

Charlotte Seminar 5-26-00 Pm

by George Warnock

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of divine revelation and the power of the Gospel through Christ's crucifixion in the life of the church and its mission.

Duration: 1:06:27

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:9, Hebrews 9:13

Topics: "Seminar"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of wisdom and instruction for kings and judges. He urges them to serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. The preacher also highlights the significance of following Jesus and putting trust in Him. He mentions the power of the blood of Christ in purging our conscience and enabling us to serve the living God. Additionally, the preacher discusses the role of light confronting darkness and love confronting hate, ultimately leading to the cross. He reminds believers that Jesus, as the Lamb that was slain, has defeated the Prince of Darkness and rules over all governments from heaven.

Transcript

Well, once again, we just trust that the Lord will please minister to the hearts of his people something that's pertinent to what he has in mind for us, something that he wants us to know, something concerning his way, his will. Otherwise, there's no purpose of us being here. It's not that I want to try and put over some doctrine I have or tell you some things that I think you don't know.

I just always trust if and when the Lord sees fit to release us to go places, which he does on very rare occasions, that we might come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. That we might come to a people whose hearts are prepared for what he would say or do. That we might come in the will of God.

That we would speak words from his heart to your hearts. Not necessarily with any kind of eloquence, for I don't have that. Not with too much premeditation of what I will say either.

Because I believe the anointing is there upon his people to hear what God would say and it should be upon those who stand to deliver a word. That there might be a joining together of the word from God's heart to that cry in your heart. That there might be something done of eternal value.

Like a brother read there, or sang, Be it unto me according to thy word. That sort of sealed what God had said to her. God initiates everything, you know.

Never think that we start anything that's worthy of God's approval. He initiates, he puts the thought there, or the word, or the desire perhaps. Perhaps only a great desire he puts there for something that God himself wants to do.

So he puts that desire there. And then he expects us to pursue that desire and look for him to fulfill it. We're told in one of the Psalms, and I came across it one time and I thought it was very beautiful.

He will answer the desire of his people. Or he hears the desire of his people. And in hearing, of course, he will answer that prayer.

It's a prayer, but it says he will hear the desire of his people. Whether we're praying loud or soft or just if it's something in our hearts. He hears the desire of his people.

And he will be faithful to fulfill the desires of our heart if our desires are truly unto him, after him. So I thank the Lord for these few days we've been here. And I pray that he will do what he has in mind, finish whatever he has in mind for this little time of fellowship together.

So may the Lord bless each one of you and give us all an open heart and mind to receive from him. Perhaps I should read a verse or two from 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians chapter 2. Paul had not too long before this been in Athens.

He disputed with the wise men of that city, seeking to bring Christ to them. They appointed him a day on Mars Hill. And they all assembled to hear what this man would say.

He preached a very wonderful sermon entitled To the Unknown God. He saw that idol there somewhere in Athens and inspired him to preach on it. He said, this unknown God that you're worshipping, I'm here to declare him unto you.

And so it is very beautiful, but it almost appears that when he came to Corinth, he realized that perhaps he was trying to meet them on their level of wisdom and knowledge. I don't know. But he came to Corinth with a new determination, a fresh determination.

He says, I brethren, chapter 2, 1 Corinthians, When I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. Albeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, full-grown, mature, yet not the wisdom of this world nor of the princes of this world that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Scripture that was very often quoted when I was a youngster, Sunday school days, going to church. Many would stand if they were given an opportunity to

testify like they used to do in those days, and this would be one of the scriptures.

I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. And that's beautiful, but it needs the next verse to make it complete. God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.

For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. I'm not very proficient in Greek, but the deeps of God I believe is what it says, not just things about God, but searching out the things concerning the depths that are in God himself. The Spirit is there to search out those things.

For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him. Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things also we speak.

Not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches, comparing. I look that word up, sometimes I look up a word, Strong's Concordance, and this one, it doesn't seem to be as clear as I would like to see it, and it brings out the thought, it's just putting one thing side by side with another, and comparing the two, literally joining them together, combining spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.

Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

And so these hidden things, these deep things in God, it's not something we can search out theologically. A theologian can't do it. I know there was a time when I felt I was going to be in ministry as a young person.

I always felt I'd be in full-time ministry someday. Never was, but that's another story. But I felt I got to know Greek and Hebrew, got to read books, a lot of books.

Oh, I get a few books and read them, and I never got into reading too many books. Somehow I couldn't seem to get much out of it. You say, well, you're writing books.

I know, and I don't promote them. I only write when I feel the Lord wants me to write. I just don't say, I'm a writer now, I've got to get another book out there.

If I feel God gives me something to put down, I'll do it. Not because I'm a writer, just I feel the Lord gives me things to say. I make them available.

