godhead.

I happen to know that Pete wanted us to sing a hymn that we didn't sing, but some of the lines in that hymn go like this, life immortal, heaven descending, God and man in oneness blending. That's what Simeon was holding in his arms. Or another hymn includes these words that you're familiar with, offspring of a virgin's womb, veiled in flesh, the Godhead see.

Hail the incarnate deity. Pleased as man with man to dwell, men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. God with us is what the word Emmanuel means.

This is the real Jesus that we're reading about from the words of scripture. This is the real Jesus. He was no ordinary child.

He wasn't just a different child, as I said earlier, not even close. He's God, the eternal God. In fact, he's the Godhead.

Mystery of mysteries, veiled, contracted to a span, veiled in flesh, and we see him, the hymn writer says, veiled in flesh, the Godhead see. We see in him, amen. As this child grew, and as he emerges more into the public forum, and we then have his words recorded here in scripture, we discover, he says on one occasion that you know very well, he said, I am the truth.

I am the truth. The way, the truth, and the life. If you're familiar with the text in completeness, certainly, he was the embodiment of truth according to God, not just to our legal system or our society or culture or whatever.

He said, I am the truth, and then, so we turn our attention quickly to him, to find him in scripture, and we listen to what he's saying, and we discover without any question, he was certainly the truth as he claimed to be, but he spoke the truth, and his truth was in many cases very, very, very uncomfortable. Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, we begin to see him now in the spread of his life and his ministry, and the fact of the matter is, just to bring it really close to home for us, especially at this time when we're thinking of family get-togethers and so on. You'll disagree with me on this statement, but I believe it to be true.

You probably wouldn't want to invite him to your family dinner. You say, oh, we would. Would we? Maybe the gentle Jesus, meek and mild that we've thought about, but the real Jesus who includes that, but who is greater than this, this one who is all truth, I'm not sure about that.

Let me read to you, I'm turning here to Mark's Gospel, and in Mark's Gospel, chapter three, if you're interested, I'm reading just a couple of verses from verse 20. And he came home, and the crowd gathered

again to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. When his own people, you know who they were.

To all intents and purposes, his family. When his own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of him, for they were saying, he has lost his senses. The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, he is possessed by Belzebul.

And he casts out the demons by the ruler of demons. And he called them to himself and began speaking to them in parables and said, how can Satan cast out Satan? Isn't it interesting that his own family, these were, to all intents and purposes, his kith and kin. And they were convinced he was becoming, as we would say today, completely unhinged.

He's losing his senses. And for his own protection, they came to take him away. He's making a fool of himself.

We need to protect him. We need to take him to a safe place. We need to isolate him.

And as far as those who clearly were his enemies were concerned, they said, well, he's just possessed of the devil. That's how people saw him. That's how the people saw him, even his own family there.

The people were gathered in the house to hear his word. You know, we read in John's Gospel, in chapter 3, verse 9, it says, Light is come into the world. It's a reference to Jesus.

Light is come into the world. And men didn't want the light because the text goes on to say because of men's hearts, they love darkness rather than light. And so they didn't want the light or to change the approach to this.

They didn't want the truth. They didn't want him. They didn't want what he was saying.

He was upsetting everything. He wasn't just nicely bringing everyone together and affirming everybody. But he was upsetting people.

This is the real Jesus. And let's go to another scripture if you're interested in turning with me. It's Matthew, this time chapter 10.

Matthew 10. Verse 21. Jesus is speaking.

Brother will betray brother to death and the father his child. And children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name.

But it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next. For truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

And I was in Matthew chapter 10. And that was verse 23. I just read to you.

We'll go down to verse 34. Now we got there. 10, 34.

Do not think that I am come to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father and a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

And a man's enemies will be the members of his household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He who has found his life will lose it. And he who has lost his life for my sake will find it.

These are very sobering words indeed. But this is the real Jesus speaking. And I don't know a clearer statement of application to us, particularly when we're hearing so much of the Prince of Peace coming and he's come to bring peace on earth and so forth, which is all in Scripture.

But we have to understand that statement in the light of what else we read about him. And I've just read to you from the same Scriptures of Truth where Jesus himself says, you think I've come to bring peace, but I've not. He said, I've come to bring a sword.

Do you remember what we read earlier in Luke chapter 2? Do you remember I made reference to the two categories? Simeon said, he is set, he is appointed, he has appeared for this purpose, and these are now my words, to separate the people of the world into two categories. I said he was the most disruptive man that would ever live in the entire of history because no one, we've got a president right now who is claimed to be bringing a lot of division. And we can see a lot of hatred and we can see sides and we can see it not only in that country I'm referring to, but we can see it in so many of the other nations at this point in time where there's such strong feelings one way and another and it's been blamed on some particular leader at the time and so on.

