

A Way Through the Wilderness

by George Warnock

God wants us to have faith and confidence, but not presumption, and to follow Him into His rest and into the mountain of eternity.

Duration: 1:19:43

Scripture: Psalm 40:6, Hebrews 4:2

Topics: "Wilderness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses Jesus' statement to his disciples that it is better for him to go away. He emphasizes that Jesus' departure was part of God's plan to bring about the fullness of his glory on earth. The preacher highlights the importance of the Holy Spirit, who would come after Jesus' departure and enable believers to fully comprehend and receive the love of Christ. He also uses various illustrations and types to convey the different aspects of God's work in his people. The sermon concludes with the reminder that embracing the cross of Christ can transform our nature from bitterness to sweetness.

Transcript

Thank you very much, Brother David. I'll be late in a minute. I do feel honoured to be here, not because of whether it's a convention, but because I do recognise that God is raising up a people in this city, people who are going to be here all the way.

And I prayed much in Christ's past that God would allow me to be identified with that people who are going to live all the way. And I want to be with you as long as you go all the way. Let us turn to Hebrews chapter 4. Let us therefore fear, lest the promised thing let us enter into his rest.

Many of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them. But the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

I think maybe I'll just stop there and maybe read back later and then some more after that in this chapter. But the apostle writing to the Hebrews says, let us therefore fear. And I know God wants us to have a confidence and a faith and assurance of what he has said and what he has promised.

He has assured us before. But there's a godly fear that God would put upon his people. That though he wants us to have faith and confidence and assurance, he does not want us to have any presumption.

And there's a vast difference. So writing to the Hebrews who were inclined to be wavering because coming out of Judaism, never coming into something that they couldn't touch, something maybe insubstantial as far as the natural goes. There's always a tendency to go back to something structured, something they could see, something that they were brought up yet, something that gave them a sense of security.

Paul would remind them that God had brought them to a new day and a new hour. And had done new things. And had brought forth a reality of which their temple and their structure and their priesthood and all their ritual was but mere titan and shadow.

And so he would put upon them a godly fear. That lest the promise being left to us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. God's problem with his people has always been to get them to go all the way.

Oh, how blessed it is when God moves the flowing of his spirit. Perhaps there's utterances and feelings, a manifestation of his presence. And it's so good that we just want to camp there.

This is good, what more can we ask? But God cannot be satisfied until his own heart is satisfied. And that's why God is so anxious. And I know he's going to have a people in this last day who will go all the way in with him.

For the delight of his own heart. We've been all, I suppose, brought up to look upon God as the great and mighty one, alone and by himself, who doesn't really need us. We're the ones that need him.

The fact is that God has a tremendous need for fellowship with you and I. For the simple reason he can't find true fellowship in the midst of angels and archangels and cherubim and seraphim. Because they're not like him. You can't have real fellowship except with humankind.

You can enjoy the other creatures that God has made, but only with man can you have real fellowship, some when you're a king. And of all the creatures that God ever made, man alone is the only creature that God can have fellowship with. Because only he was made in his image.

Only he was made in his image. I think it was Augustine that said that man was made to find rest in God. He'll never find true rest until he comes back to his dome.

I remember reading that and the thought came to me one day, that is true, that God made man in his image. That in that man God might find a place, a resting place for himself. And God can never be satisfied until he draws man back into himself.

He might find his habitation in the human heart. And therefore it is for him and for his glory that we are and we're created. I know we need God, but God needs you and me.

For his glory, for the expansion of his glory. And for the rest and satisfaction of his own heart. What our brother just said is so true.

He wants the people to sit at his feet and hear his words. Doing what he says is no great problem. But we've learned to sit at his feet and hear his words.

And recall that the Lord Jesus chose twelve apostles, the twelve disciples that were not called apostles immediately until he sent them forth. Do you know why he chose them? Anyone venture just against why

he chose them? That they might be risen. First, that they might be risen.

Secondly, that he might send them forth to preach. For how shall they preach unless they can live? How shall they truly relate Christ unto others unless they know him themselves? So God does not want us to fall short of the rest that he's provided for his people. Not only that he's concerned that you and I find the delight of our heart, but he desires to delight his own heart.

And he never truly founded in the fullness of the sense of that word until his only begotten came to earth, who was made in the likeness of man. True, he had a little fellowship in the Old Testament. He had one man whom he called his friend.

Imagine that. God had a friend in the Old Testament. The only one that I know of, Abraham, was called the friend of God.

And Jesus chose these twelve that they might be with him and become his friends. So he says, I'm not going to call you servants. For a servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth.

He doesn't need to know. You just do what you're told. But he says, I've called you friends.

Because whatsoever I've heard of my Father, I've made known unto you. The Lord Jesus today has many servants, many good servants. Many servants who are doing what the Lord says.