And I'm thankful it's helping people. But I'm not a writer, I'm not a preacher, I'm not a theologian. And I just want to be a servant of the Lord to do what He says.

I used to think, I should know Greek, and if ever get time, know Hebrew. Because I know there's a great language barrier between our language and the Greek and the Hebrew in which the original languages were written. I mean, the original Scriptures were written.

And I did study Greek for a few months. And then I found I got busy, too busy to keep it up. And I used to feel a little bit disappointed that I was never able to really get into it.

And then I think the Lord began to show me, not necessarily that I was too concerned about it, but I think He began to show me that I could know Greek and Hebrew to perfection. And never know the true God. Why would I say that? Because the Apostle Paul, he knew Greek and Hebrew thoroughly.

Never knew the true God. Knew about Him, and that knowledge about Him served him well in the days to come. Never knew God.

Never knew the Lord Jesus Christ. God smote him down there on the Damascus road. Who are you, Lord? Jesus! And they'll persecute him.

Never knew Him with all his studies. But then, having met Him, oh, then what he had learned became very valuable to him. As he would turn to the Scriptures and God would reveal things.

Even then, it wasn't because he had a theological mind. Because he tells us so clearly, writing to the Galatians, the things that, I'm telling you, the Gospel that God gave me was not by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He didn't get it even from the other Apostles.

He got it directly from the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's why when he would read the Scriptures and God would show him something, He'll tell us what he found. And you'd say, well, I can't see where he'd get that there.

I don't see how he'd come across that. It wasn't that he just happened to cross it. God revealed it by His Spirit.

And would reveal truths that were New Testament truths that was all through the Old Testament, but not apparent until God, by His Spirit, takes it and shines upon it. And so, he was able to write the things he did because of the revelation of God to his own heart. The revelation of the Christ Himself.

That became the key to the unfolding of the Word of God in his own life and for the preaching of it to others. And so, he says, I didn't come with excellency of speech. I didn't come to try and sway people with my oratory.

But I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Oh, may God restore that divine anointing that enables His servants to stand and preach the Gospel not in words of man's wisdom, but in the wisdom of God, declaring the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. So, writing to the Ephesians, I believe it was, he said God gave him that ministry as the steward of the mysteries of God to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

But then he went on. He went on from there to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and to cause men to see what is the depth of those riches, what is the depth of the mystery of Christ that God gave to him. Cause them to see.

Cause men to see. Well, how can I cause men to see? We can't unless the Spirit of God is there, not only to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, but to cause men to see. For the God of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not.

Lest the light of the knowledge of the glory of God should shine upon them. They're blind. And unless there's a ministration of the Spirit that causes men to see, they can't see it.

Well, if we only knew that instead of thinking, well, all they need is the Bible, all they need is someone to go and quote John 3.16. But no, they're needed. And the anointing of God that will cause men's eyes to be opened. I know we can't do that.

We're totally helpless. That's why God wants to send forth an anointed people. He's going to send forth an anointed people to the nations.

God forbid I should speak any word against any missionary or any person whom the Lord has sent forth into another country to proclaim the Gospel. But, oh, I feel sorry for many of them who go thinking, well, I can go and I'll take a team with me. I'll take some singers or I'll take some actors or those who are good at puppeteering or whatnot and we'll try and portray the Gospel to these people that can't speak our language.

That's nonsense! You're not going to reveal Christ by any of that. It's going to be by the revelation of Jesus Christ or they're not going to see Him. Paul said to the Galatians, I came to you and I preached the Gospel in a way that Christ was openly seen crucified in your midst.

There was such a portrayal of the Gospel of Christ by the Spirit that they saw the Christ revealed, the crucified Christ revealed. Because that's the Gospel. Christ crucified.

Paul says, God forbid, that I should have come to you, Corinthians, in any other way but with humbleness and meekness and in fear and in much trembling, declaring unto you the testimony of God. Christ crucified. The wisdom of God and the power of God.

Oh, you see, just as long as we can tell them Jesus died for them. But Paul said, by the wisdom of God and the power of God, this Gospel must go forth. Christ crucified.

The power of God and the wisdom of God. Foolishness to the Greek, he said. A stumbling block to the Jews, but to them that believe, both Jews and Gentiles.

Christ the power of God and Christ the wisdom of God. Christ crucified. Christ on the cross, the wisdom of God, revealed in its fullness.

The wisdom of God was revealed in its fullness when Jesus died on the cross. Because he went there in the will of God. He didn't stumble his way to Calvary.

He said when he set his face as a flint to go to Jerusalem, I'm walking in the light. I think I mentioned this even last night. He said, Lord, but we were there in Jerusalem.

They tried to kill you. He said, I'm walking in the light. If a man walks in the daytime, he will not stumble.