But the fact is, on a far greater scale, on the broadest scale of human history stands Jesus Christ, the great divider. By his very presence, by his word we've just read and by his name we just read, he would bring this division because people faced with him, and this I would like to say is a reference back to a very important statement in the book of Isaiah where he is spoken of it prophetically, that he will be, when he comes, as a rock and as a caution that if this rock falls on people it will crush them. But then there'll be others who clearly will stand on that rock and will arise indeed.

And I think the issue, the dividing issue at the end of the day is really how men and women respond to him. This is the critical issue. And I must ask you, how do you respond to him? Do we prefer the more comfortable, the tamer version of Jesus, which Paul would call another Jesus? You know, that we can fit nicely into our comfortable, self-centered lives and our family and everything's nice and who doesn't want a family that's united? But the fact is that Jesus is the God of truth and he's come to speak truth and his word comes like a sword.

Even Mary was not going to be free from this. Do you remember we read that in the opening text earlier on that a sword would go through her soul? And clearly there was a reference there to how she would see him treated toward the end of his public ministry, toward the end of his life on earth indeed. She would see him nailed to the cross and so on.

And I can't imagine it possible for any woman, any mother to experience a more torment to her own soul than that because he wasn't merely her beloved son as we've noted already. But in any event, the fact of the matter is even at the very earliest stage of the angel speaking to Mary telling her what God had in mind for her. Do you remember when Gabriel visited her at the beginning? I think we talked about this a week or so ago but a sword went through her soul at that point.

What about Joseph? What about the life that she'd planned and anticipated with Joseph and how she was seen and perceived in the township where she lived and so on? This word would cut right through the whole thing. She would be an outcast. She would be blamed for immorality and so forth.

And of course Jacob, forgive me, Joseph to some degree also and so on. But this is how it is. And then we hear Jesus who says, They persecuted me, they'll persecute you.

He's talking about him being the center of this divisive work and ministry and men and women falling into one category or the other. Not into some unified group where we all just get along well together but when the word of truth comes. The word of truth is such that it divides and men and women make decisions as to how they are going to respond to it.

Now having said all of that, let me tell you this. He is set, said Simeon. He's set.

He's appointed. He has a purpose. He has a clear mission.

He's a little babe at this moment, humanly speaking, but he's here with a mission. And his mission will be a transcendent mission. It is a redemptive mission and purpose.

A mission which will cost him his life's blood. He started out his life in a little wooden animal feed box and he'll finish his life nailed to a wooden cross on a hill called Golgotha. But he came for this purpose.

He came into this world. We can find a list of scriptures which remind us why he came. And he came for this.

He came with this redemptive purpose. That being said, let me tell you this, that I believe, to use a sort of modern expression, if he has you in his crosshairs, that is if he has chosen you, if he has begun to work in your life, he will not leave you. We've been reminded again in the text quoted earlier this morning, when he starts to work, we're told this in scripture, in as far as he started a work, it's a good work, and he will be careful to complete it.

Amen. We have reputations for starting something and then we get fed up with it, or it's too hard, or too something, and we pack it in and forget it. There'll be people doing that in the next week or so.

We'll make resolutions about different things, but too soon it'll all be forgotten and we're back to the default again. But not God, except that his default will not vary at all. His default is the highest possible default.

If he has you, if he started a work in your heart, somewhere along your journey, be assured he will not withdraw from you. He will continue, he will persist. He'll move, what do they say, hell and high water.

He'll move circumstances, he'll move people. I believe that in the broad sense today, he's moving nations and leaders of nations and everything to fit into his great grand purpose and plan, and he's got a purpose and plan for you. Did you hear that again stated this morning when we're here? And what is that purpose he has for you? Let me tell you, it's to raise you up.

By whatever other label or title, it's to raise you up. One text was mentioned, and it started us off well this morning, about being removed from a pit. And he's taken me out of the pit, and out of the miry clay.

He set my feet upon the rock, not to be crushed by it, but to be exalted by it, to be raised up by it. Amen. And the hymn writer put it so well, didn't he, when he said, he was born that man no more may die.

Take that to yourself this morning. He was born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth. If he's got his eye on you, this is his purpose.

This is what he is set to accomplish in you. Your response will determine whether you benefit from it or not. And I'd like to suggest to you that this raising up, the first feature of this raising up, will be, and always is, an awakening.

That's where it all starts, as God begins to make himself known to men and women. We may be little and young, we may be middle-aged, we may be elderly, but this is how it works. He begins to speak.

He begins to work around us. Sometimes, and for the first part, we're probably ignorant of what's going on, but he's positioning you. He's bringing you to a place, and this is a different position and a different place and a different stage and different circumstances for each and every one of us, but he brings us to a place.

I can't help but say this, I hesitate it, but he brought two people from Beijing to bring them to a place, but before he brought them here, he brought them into contact with someone who was the doorkeeper. And this is how he works with each and every one of us, unknown to us. He's organizing things to bring us to the place where he is able to awaken us inwardly and spiritually and awaken us to spiritual realities.

I must read to you from the book of Ephesians where the apostle Paul says in the second chapter, and you, listen to this, you who were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience, among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God, but God being rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, he made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved, and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus so that in the ages to come he might show the surpassing riches of his grace and his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. And so this passage continues.