I wonder how many friends he's got. I trust that we'll go away from this gathering and determine that we're going to be the Lord's friends. If we can be his friends, then we'll sit at his feet.

And therein will we find true rest. The word bothers a lot of people. Troubles them.

Talking about rest in this day of great need. Even the world is starving. The world is lost, going headlong to destruction.

You hear people talking about resting in God. But it's just that they don't understand what God means by rest. It doesn't mean inactivity.

It means ceasing from our own works. As God did from his. It means laying down our own works and beginning to take upon ourselves his yoke and thereby learn of him.

Jesus says, take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart. And you shall find rest unto your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Jesus, the Son of God, who carries such a load, says my burden is easy.

My yoke is easy and my burden is light. Why was it light and why was it easy? Because he came with no other thought in mind but to do the will of the Father. You say he came to perform the great plan of redemption.

We know that. But in actual reality, if you want to pinpoint it, he came for one purpose and one purpose only. And as it were, in his pre-incarnate condition, we hear him saying to the prophet, sacrificed an offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared for me.

In burnt offerings and in sacrifice for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, lo, I come to do thy will, O God. And so he's revealed and he walks amongst men, walks in and out the temple gates, ministers inside

the temple, courts on occasion.

The whole religious system was greatly overtaken with sacrifice and offering and ritual, priestly service, which God ordained. But way back there in the book of Psalms, I don't know which singer it was, but God gave them these words. Imagine, even while they were singing this song, no doubt with their symbols and everything, it was in music.

The book of Psalms was the hymnal of the second temple. They'd be singing and rejoicing, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, little realizing that they were prophesying that the day would come when all that which they were doing would become but an empty shell, an empty ritual, would have no meaning because God was moving on to something different. And he was manifesting in the earth this Son in whom would be revealed the finality of every type and shadow that was ever offered in the Old Testament.

Imagine Jesus walking in and out of the temple courts and seeing the ritual and seeing the sacrifices and he knew that God had no delight in it. I wonder how much delight God really has in the structured religious systems that we have in Christianity today. This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, he said on two or three occasions from heaven.

I was surprised to discover that he was saying more than is said in the Authorized Version. What he actually said was, this is my beloved Son in whom is my total delight. Because you can be well pleased with many things.

God was saying this is my beloved Son in whom is my total delight. I can find delight nowhere else but in my beloved Son. Perhaps we can come back to that thought a little later.

But the yearning of the heart of God was that God's people would not fall short of God's desire for them. Whenever there is a beautiful moving of the Spirit of God, having been through one or two at least movings where there was a precious new thing that God was doing, having seen the joy and the rejoicing in the new thing that God was doing and then somehow discovering that the people wanted to go no further. Because God cannot be satisfied until you come right nigh unto His very heart.

He'll continue to love you. He'll continue to bless you. He'll continue to give you gifts and ministries and anoint the word that goes forth from your lips to bring healing and deliverance to mankind.

For that we thank Him. He cannot be satisfied until you go out from that realm of the holy place and into the holiest of all. You say, oh, the veil is rent and plain and so I'm already in there.

And I remember a great teacher one time had it all up in a blackboard and he had the outer court and tabernacle which is divided into two realms, holy place and holiest of all. He said, I don't know why people think that we should go into the holiest of all. He says, don't they know the veil is rent? So he rubbed it out.

Yes, the veil of the temple was rent and plain from the top to the bottom when Jesus died on the cross. And that means there is access into the holiest of all. But just as in that day they continued to worship in that temple for another 40 years, how could they do it with a rent veil? Unless they took needle and thread and sewed it up.

So though Jesus Christ has rent the veil through His own flesh, that veil, as it was in the case of Moses, remember when he went up in the mountain and saw the glory of God and came down with the glory of

God radiating from His countenance with a light so brilliant that they could not even look upon Him. So that Moses, when he saw them shrinking and looking away, he beckoned to them. Some think he immediately took a veil and covered his eyes, but I discovered one day that he didn't do that.

But he beckoned, it says, he beckoned to Aaron and the elders. And so fearfully they came forward and he spake unto them the word of the Lord with the glory of God radiating from His countenance. And then he sensed that that glory was departing.

And it says when he finished speaking to them because he sensed the glory was departing, he put a veil on his face so that the children of Israel would not see the end of that which is abolished. Look it up in any other version. He put the veil up on his face so that they would not see the last rays of that fading glory.

He put a veil upon his face so that they would not see the finish of the splendor which was done away. And it actually says that until Moses had finished speaking with them he put a veil on his face. But in every other version, when Moses had finished speaking with them he put a veil on his face because that glory was gone.