He went there in the will of God knowing that he was confronting the hosts of evil. He was confronting the prince of darkness. And he told his disciples, the prince of this world, prince of darkness cometh and he has nothing in me.

There was no foothold in him. He had undergone temptation after temptation at the hands of the prince of darkness. Not only from the very beginning of his ministry up there in the mount of temptation, but all through his ministries, as darkness came against him, confronting him, he being the light.

They were offended. They resisted him because they walked in darkness. He came as a light into the world, he said.

That those who would receive him, those who were blind might see. And that those which see might be made blind. In other words, those who professed that they could see and were satisfied with the natural vision they had, they become more blind because of this light that he became.

And so it was light confronting darkness that brought about the cross. It was good confronting evil that brought about the cross. It was love confronting hate that resulted in the cross.

When he healed a man that was dead in the grave four days out of love and compassion, healed him and raised him from the dead, it brought about his death. That caused him to have a counsel. What are we going to do? He's doing all these miracles.

We've got to kill him. We might even have to kill Lazarus. Because this man is performing so many miracles, we might lose what we've got.

They were not prepared to accept this one who had the truth unless it would fit into their system. They saw the mighty miracles. At first they were thrilled with it and they tried to make him king.

Wanted to make him king because he had such miracle working powers. But when they realized he was not interested in becoming that kind of a king that they wanted, then they crucified him. The fact that he raised Lazarus from the dead was something that propelled him to his cross.

So in the wisdom of God, God was bringing light against darkness, hatred against love, deception against truth, iniquity against righteousness. In Jesus, he came into the world as that one who would reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to judge the prince of darkness. And he declared just before the time he would go to the cross, the prince of this world is judged.

Not that it would happen just the next day or so, but it was done in his mind and that's why he was able to say in John 17, Father, I've finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. He had yet to die, but it was finished. His mind was set.

He had conquered. He had overcome. And now all that remained was for God to finish this offering up of himself on the cross.

God arranged it all. He arranged it all. He didn't put that evil in the hearts of people.

He didn't put that sin there to cause them to crucify Jesus. Jesus came into a world of darkness. Jesus was the light.

And because he was the light and they were in darkness, there was confrontation which caused him to die on the cross. And Satan finally thought, I've got him now. He tried all through his earthly ministry to get him to go out of the will of the Father, but finally got him on the cross.

But it was there on the cross that Christ overcame him. Overcame principalities and powers through his death on the cross making a show of them openly. Openly triumphing over them on his cross.

Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death. The prince of darkness didn't know it. Had he known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

They didn't know that God was turning all that hatred against his Son and against himself. God was using that occasion to bring forth the ultimate sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ which would forever do away with all other sacrifices.

Because he had become the sacrifice which was overshadowed by the will of God and by the presence of the Spirit of God. That day when he hung on the cross, and if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer would sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God. Purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

So Paul preached that glorious Gospel and the going forth of that message caused the eyes of men to be opened. I'm going to turn to Ephesians there just to touch on that a little more. He says he was made a minister of this Gospel.

Ephesians 3 verse 7 According to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God who created all things by Jesus Christ. Then what? The purpose of all this? To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers and heavenly places might be known by the church through the church the manifold wisdom of God.

That's the full Gospel. Not just a simple message devoid of the power of God. Paul says, Our Word came unto you not in Word only but also in power and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance or in much conviction to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to cause blind eyes to be opened to the intent that the principalities and powers and heavenly places might be impacted with the mighty revelation of the wisdom of God that was revealed at the cross.

When Jesus died on the cross, they realized that they were destroyed. They realized that they had been defeated by the humblest of men. Defeated by a lamb.

The lamb that was slain has defeated the prince of darkness, the prince of this world and all his lesser powers in the earth. Oh, we get so concerned sometimes about our governments. And I know we'd like to have good government.

And God said as His people, walk with Him. Pray for governing authorities that He is able to change their hearts that the church might dwell and minister and thrive in peace. Not denying that it takes a season sometimes for God to bring nations down, bring rulers down.

In the meantime, His people become a suffering people. But God has set His government in the earth. The Lord Jesus Christ rules from heaven as the King on the throne over all other governments.

I know you don't like your government sometimes and we don't like ours. There are very few nations that really like their government. I'm telling you, we've got a government that we should be keeping our hearts and minds at all times.

We've got a King who is King of all kings and Lord of all lords. And He has the final say in everything. He's got the final word.

We're always trying to prod Him to become a little more active in His government. And if He doesn't do it well, we'll try and get some politicians to do it. God don't rule in the midst of His enemies until they're all put under His feet.

Let's not get concerned too much about governments. They're going to be evil, especially in the end time. They're going to rage against the King that's reigning in Zion.