It's just so very, very wonderful. Certainly. The fact of the matter is he's talking about two categories.

He's talking about the category we all start in, dead to God. And then, if we are so privileged and so blessed, he makes himself known to us. Light has come into the world of my life or your life.

And we're not sure we like the light at first, but this is how it all starts, certainly. The thing is that when you're dead, you don't know you're dead. But when God begins to speak his truth to you, you mightn't like it at first, but he'll show you, first of all, how dead you are.

You don't know otherwise. No one knows it. Only he can do that.

I can't convince Tom, Dick, or Harry or the female equivalents of them out there. I can't do that. I can't convince them they're dead.

Only God can do that. This is a work of God. Do you see those words? But God.

But God. He awakens people. My mind has gone to Ezekiel 37.

Do you remember? The valley of dry bones and just how that story unfolds there for us until soon Ezekiel has been told to prophesy to the bones. Do you remember? And all that goes on, the rattling, the noise, and so on and so on until he says, Breathe on these slain. And that is the prayer.

He's prophesying. He's speaking to God here. Breathe on these slain.

And I love the way the story goes. It's always been a thrilling passage to me. It says in this translation, And they came to life.

He breathed on them. They came to life. And the next statement, And they stood on their feet and were an exceeding great army, the people of God.

This is a prophetic statement with many applications, no doubt. But it has an application here. This little babe that Simeon is holding, he's appointed for this, to raise the sons of earth, to give them second birth, to lift us out of the pit in which we once lived.

Amen. The sword of God's word is sharp, sharper than a two-edged sword, says the apostle. And it penetrates where nothing else can.

But when we're truly awakened by God's spirit, and bless God for every occasion when this has taken place in my life and I trust in yours also, in that moment we come to our senses. They said he has lost his senses. But it's his word that brings men to their senses where they are awakened to their state spiritually, their death state, and at the same time awakened to the grace of God.

And there's no better story to tell than the one which Peter touched on on Thursday. And when he came to his senses, you know the story, the prodigal in the far country. And when he came to his senses, he said, I will return to my father and to his father's house.

He didn't say that, but that's what he did. He came to his senses. He said, I'm a fool.

I'm a fool to be here. I love the old King James here. He fain would have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat.

Then he came to himself. And of course, not only did he come to himself and see this, but the next verse says, so he got up and went. And look at the welcome he received.

Certainly. You know, the question really is, whether I'm speaking to people in this room or people who will listen to this later on somewhere, you know, has God been speaking to you? Think about it. Am I encouraging someone to refocus the things which are somewhat vague in your mind, but now in this moment, you're recognizing, yes, I'm able to believe that God has been bringing me to this place.

I'm facing the fact that I need a much deeper work of God in my life. Perhaps I'm speaking to some people who feel that they've squandered their lives, squandered their lives in John Bunyan's Vanity Fair. Remember the story? Squandered their lives.

You know, we can do that. We can have what seems like a great time and everything's wonderful and everything's fine on the surface. But you know, when you come to the end of life's day, when it's time to say goodbye, will you end up at that stage with regrets? Because you can recall the fact that God gave you so many opportunities.

God spoke to you so clearly in such a situation and yet again another situation and yet another. But you allowed those opportunities to just run like sand through your fingers as you got on with the things which have become your life and your pleasure. Someone wrote these words.

Wasted years. Wasted years. Oh, how foolish.

As you walk on in darkness and in fears, turn around. Turn around. God is calling.

He's calling you from a life of wasted years. Wasted years. Wasted years.

Turn around. This is repentance. It's not tears coming to you.

There may be tears. It's not tears. It's turning around.

It's refocusing your entire life. It's giving yourself to God who is speaking to you. The turning around, to my mind, speaks of a complete and full surrender of your life to him.

We say, I'm giving myself. This is to the real Jesus, the real Jesus who is speaking truth to you, whose words in many cases make you feel very uncomfortable. It challenges you to your core.

It makes you realize what a fool you've been for wasting so much time on so many foolish, trivial pursuits and so on. But his plan is to raise you up and to elevate your whole life. He's born to give you second birth.

He's born to bring you into heights of spiritual union with himself and a life of purity and satisfaction that's on a scale that cannot be reached apart from what he does. It's beyond what you've imagined. Whatever you do, whoever you are, don't finish your life with the words on your mind that were on the mind of an ancient king in Israel who said, I have played the fool.

Those in the first category I've referred to, they would fall because of their refusal to respond to the one who would speak into their hearts. Amen. You know, I'm finishing here.

But you know, you can even be foolish by focusing your life on religious traditions that can hold you in a category that is lower and less than what God truly has. But because this is the way you were taught, because this is the way you've always done it, because this is where all your good friends are, and so on, without realizing it, you may be refusing him who is speaking to you, who wants to raise you up and to raise you up into a fellowship with him that he has ordained for you to know. So we shall close and we shall pray.

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