It was not just time to remain. It was only for a season. How could it remain? For it was the ministration of condemnation that he had.

And if the ministration of condemnation came with glory, says the Apostle Paul, how shall not rather the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory? How shall not the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory? God grant that this ministration, at least beginning in the hearts of His people in this day and hour, might continue to increase and increase and increase because such is the nature of the new covenant. The nature of the old covenant was to decrease. The glory would fade away.

So when Moses would talk to them he'd come fresh from the presence of God with the glory of God upon him. He'd talk to the people and then he'd sense that glory was going and he'd cover his face again. He lacked that boldness.

Paul says, not like Moses, the covenant that we have and the ministration that we have is not like the one Moses had. Who put a veil on his face so that children of Israel would not see the passing away of that glory. But their hearts were blinded.

For until this same day remaineth the same veil untaken away, which veil is done away in Christ. I know that veil was rent in twain, but that veil is now in the hearts of the people of God. But the secret is, whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Jesus did it at the cross. The Spirit does it in your heart and mine. It was a wonderful revelation to me when I discovered that everything that Jesus accomplished on the cross God would now accomplish in your life and mine through the ministration of the Spirit. And when your heart and mind turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

And so Paul concludes that message in the New Covenant. There, I think, is 2 Corinthians 3 by saying that we all with open face, and the word openness is unveiled with the veil removed. We all with the veil removed are changed into the same image.

From glory unto glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Reflecting as a mirror, another translation. Holding it in a glass, reflecting it as a mirror.

God wants us to be mirrors. Reflectors. As we partake of His glory, we reflect it to someone else.

They partake of it and they reflect it to someone else. That's why your hope and mine, for the ministration of the Spirit in this day and hour, as in any day and hour, but in this day of the consummation, God is going to consummate His plans and His purposes. He's going to bring into being and into fulfillment all that for which we have had bits and pieces through the church age.

He's going to bring to one glorious climax. So it's so essential that you and I begin to relate to the body of Christ. That we be fitly framed and knit together in the body of Christ in this hour.

That we all with that open face might edify our fellow members until the church of Jesus Christ goes on from glory unto glory, from one degree of glory unto another, till we stand face to face with Him in His unveiled splendor. For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them. The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith and them that heard it.

And the Apostle Paul is referring to that occasion in the Old Testament when good news was brought back to them concerning their heritage in Canaan. You remember how at the hand of Moses, God had led them out of Egyptian bondage. And as He brought them forth by the hand of Moses, His purpose was to bring them in to the land of Canaan.

That they must go through a halfway house. God's purpose in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt was to bring them into Canaan. And God said, I brought you out that I might bring you in.

He didn't tell them too much about the halfway house because it was only intended to be a halfway house. Just that. And if He had told them in detail, it might have frightened them.

God does not want the trial and the test and the tribulations of life to dampen our spirit and our zeal to go on with Him. For He has provided grace sufficient for every trial, for every test that He will bring our way. God doesn't have to worry about not informing His people.

I'll look after them. I've got grace for them. So He says, I brought you out of this house of bonnets and I'm going to bring you in.

Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of thy inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. That was the song of Moses. One of the songs of Moses.

When they came out of Egypt and crossed over the Red Sea, what a time of victory. And they sang this song of Moses. And this is part of it.

For even in the song of deliverance there is hope for something better. For I fear, brethren, lest the promise be made of entering into His rest in it you should seem to come short of it. For even in that great thing that God was doing in delivering them out of the hand of Pharaoh, God reminds them this is not all.

I'm going to bring you in. I brought you out to bring you in. That's the purpose for which He brought us out, to bring us in.

Did you know that by and large the birth of Jesus Christ has remained in the wilderness? By and large. But what a victory to see the hosts of Israel crossing the Red Sea with the armies of Pharaoh following them and Moses lifts his rod and the waters go back and overthrow the horse and his rider in the sea. No

wonder they sang the victory song.

And I think it's even in put to music. I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider they've thrown into the sea.

And I hear some victory songs here. But I trust from this day forward when you sing your victory song that you'll remember the purpose for which God gave you that victory. To bring you into the mountain of eternity.

And so when they come out of Egypt into Canaan, God set His very own presence in their midst as a cloud of glory and as a cloud of fire. A cloud of glory by day and a pillar of fire by night to lead them in the way that they should go. And God said, You just follow the cloud.

Just follow the cloud for I'm leading you into this realm of my inheritance. So the cloud of God went ahead of them and brought them to a certain place called Merom. They went out into the wilderness of Shur and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.

And so as they searched around for water they suddenly came to Merom. First no water and the cloud must have been leading them because they had to follow the cloud and lose direction if they didn't. And they came to Merom and found water.

But they could not drink of the waters of Merom for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Merom. Similar word to the word myrrh which is a bitter herb.