Why do they rage? When God sent forth the Holy Ghost the day of Pentecost, they had power to do anything God wanted them to do in Jerusalem even though they were under the power of the Roman government. They could do anything God wanted them to do. Put them in jail.

God would open the jail doors and take them out. Slaughter them. Persecute them.

Scatter them. Wherever they went, they went preaching the gospel of the kingdom and scattering the seeds for the kingdom of God to grow and reproduce itself until within two or three centuries, we're told, half the Roman Empire was nominally Christian. They believed that Christ had conquered.

I know it went into apostasy. But that happened. And one time in one of their prayers there in the book of Acts, they quoted this psalm when they realized that Jesus was king after all.

At first they thought their king had been slain and they were dejected and despondent. When he rose again then, they got a little more courage. Are you going to set up your kingdom now? He said, it's not for you to know.

You go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father. Which happened. Ten days after he ascended.

And then they began to understand the nature of what God was doing. The nature of the kingdom of God. That Jesus never planned, the Father never planned that He would set up that earthly kingdom.

But that He would rise above not only earthly kingdoms, but those spiritual kingdoms in the heavenlies where our real problems are. And sit on the throne of glory as a lamb that had been slain and conquered over all evil forces. That was God's plan from the beginning.

Jesus knew it. Somehow we can't get beyond the thought that we'll never have anything going right here until Jesus comes back. He rules and reigns in the throne of glory now as King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

And He's going to reign in the midst of His enemies, the Apostle tells us, until they're all subdued under His feet. I don't know the timetable for His coming back, but I do know He's King now and He's doing everything the Father wants Him to do. And will do so until all enemies are subdued under His feet.

Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed saying, let us break their bands that sunder and cast away their courts from us. They're saying it. We get troubled about it.

We should be concerned about it from this standpoint. That we should encourage one another to seek God's face until we hear His voice and we'll be able to do anything God wants us to do about it. Not by getting the right politician there, but by getting a people who are in tune with the King of kings.

Like Elijah did. He goes to the king and he says, because of all the abominations going on here, it's not going to rain until I say so. Oh, he says it's Old Testament.

I know. But in the New Testament, we've got a king who is king of all kings and Lord of all lords. Shouldn't it be better? Shouldn't there be more power in God's people than there was then? They didn't pay much attention of course until a year goes by and no rain, two years go by and no rain, three years and no rain.

And God didn't rapture him because of the trouble coming. He left him in the midst of the trouble. Stupid notion that God's going to take the saints away and leave the world without a witness.

He's leaving them here. He's going to be with them in the hour of tribulation. Because in the hour of tribulation that God is manifesting His great works in the earth, He's going to have a people who will go through it triumphantly.

Perhaps they'll have to lay down their lives, but they're still overcomers if they do it in the will of God. If God's time hasn't come for them to go in that way, then God will keep them alive. Nothing could hurt Jesus.

Nothing could kill Him until His time had come. They tried to stone Him on two or three occasions. They tried to throw Him over the cliff.

He just walked away from it all. Finally, they got Him on the cross, but they didn't know that Jesus went there to be the light confronting darkness and gave His life. No man took His life from Him.

God sent His King on this holy hill of Zion. The nations, the kings of the earth are saying we'll break their bands of thunder and cast away their courts from us. The early church was repeating this psalm and praying unto God.

Praying this psalm unto God. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree the Lord has said unto me, Thou art my Son. This day have I begotten thee, ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.

And yet are most parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron. Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Be wise now therefore, O you kings. Be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the son lest he be angry and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled. But a little blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. And they knew that Christ was reigning and they knew that they were followers of Him.

And they did anything God wanted them to do with God's power standing with them because they were in touch with Him. God is going to bring forth a church and let us have ears to hear. Above all, let us have that commitment sealed in us, not only by our own determination but by the help of God's Spirit to follow the Lamb with us wherever He goes.

We're followers of the Lamb. He'll overcome us. He overcame.

He overcame by confronting evil with good, by confronting darkness with light. God wants a church robed in light and we'll be able to overcome anything that Satan raises up and brings against His people. We're walking in the will of God and in the purposes of God and in the shadow of the cross and following the Lamb with us wherever He leads us and loving not our lives unto death.

God's going to have a conquering church and we're only going to overcome the way Jesus overcame. He overcame by doing the will of God and eventually dying on the cross. That's the only way we're going to overcome by following Him.

Whatever path He may lead us, not loving our lives unto death and we stand then overcomers. The world, the flesh, and the devil. Until eventually, this Christ who is asked of the Father and God has given Him all nations for His inheritance will come to the time when it will be fulfilled as was prophesied not on the Old Testament, but in the New.

They sang the song of Moses and of the Lamb because they had triumphed and they stand with Him on Zion's hill and it says all nations shall come and worship before Him when His judgments are manifest in the earth. There's awesome times coming. Don't try to get away from it.

That's for the fortifications, the weaponry of God, and the whole armor of God. There's everything you need to go through any tribulation man or devil can bring in this world. God's given you armor for that day.

Not wings armor, but on the armor of light. Therefore, Paul says, because the day of the Lord is at hand... Forget reading about what the theologians say. We're going to miss it all.

God will take us away before the day of the Lord. Because the day of the Lord is at hand, Paul says, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation for God has not appointed you to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, God has appointed us to wrath, so God take us.

No! But on the armor, he says. The helmet of salvation. The breastplate of righteousness.

The sword of the Spirit. That's your weaponry to face anything Satan or man can bring against the church of Jesus Christ. And I'm not talking that from a doctrinal standpoint.

I'm just saying, people are not ready. They're not preparing themselves. Because they've been deceived by the theologians who say God's going to take the church out of here so you won't go through tribulation.

The Bible teaches from the beginning. You're appointed under tribulation. The church has known tribulation all through the centuries.

Probably half the population of Christendom today is going through great tribulation. And here, we in Canada and America think we're going to miss it all? Who do we think we are? God uses that tribulation to refine us and purge us and to put us in a place where we can overcome and come forth triumphant because of the opposition of the enemy about us. So we're not just trying to bring forth some new teachings, new doctrines as such, but we are concerned that God's people will be fortified in this day of great trouble.

It's a day of great trouble. I know it hasn't actually broken out yet in a way that it will. There's still relative peace and security in this part of the world.

But all around and many other parts of the world, the church is going through trouble and it's coming here. God wants us to be fortified for it. He's got everything we need.

He's got everything in the armor of God for that day. There's nothing lacking in that armor to fully protect us. We'd better learn about it.

We'd better read about it and learn about it and by His grace pray that He will help us to put on that whole armor that we might be able to stand, Paul says, in the evil day. The evil day. Not just when there's a little evil.

That we might be able to stand in the evil day. And having done all to stand. One old translation says, having fought the battle to the end, we remain victors on the field of battle.

Having done all to stand. Go through the battle and the enemy flees. It's not just, you know, well, yeah, you won a 9-1.

We're short a vehicle. And so, having done all to stand, having fought the battle to the end, the church of Jesus Christ remains victor on the field of battle. The princes of this world didn't know that.

They still don't know anything much about the cross of Christ except there was a strange man back there that died on it. But that's all they know. They killed Him and I know the Christians believe He rose, but they know that isn't right.

But they're going to know one of these days that that Lamb is alive and ruling in the heavens. They're going to know. In the book of Revelation, the great men of the earth, the generals, the presidents, the kings, they're going to cry out for the rocks to cover them because we want to be hidden from what? The wrath of the Lamb? They want to hide themselves in the rocks of the earth from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of His wrath has come.

We're not glorying in those things. We are glorying in the fact that the Lamb has triumphed. God has set Him in His holy hell.

He's King of all kings. And you and I can have intimate contact with Him. We can come into His presence and lay our cause before Him.

But as we emphasized the other night, we come into the house of the Lord to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple. And if there's something God wants us to do about situations, if we're walking with Him and I pray and I believe and I know God's going to have a people, walking in such harmony with Him that situations arise and God puts it on the heart. We've got to deal with this.

You can do it. You don't have to have a big army behind you to do it. If there's a dozen people or less or more, that God, as you fellowship with Him, makes it known there's something here that we've got to deal with.

You can do it. You just can't take on the world and start organizing the world and cutting it up into different districts. We're going to start dealing here.

Jesus Christ is King of all kings. And He's the only one that's going to do the mapping of the world situation. He's the only one who can do it.

Little people, little group here and one there moving in harmony with Him will be able to do anything God has in mind. By His anointing, by His presence, by His Spirit, when the Mammoths were sweeping down on Kenya, I remember back there, I don't know, in the 40s somewhere perhaps, and they were coming into Kenya from Ethiopia. And they were afraid that they were going to sweep through Kenya.

And there was a group of people praying. And God said, If you will pray, I will turn them back. I'll stop this rebellion.

God revealed that. And the people of God sought Him. And God stopped the rebellion.

Enabled the British to round up the Mammoths and put them in compounds. And the missionaries were given privileges to go in and minister to them and many of them got saved. It's reported that the first president was converted as one of the Mammoths.

I haven't tried to verify it, but that he was one of the Mammoths and got converted. And Kenya had quite a stable government for quite a long time because of the power of a Christian people. They've been having trouble in recent years.