Also the word from which we get the word myrrh. I noticed once looking through my concordance that there's, I don't know, five, six, seven myrrhs underneath that. It is seen that Israel has gone through such desolation and bondage here.

When this little child was born this was called Merom. You'll remember when Nehemiah and Luke came back from the fields of Moab where they had gone to take refuge during the time of famine. She'd lost her husband.

She'd lost her two sons. She came back with her daughters-in-law and turned to them and said, Go on back home, dear God. The hand of the Lord had dealt very bitterly with me.

God's gone against me. Orphan, you'll remember, went back to his God and said, Luke said, Whither thou goest, I will go. Your people shall be my people.

Where thou dwellest, I will dwell. And treat me not so meekly. And she'd claim unto her.

When they got back into the land of Canaan the people were excited because this long lost relative was back home. They said, Nehemiah's home. And she says, No.

Not Nehemiah anymore. Merom. The Lord had dealt bitterly with me.

There's a lot of bitterness in God's people. I don't mean just that kind of bitterness where you have resentment one against another. But an inward bitterness simply it's just bitter.

The way it's been bitter. It's been hard. It's been difficult.

Can you tell me why God would lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and across the Red Sea and then they're famishing for water and He leads them to a place where there's water which is bitter which they can't drink. As the brethren have been emphasizing. Whatever things were written before time were written for our learning.

That we should be patient in the comfort of the Scriptures in our time. And it's all for our sakes where these things are written. And God wants us to know that before He can take us into this land of true rest where we are unable to cease from our own works and be so enveloped with the canopy of the Lord's presence that it is no longer you and I that work but it is the living Christ that works through us.

He wants us to know it's a prepared place and we can't just barge in there. But that for this prepared place there must be a prepared people. And that's what the wilderness is all about.

That's what the wilderness is all about. That God might prepare you and I for the coming into this good land. But you see, you mean that God has to lead us to bitter waters to prepare? No doubt you've often heard as many teachers are explaining that the fullness of the work of God and His people is always in triumph.

And oh, we could probably name a dozen or so triumphs too to show the fullness of God's work and His people. I'll just mention a couple. I've already mentioned the tabernacle, how that there was outer court, holy place, holiest of all.

Remember the three feasts in Israel? Feast of Passover, Feast of Pentecost, Feast of Tabernacle. And John speaks of three realms of growth in such people. Little children, fathers, young men.

I quoted it right. Never heard a minister yet who quotes it right. All these little children, young men, fathers.

There's no other order. Little children, fathers, young men. I thought John might have slipped up until he repeated it.

I'm writing to you little children, I'm writing to you fathers, I'm writing to you young men. Because though the whole family could get strength from that if they opened that letter and read it, all John would have known that he was also writing of the spiritual growth in the family of God. Little children whose sins are forgiven.

Fathers who have come to maturity and know Him. And then, young men. Overcomers.

I'm not referring to age. The people who like Moses at the age of 120, his natural force was still there. His eyesight was still good.

The only reason he couldn't win and conquer Canaan with Joshua and the rest of them was because he disobeyed God. And God said you're going to have to die. And when his time came, He says go out on the mountain there and die.

He walked up a mountainside at the age of 120 and laid down his life. Caleb, when he comes into Canaan, he had waited a long time for this generation to arise to take the land. When he came into Canaan, he didn't rush over to Hebron to take possession of his heritage.

Oh God, I've sworn an oath to him 38 years before because your spirit has been right and your heart has been right. I swear I'll bring you into this land. But when he got there, Caleb didn't rush over and get his

little inheritance.

But he spent seven years bringing others into their inheritance. And when the others got there, as he came to Joshua, and he says now Joshua, remember what the Lord promised you and I 38 years ago when you and I went over there? He says I'm just as strong now as I was then. Give me this mountain, young man.

I've got some gray-haired men, some in this room today. You think you're in the place of retirement? Forget it. You hear what God's saying? Forget it.

Little children, fathers, young men, overcomers. Hope I'm with some of you, young fellas. You take the land.

And I don't mean by that, you know, that the man might be feeble and all that. There's no retirement for those who go all the way with him. I'm not saying they're out active in ministry, but that's nothing to do with doing the will of God anyway.

It shouldn't have been that. It's not first. Jacob there laying in his bed just about ready to die.

And he brought the sons in to kiss them goodbye. He props himself up in his bed and prophesies the word of the Lord. There's a prophecy that's written down in holy Scriptures concerning what God would do with His people in the last days.

He laid back and died. Anyway, another three, one that I always like. The kingdom of God is like a seed that's planted in the ground and springs up first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn.

I didn't quote it all. The full corn in the ear. Not in translation, not in rapture, not in resurrection.