The church is always going to be in a land of trouble if they're not walking with God and in tune with God and seeking God and knowing that they can go to the King of Kings with their problems and that He will answer if they're walking in obedience. We're going to have trouble if God's people don't wake up and realize, listen, we're headed for trouble if we don't seek God earnestly. We might be in a relationship with Him that we might know what to do in this time of trouble while the heathen rage and the rulers imagine vain things and while they're saying, cut their cords from us.

We don't want to have those cords of God and Jesus around us anymore. And that's going on, as you know. The Lord and the heavens will laugh when God finds the people who are able to come against that.

Elijah comes out of hiding after three and a half years. Sees the king's right-hand man and tells him, go tell Elijah I'm here. Oh, he says, please don't put that heavy responsibility on me.

I'll go and tell Elijah you're here and he'll come back and God will pick you up and carry you somewhere else. No, he says, I declare, I'm going to see him this day. So he went and told the king.

They were out there, he and his... what was his name? Looking for water for their animals. Springs were drying up all over the place. Water was very short and they were looking for new springs.

And so, Elijah comes walking up to Elijah the prophet who had been in hiding. God hit him. Elijah had gone to all the nations.

Sent ambassadors, go and find out if Elijah's hiding in your midst. If they say no, take a note from them confirming. Couldn't find him.

God was simply hiding him in the home of a widow woman providing his needs in the day of famine. And so, the king comes along and he says, so you're the man that's troubling Israel. No, he says, you're the man because of all the abominable things you're allowing in the nation.

You're the man. God will do things like that again. He's done it before.

He's raising up an Elijah spirit in the earth once again. As he said he would. Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of that great day of the Lord and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers.

I know he raised up that Elijah spirit way back in the beginning in John the Baptist. But before the end time, he'll do it again. I believe we had samples of it in this generation or in the previous one where men of God professed and declared that God had told them they were to be in the Elijah ministry in the earth.

Some of them, I believe it. God's had that witness. Some of the prophetic voice concerning the ways and the will and the purposes of God.

But that ministry is not completed yet. God said he was going to have an Elijah ministry that would turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. A time is coming when the children will recognize that there is a father ministry that they've got to listen to.

And their hearts and their ears will be tuned to what they will have to say. God will do it. Only God can do that.

In the meantime, God is turning hearts of the fathers to the children. And only God can turn the hearts of the children back to the fathers. So that's in his care.

Let us just be faithful in whatever ministry God gives. Be faithful to do whatever God says. Having no agenda of our own.

No plan of our own. No thing we've got to fulfill. Nothing I've got to pursue except the will of God.

God help us to simplify our walk with the Lord. Not to say God won't steal into your heart certain things that he's whispering to you that you will do in the days to come or whatever. Let's not be too curious about that.

The principle is today if you hear his voice, not your heart. I remember this young man that wrote me and others virtually say the same thing. Pray with me that God will show me his plan for my life.

I want to know God's plan for my life. I've learned to answer it this way. Don't be concerned about God's plan for your life because he won't tell you too much about it.

He might give you some little indication along the way. If he told you too much about it, you'd arrange for it. You'd plan for it.

You'd do this and that. If I'm going to do that, then I've got to, oh, maybe continue my education, go to Bible school, do this, do that. I don't know.

I'm not saying there's anything wrong with any of those things I mentioned. But if God says my plan for your life is this, then we'd want to do things to help God out. So God gave Joseph a broad vision of what he had in mind for him.

And the vision is sweet. The vision is wonderful. And God gives us a little insight into his purpose.

It's beautiful. And so he tells his brethren the dreams he had. And, oh, he saw the sheaves in the field.

And his sheaves stood upright and all the others held prostrate before him. Oh, so you're going to be the big one, eh? You're going to rule over us? Then he saw the sun, the moon, the eleven stars doing obeisance to him. Oh, so? And even his father said, so what's this you're dreaming, Joseph? Are we going to come and bow down to you? Well, he's just telling his dream, that's all.

There's no way he could work it out. And when God worked it out, it seemed incredible to him. Lord, what about those dreams? What about those visions? Here I am in a dungeon in Egypt.

God, what about those visions? The vision God gives you, and it might be all right. I don't know if anyone here had a certain vision of what God has in mind for you. I have no idea.

But you can be assured of this. If it's a vision from the heart of God, when the working out of it comes, it will not be an enjoyable thing that you'll be going through. Because God does give a certain vision, you know.

Maybe it's not always as clear as the vision Joseph had, but a certain vision. And in the working out of it, it's so different to what you thought. So God doesn't tell you too much about it, or you're trying to arrange things to make it easy for God to do it.

And it gets more difficult. It got more difficult for Joseph. Not only in the common prison, but finally down in the king's prison.

A place of greater security, I guess. God was just as faithful to him there as he was back with his brethren at home. Beautiful story.