The full corn in the ear. First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. So that the ear becomes the connection, the transition between the blade and the full corn.

What I want to impress upon you is that almost invariably in the history of God's people, they will settle for that area of transition. And even the holy place in the tabernacle was a place of preparation for the priest to come into the holiest of all. We need to go through that.

There's no other way. There's no back door into the holiest of all. We must have gifts.

We must have ministries. We must have the illumination of the candlestick. We must have the table of showbread.

Aaron must stand before the incense and offer up the holy incense before the Lord. I appreciate what Brother David has been writing about the altar of incense. And incidentally I'd also written something about it just before I got his letter on it.

And I discovered that they didn't like the fire of the incense there in the golden altar. The golden altar wasn't made for the burning of fire. But he would take the incense off the golden altar and put it in his censer.

But the fire for that incense came from the altar of the Lord. Out in the outer corner. So he'd have to go out there.

That's where the fire was kindled. Take coals from the brazen altar and bring it in and put the incense upon it in order that there might be a cloud that covered the most of it. In order that the incense might ascend unto God as a sweet-smelling savior.

As David said, my prayer shall be set forth before the incense and the lifting up of my hand as the evening sacrifice. So that God is saying, it is true. I don't want your prayer.

I don't want your praise. I don't want your worship. Except it is ignited by an act of obedience and submission to the will of God at the altar of Bernoff.

The blade, the ear, the fulcrum. The fulcrum in the ear. So let's just consider for a while the purpose of God in leading His people through the wilderness.

We look upon it geographically. They came out of Egypt. Traveled through the wilderness.

And they entered and became. But ours is a spiritual journey. Ours is an inner journey.

And so we have to see the wilderness in you and I. And because God must have a prepared people for this prepared place, He has to deal with you and I in the wilderness. And in leading us through the wilderness, He's redeeming that old light, that carnal nature that we have there in the wilderness that we might deal with. So that the wilderness becomes a preparation.

A place of preparation. Something that Israel did not learn. And yet, tenderly was God leading them every step of the way.

Showing them His glory in such a way that He might entice them unto Himself and cause their hearts to be turned unto Him. That they might realize that God meant what He said. I'm bringing you into a good land.

If God's Word is true and if they believe God, all they could say is, God, I see the waste in the howling wilderness. I see bitter waters. But Lord, it has to be for Your glory.

You must have a purpose in it. What are You trying to reveal to me? What are You trying to show me? He brought them to Marah because Marah is the condition of our hearts. He brings you to bitter waters that you might know that this is what my heart is like.

Deuteronomy chapter 8. By this time, He's talking to another generation. This first generation didn't make it. So, He's talking to another generation.

But He does tell us the purpose of the wilderness life. Verse 2, Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness. Now that's something different.

The Lord led you forty years in the wilderness. God was leading them, but because they did not know God's ways, they wandered. To them, it is a wandering place.

No purpose. No real intention. God was mad at them, so He's just leading them around haphazardly.

That's the way they looked upon their God. I don't think it's without significance that the first stopping place was... No, I don't think it was the first. I think it's the first to mention here.

Came to record them. I believe first. But one of the first places where they stopped in town was Mara.

As God knows the bitterness that's in the human heart. When God leads you to waters of Mara, He has a purpose. See, what purpose can there be in God giving me bitter waters to drink? Until we discover that God didn't give you bitter waters to drink.

God gave you bitter waters that you might see the grace and the glory of God of changing those waters and making them to be sweet. Instead of that, we sit down and we drink of the bitter waters. We grumble and complain against God and man.

Drink some more. Drink some more and more and more bitterness. We complain and murmur.

Instead of saying, God, the cloud of Your glory led me here. The cloud of Your presence brought me here. What are you trying to show me? We'll show you.

Moses cried unto the Lord. The Lord showed him a tree. He cut down the tree and threw it into the water and it became sweet.

So God led them to Mara to perform the miracle of changing the bitter into sweet. And by that to show you and I that if we truly embrace the cross of Christ in our life, no matter what experience may come our way, as we cast the tree into the waters, it becomes sweet. And it changes our nature from one of bitterness to one of sweetness.

Moses cried unto the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree which when He had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made for them a statute and an ordinance. And there He proved it, or tested it.

The wilderness is for testing. It's not for destruction. It's not intended to bring murmuring or complaining.

It's intended for testing, for proving that you might be prepared for that land of union with Christ, the land of union. For Jesus cannot join unto Himself your fleshly nature, my fleshly nature, your sin and mine. But He's going to join a people unto Himself.

Therefore, He would rid us of every bitterness, every stain, every sin, every bit of carnality. He might join us unto Himself. We might find rest in Him and we might find rest in the world.

It's your life and mine that becomes the wilderness. We're the wilderness. We're going to the wilderness.

It's that spiritual work that God is doing in us. That out from the wilderness of our life He might bring forth the beautiful garden of the Lord. For the Lord shall comfort Zion.

He will comfort all her waste places. And He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, and thanksgiving in the voice of melody.

God wants to make of this wilderness what you and I are, the garden of the Lord. There's so many different illustrations and pictures and types of the work that God is doing in His people. And the reason God chooses so many different types and shadows or illustrations is for the simple reason that there's no one picture that can show the whole story.

We see the one picture and we get caught away with that perhaps. We fail to realize it takes all the other pictures together to get the real picture. And so those who are strong, ready for battle, they like the thought of being part of God's army.

There's an army marching through the land. That's one picture. But to be God's army, you've got to know also that we're God's temple.

Of course, a temple can't march through the land. It's not a literal temple. There's another aspect.

A temple is where God dwells. So if God doesn't dwell in you, don't talk about going forth because He's the enemy. And then, of course, we're the body of Christ.

And without getting into that in any particular detail this morning, I'd just like to remind God's people it is the body of Christ. In the same way that you have a body in which you dwell. I remember a very noted teacher of the Word a few years ago.

He set up and said, I've been preaching the Word for I don't know how many years. And he was tremendous in the Word. He said, I never understood until a few years ago that the body of Christ meant the body in which the Lord Jesus dwelt in the fullness of His presence, but a body of people.

If you look at Mark, here's the body of Christ, here's the body of people. Much deeper than that. When you read 1 Corinthians 12, 14, you'll discover that the apostle draws a comparison between the body of Christ and the body of which you are.

A finger, a hand, a foot, an eye, an ear. And he says, you're that body of Christ. When God grabbed us, the revelation of the body of Christ might come to us with such an impact.

We begin to pursue in our thinking, in our faith, in our praying to the Lord. In our intercessions, pursue that purpose that God has for making of His people the body in which He, the Lord Jesus, shall dwell in the fullness of His being, where He Himself is the head, where every member is vitally joined, each to its part, that there might arise in the earth the very expression of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as truly and as effectually but far more reaching than the body in which Jesus, that one man, dwelt when He was here on earth. I don't think any one of us would have any argument with the fact that when Jesus dwelt here on earth, in Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead body.

Not that all of God was there because we know God built everything. We know that, the fullness of it. The word signifies completeness, nothing lacking.

I saw that power takes power. Well, we know that the universe is filled with it, but the completeness of it, the fullness of it, is in the Lord Jesus. Love, you see it in the creation, in the natural realm.

You see it in the animals and the birds. Very little of it in the human family. You see it in the lower realms of creation, remnants of it.

But the fullness, the highest description of love, I'm not good at words, is in Jesus, my mercy. God suffered. I mean, anything you can think of that pertains to God, the fullness of it, the completeness of it, the perfection of it, was in the Lord Jesus when He was here.

I suppose, like I have, we've all thought, my, what we missed. Having been born a couple of thousand years ago in or near the little land of Palestine, somehow we might have caught a glimpse of our Lord, heard words from His mouth that we knew were infallible and pure and clean and holy, straight from the heart of God. I don't think it struck me with force until two or three years ago as I was reading John 16 that God had a better plan than that.

He had a better plan that Jesus should have remained here on the earth these 2,000 years. He could have. He stayed 40 days.

He could have stayed 40 years, 400. God had a better plan. To me this is staggering.

But He told His disciples He was going away. Sorrow filled their hearts. You can't get by without your Lord.

He's been following you, anticipating, just knowing for sure that one of these days you're going to set up a kingdom and you say you're going away. It doesn't make sense. Because I've said these things unto you, Jesus, sorrow has filled your heart.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. This is what Jesus said. I tell you the truth.

It is expedient to me that I go away. Do you have a amplified version? Read it or not. It is to your advantage that I go away.

It is better for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send Him unto you.

I can't see anything else in this and other Scriptures that Jesus' intention was that when the Holy Spirit came to take up His habitation in this temple which He's forming in the earth, that He would manifest His presence out from that temple in the same degree of purity and truth and glory and excellence as He did in the body of the Lord Jesus that was prepared for Him when He was here. That just as truly as the Holy Ghost came upon Mary, the child of sorrow, her name means bitterness, He caused her to conceive in her womb and bring forth a body prepared of God for the expression of His own image in the earth. So, just as truly the Holy Ghost is coming upon a pure woman in the earth made pure by the cleansing of the blood of Christ, and as that woman nurtures in her heart, in her womb, the Word of the Lord that comes to her, she's going to bring forth in the earth a son, not another one, but the complement, C-O-M-P-L-E-M-E-N-T, of the one who didn't see fit to stay here, but said it would be better if I went away.