The time came when he was called out of the dungeon. You know the story how God used him to reveal what was going to happen to two of his fellow inmates. And it happened as he had said.

And so it became known that here was a man in prison that had dreams and revelations. But of course, the man to whom he had given a good word and it happened and he was sent back to be the king's cupbearer, Joseph gave him a word. Now don't forget me.

I'm down here and tell the king. I'm here for no just cause. God caused the butlers.

Forget all about them. He had to remain there a while longer yet. God's time, you see.

And in God's way, the king sent for him because of a troubled dream that he had. And the butlers said, oh, I forgot, I forgot. There's a man down there in prison.

I was his prison mate. He knows how to interpret visions. Go bring him up.

Come down, Joseph. The king wants to see you. You see, that was God's way of preparing him.

That's God's way of preparing him. To be a ruler. He brought him up.

Pharaoh told his dreams. Joseph had a clear word. A clear word.

There's going to be seven years of prosperity in which you must gather together the fruit of the land because there's going to be seven years of great famine. And if you store up the food in the day of plenty, there'll be sufficient. If it's well organized, there'll be sufficient to carry you through.

And so immediately, you're the man. Just overnight, a prisoner in the dungeon became ruler of the land of Egypt. You know the rest of the story.

How God was working it all together so his brethren would come down looking for corn. There's coming a famine in the land. It could be a natural famine too.

I don't know. But there is coming a spiritual famine. I think it's almost started.

A famine of hearing the words of the Lord. Not just a famine of the words of the Lord because there's lots of good books and lots of Bibles still available. With all the Bibles we have, there's so few who really hear what God is saying.

A famine of hearing the words of the Lord. There's two things that can cause a person to have hunger. One definitely is famine.

But even in the time of plenty, God has something that will cause you to hunger. And I liken it to the manna. Because God gave them this food in the desert to be their desert food.

Something that was totally sufficient to sustain them, give them life, give them health, give them strength with no diseases in their midst. I emphasize this, I know, very often. Because we're living in a Laodicean age.

And we say we're rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing. And there's just as many sick people in the church as there is in the world. Take it for granted.

We've got Medicare. We've got all kinds of doctors and all kinds of things to trust in. The church is supposed to be living in grace, not under law.

And here's a nation of people in the wilderness with manna and water. Manna and water, which Paul calls spiritual food and spiritual water. Don't get excited when people talk about spiritualizing things.

That water they drank was real, but it was spiritual. The manna was real food which they ate, but it was spiritual bread because the Spirit of God was in it. Making it to be spiritual.

Sustaining them. Keeping them alive. Keeping them healthy.

Keeping them strong without diseases. Even though they were many times disobedient, they had this wonderful food. Sometimes God had to judge them by sending diseases or afflictions.

But as they walked with God in any measure of obedience, the manna was sufficient to keep them healthy and strong and vital. It left them hungry. We love this light food.

Eating all this light stuff, and they'd fill up on it, but an hour later they were hungry. God says, I give you that kind of food that you might know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live. He deliberately gives them that light bread.

Deliberately causing them to hunger that in their hunger they might seek after the Word of the Lord. Instead of that in their hunger, they blame Moses and blame God who says we hate this light bread and it's almost that way in the church. Can't stand a simple word of God.

The clear words from God, but it's got to be embellished with all kinds of entertainment. Philosophies of man. All kinds of musical entertainment and whatnot to keep the people coming.

We hate this light stuff. Give us flesh, they said, and God gave them flesh and sent leanness into their soul. I think the church in America and our country is lean because we haven't been satisfied with hearing the voice of God and doing it.

We've got to clutter up the ministry with all kinds of things that are non-Scriptural, totally non-Scriptural to keep the people coming, to keep them happy, to keep the young people coming. Keep them in the church until they get a little older and then that won't satisfy us. So they're out in the world trying to find the pleasure that they've craved for in the church.

Yet, I don't blame them because we're living in a very evil generation, but we do need to uphold them and pray for them that the hearts of fathers and mothers now begin to turn to the young, knowing we can't do anything about it perhaps. But God says, I want to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. In the natural, I believe, yes, as well as the children in the church.

Then, He said, He will turn the hearts of the children to the fathers. I believe God has a great work to do in our young people. I believe God's going to move mightily in the midst of our young people.

They've got to come to know the voice of the fathers, the voice of those who are mature in the Lord. God can turn their hearts that way. And when trouble comes, I believe you'll find that they'll be seeking out those who are experienced in the ways of the Lord, looking for direction, looking for guidance, forsaking their entertainment.

Which is going to be down the drain one of these days. How quickly we do not know. Jesus said, As it was in the days of Sodom.

They were building. They were planting gardens. They were growing vineyards.