I said you'd have no problem in receiving what I said, that in Jesus dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. My brother has already quoted this Scripture, at least part of it I think, in Ephesians 1, which states that when Jesus, who was the fullness of God on earth, ascended into the heavens, He was exalted above all principality and power and might and dominion in every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. The fullness.

It's the same word. The pleroma, the completeness, nothing lacking. No wonder when Paul would write to the Ephesians he'd have to stop every minute to pray, to pray for the ones to whom he was writing because he knew that the thing that he was saying was from the heart of God.

And if the people of God did not have the spirit of revelation upon them, they would not know what he was saying. And so we come down into chapter 3. Having declared these glorious truths of the mystery of Christ being revealed in the earth and in His people, he pauses once again. Ephesians 3.14 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 His name, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.

We can accept that. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. We know that's true.

That ye be rooted and grounded in love. We know that that's true. But listen to this.

That ye might be able to comprehend. Look it up in other versions. It's more than comprehend.

It's to apprehend. It's to receive fully. What is the breadth and the length and the depth and the height and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Which in others He said that we, the corporeal beings, you can't be filled with all the fullness of God. You, you, you. But together God saw fit to take His Son that He might magnify His glory in the earth.

Everyone who is fitted together in this body might have one function and one function only. And that is according to the particular place that they have in the body of Christ to glorify God and to bring glory to His name in the manner which Jesus said was good. And it is good that He left so that God could do this in the spirit.

You've got the notion that Jesus is coming back because the church made a mess of herself. So, Jesus figures He'll come back and set up a kingdom. The church failed.

Unto Him be glory in the church throughout all ages world without end. Back to Hebrews chapter 4. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, as I have sworn in my wrath that they shall enter into my wrath. Sounds a little strange wording, but it's quoting Scripture.

If they shall enter into my wrath. So that God, He says, God said there was a wrath. So He says, if you believe, enter into that rest that God spoke about.

Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He spake in a certain place at the seventh day. And this wise and God did rest the seventh day from all His works.

And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein that they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief. Again, He limited the certain day.

You've got to follow the spiritual logic here of the Apostle. It's a little difficult just to read it over passage. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein that they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.

He didn't touch on that, but I think you all know the story. God said He'd bring them out to bring them in. So they camped there at Sinai, I think, for a couple of years to be instructed in the ways of the Lord, to receive the instructions of the tabernacle, priesthood, cleansing.

That's a couple of years. Is that right? And then they began to move north into the land that God had promised. And they came right up to Kedosh Barnea, which was the doorstep of Canaan.

And they sent spies out to spy out the land, search it out, just to know the ingoings, outgoing of the enemy, ready for conquest. And they came back with a report of the land. And they all agreed it was good.

There was no question about that. But it says the word preached did not, the word that they brought back, the word of the report, I think other versions say, did not profit them, not being mixed with faith Did not profit them. They were not joined by faith to those who had the word.

There was a dissension arose. Here was Caleb and Josh with a sure word from the Lord. And Caleb said, let's go up boldly and take it, for we are well able to overcome it.

But they said, we can't because the enemy's in the land and they're mightier than we are. They're giants. We're like grasshoppers in their sight.

They got iron chariots. Caleb looked at none of that. He says, they'll be bread for us.

They'll be our bread and butter. And his only reason was that if God delight in us, he will bring us in. The only reason he gave and that was sufficient.

But you know, there was a controversy. So that the people of God did not join their hearts with that word. And so they failed to enter in.

Now, there's much to be said about the new generation that God would raise up as he did then. Because they didn't enter in, God said he would wait for another generation. Not only that, but the excuse they gave for not entering in, God took advantage of it.

They said, our children couldn't stand that kind of a land because they couldn't stand the enemies that were there and the difficulty we'd have in settling down and making a home for ourselves. Our children couldn't take it. God says, I swear by myself, you'll die in the wilderness and I'll bring your children in.

So the excuse that they had as a reason for which they couldn't go in, God says, alright, you're afraid for your children. You die here and I'll bring them in. What I'm saying is, and I'd like to emphasize this in closing, seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter there.

It doesn't say, well, because they didn't enter in, God just forgot. I'm encouraged to know when God has a plan, a purpose, no work of man or Satan is going to hinder it. I'm not saying by that that you and I are therefore going to make it in that sense of overcoming and taking the land.

I'm saying that God's going to do it in spite of us. And if we fail, we'll have another people raised. Also, I've discovered that God's timetable, oh, he might delay it sometimes, like he did here, 40 years.

But even that delay was in his purpose. At least he fitted it into his purpose later on. When the time comes when God says, it's going to happen, and that the people to whom the word of the Lord came and to whom he gave precious promises, whom he encouraged to prepare their hearts for this land have not done so, or despise it, or reject it, or lay it aside as some far out teaching.