Everything was lovely. It was like the garden of the Lord, He said, the day before God destroyed it. That's not a sign of the end times.

It was the old building and planting, a sign of the end times. No. They've been doing that since the beginning.

He's saying that those normal ways of life will carry on right till the time when the flood comes, when the great tribulation dawns upon the earth. Man will be doing those things. Nothing wrong with that, but we've got to be aware of what God is saying, what God is doing, what God has in mind.

Lest our hearts be carried away with the niceties of Sodom when the next day it's smoking ruins. The next day. We don't know how all these things will happen and when and where, but God is saying, great trouble is coming upon this land and on this part of the world, on our land.

Great trouble is brewing. He said, I'm not concerned about it. I know my God, I know.

We're not concerned about it with any kind of fleshly concern. There is a warning that God brings to His people to prepare. The Christian church, I think all over America and Canada, prepared diligently for Y2K because they believe the prognosticators that there is going to be trouble with the computer system.

Now it's over so we can rest now. Would God that there be that same diligence in God's people to prepare for the storm that's coming. I don't mean by way of storing water and food.

I don't mean that at all. But preparing our hearts now. The diligence seeking of Him, forsaking of the ways of man and of the world the best we know.

Seeking to draw closer to Him. Seeking to have a hearing ear. To hear what He's saying.

That that hearing faculty might become so prominent within us that we'll know the voice of God from the voice of the stranger. We'll know the voice of the shepherd clearly. That isn't too prominent nowadays.

Because by and large, people are settled in a denominational system where, well, we've got a good pastor, he'll tell us what to do. That's not enough. The good pastor will teach the sheep the voice of the Lord.

Will teach them in such a way that those sheep will know the shepherd's voice. The true apostle will do that. The true prophet will do that.

They'll minister truth to God's people that they'll know the voice of truth. And they'll know the shepherd, the good shepherd from the harling. They'll know the true voice from the voice of the harling.

And that's the purpose of ministry is to so bring forth the words of truth that God's people will become familiar with the voice of truth. So that no matter where they hear it from, they'll be able to discern the voice of the harling from the voice of the good shepherd. So God give us that hearing voice, that hearing ear, I should say, that hearing ear to hear what the Spirit would say to the churches.

And all of those seven letters to the seven churches, the Lord saw fit to end each one of them with this solemn pronouncement, He that hath an ear to hear, because many have ears that don't hear. He that hath an ear to hear, let them hear what the Spirit saith unto them. So even tonight, Lord, we pray, Lord Jesus, that You'd put it in the hearts of Your people.

Oh, to make a new commitment, a new dedication, Lord, to follow You and know Your voice and to tune out the voice of the stranger. Not to think that we're just supposed to be subject to this constant barrage of voices from all directions and sometimes not knowing the difference. But to hear the words that come forth from those who are reputed to be ministers of Your Word and to be able to distinguish the voice and to say, yes, this is the voice of the shepherd.

And no, that's the voice of the harling that we might have that certain sense of hearing, Lord, such as Samuel had of old. When he said, Speak, Lord, and Thy servant hears. And from that day on, that sense of hearing became so pronounced within him that he knew Your voice above all others.

And God did not let one word of his fall to the ground. Raise up a people, Lord, in this land a people, Lord, who know their God. For we know trouble is coming, yet we say it not because the trouble is coming but because we're born into trouble.

Job says, As the sparks fly upward, we're man's born to trouble. So tribulation is just an increase of the trouble for which we're born. Raise up a people, Lord, who know how to deal with trouble in their commitment to You, in their walk with You, to know how to commit it into Your care and trust, to know how to stand true and firm in the day of temptation and day of trial.

That it had come to pass that one might have to lay down his life for the Gospel. That he readily does it because his heart is fixed on You. He's determined to follow the Lamb with us wherever He might lead.

For we do not know how soon it could happen when the hatred of God that is in this land and in ours will break forth in a vehemence and in great judgment upon the true Church of God. We don't know when it will happen, but it must come. If we come to righteousness, that must happen because the world hates righteousness.

If your church begins to truly walk before you in holiness and truth, we know that judgment, the antagonism of the world will come against it because the darkness cannot stand the light. It must either yield and vanish because of the shining of the light of the Gospel or become more intense than before and come against your people who walk in light. It is to be a people walking in the light, walking in truth, walking in love, walking in mercy, walking in holiness.

Do that work in our lives, Lord, that will cause our eyes, our ears to turn away from the allurements of this world about us that takes our eyes upon you. Your hearts be fixed, your hearts be fixed, Lord, in this day of trouble that we might know your voice and hear your words and do what you say and love you and follow your works, whoever you might be. Bless your people, we pray, that these words, Lord, implanted in their hearts, we pray in Jesus' name.

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