God can go out there in a matter of a few weeks and prepare a people and bring them in. And he'll do it. I get letters from Kenya.

I don't know why. The only country that I get large numbers of letters from is the head of man from Kenya who was visiting recently. God's noodle money.

And what I find is the Kenyan people that write me, they seem to have a real understanding of these things. And I read what David said about God turning these third world countries, poor countries, to bring forth what he has in mind to this day and hour. My heart rejoiced and I think I was a little more diligent in attending to my correspondence out of these four countries.

That if we in this land, if there's no group of people that goes into the inheritance, it's not going to frustrate God. He's going to do it. So it's not depending upon you and I. But he does desire that we should lay hold upon it and embrace it.

Otherwise, our hearts would not be open and receptive to this word. The principle in Scripture is that the secret things belong to the Lord our God, that those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children as we might do them. If God hides it, well, I think God hides lots of truth.

I'm not saying that there's anything really new under the sun. I'm saying that you and I, in the time to come, there's going to be new manifestation in the earth hidden away in the heart of God for centuries. Isn't the day of harvest? All Christendom recognizes that.

Isn't the day of harvest? There's going to be a good harvest because God's a good gardener. And you know, I know, that he should have come 40 years ago. I thought it was senseless to finish high school because the Lord should have come.

The teaching is when you get a temple over there in Jerusalem and get the antichrist in there, then he can come. I'm telling you that God's building a temple not made with hands. And then in the midst of the temple, the man of sin has been and is being revealed because that's the temple that God's concerned about.

Antichrist is not concerned about some old wooden temple someone's going to try and build over in Jerusalem. He's determined to rob God of his glory. He's put his glory in you and I. And he'll try his best to set up his habitation in you and I if we'll let him.

That's why we say, come, Lord Jesus, in the shining forth of Your splendor. Destroy that man of sin that rises up in every one of us from time to time as we seek to exalt ourselves above the throne of God and refuse the Lord Jesus Christ His total lordship in our lives. Come and smite that antichrist in me.

I know he's going to be revealed out there to a far greater degree than he is now. That man of sin will rise up in your heart and mine if I give him a chance. But not if we stand face to face in the presence of our Christ because his light will destroy every trace of the carnal nature, every trace of sin of those who stand face to face with him.

Certain Greeks came to see Jesus. They heard about this great one. They were Greeks, but they were Hellenistic Greeks.

In other words, they were converts to Judaism. They came to the feast and they came, was it to Philip and Andrew? One or the other or both. They said we would see Jesus and they called Jesus.

There are some Greeks here. They've come down a long ways. They'd like to see you.

And the simple yet strange reply was except the corn of wheat fall to the ground and die that abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. The fact that Jesus died in obedience to the will of the Father.

The fact that God raised him from the dead the third day and seated him in his right hand in heavenly places far above all rule and principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named and gave him to be the head over all things to the church which is his body. The fact that God did

that is God's guarantee to you and I, to the world, to all creation that there shall arise in the midst of the earth much fruit because of the corn of wheat. Dear Lord Jesus.

We thank you Lord Jesus for these people. Let us stand. Thank you for these people Lord whom you've apprehended for this hour.

Lord, I thank you for the liberty you gave which I do not always have to try to show forth some small measure or the glory that you have in store for them. Rather they might take this word, embrace it, behold upon it, bear it in their heart, lest the fowl of the air pluck it out and devour it, lest the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches crowd it out, lest thorns and thistles and priors spring up and choke the word and it bear no fruit. May the word upon reception live long in his heart and bring forth fruit from the eternal life.

Jesus, hear our prayer. Raising up a holy, pure people with a heart for you. Lord, with no part dark, with nothing hidden in their lives, you're bringing it forth again this afternoon, dear brother.

We say this man has been with Jesus and he's brought us a pure word, Lord, that you're going to find a people. You will find a people, Lord. God, find some of us here.

Find some of us here. Put it in our hearts to go all the way with You, Lord, that we will lay down everything in this world, everything in this life and go with You, Lord. Lord, our dear brother has come through the ladder.

He saw people and his hopes were raised in them. Our hopes were raised again and then they're dashed and they're raised and they're dashed. But, oh, Lord, You're going to have... You've always had a people.

You're going to have a people in this day. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! You will have a people, Lord. I see young people now rising up in such holiness.

Young people, Lord, that cry night and day, that dream over the sins of the Lamb in their hearts. Lord, some of those young people are here now. Those young men that He speaks of.

There are others, Lord, that are in their 50s and 60s and even 70s and they have this youth of the Spirit now, this hunger for Your righteousness and holiness. Amen.

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