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by George Warnock

George Warnock's sermon reflects on the impact of William Branham's ministry and the restoration of spiritual gifts, emphasizing the importance of faith and unity in the body of Christ.

Duration: 50:42

Scripture: Exodus 15:23-25, Joshua 6:20, 1 Samuel 3:1-10, Isaiah 43:18-19, 1 Corinthians 14:8, James 1:17, Revelation 12:11

Topics: "Seminar"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of following the direction and orders of the captain of the hosts of the Lord. He uses the example of Joshua receiving the blueprint for the conquest of Jericho, where God instructed the priests to take trumpets and the Ark of the Covenant to walk around the city instead of using swords. The speaker expresses concern that many have misunderstood and misused the gifts God has given them. He calls for a humble and obedient heart, asking God to show them how to give back the glory and power they receive, so that it may ultimately glorify God.

Transcript

So far be it from me to judge William Branham and where he went wrong and all that, I'd like to lay that to one side. I believe he did the work that God authorized him to do to prepare the hearts of the people, and I know it had a great impact in my own life by way of showing me the simplicity of the ministry of Jesus in the flesh, that he would stand before the people very humbly and the people who were sick and infirm would come before him and he would take their hand or in later years he wouldn't even touch them, but the angel of the Lord would reveal the things concerning them that were wrong and he'd pray for them and many, many times they were healed. Not always, no.

And some are troubled about that, but I'm not, because I know that there's many reasons why people are not healed or if they are healed they don't retain their healing, even though it's a valid healing. Living as we do in a realm where it's so hard to retain true faith. There's so many crutches we can fall back upon if faith doesn't work.

If faith doesn't work, we've got all these crutches. It seems that faith is failing so back in the crutch. So I'm not here to exalt William Branham or to denounce him by any sense of means, because I believe he was a true follower of the Lord who did the work God wanted him to do, and it was through his influence on these brethren who were seeking God for a restoration of the gifts of the Spirit, through his influence, though he

had no contact with them, that they were praying and fasting for a mighty move of God.

And in the spring of 1948, the Lord began to break through in prophetic utterances, I will at this time restore the gifts of my spirit to the church and they will be restored through prophecy in the laying on of hands. Something that had happened to me a month before and I didn't know what it was all about. So I was ready to go up there when I heard about it and to see what God was doing and was greatly amazed and humbled and blessed to see a very sovereign move of God in the people, in the ministry and in the people.

That there'd be an anointed word and that all over the congregation there'd be a oneness and a flowing in the spirit and prophecies coming forth anywhere in the congregation. Not just that moving of the gifts of the Spirit, but a strong teaching that God was beginning to restore the body of Christ, that he was beginning to pour out gifts of the Spirit through prophecy in the laying on of hands, and that in the ultimate God's intention was to bring the body of Christ together to prepare for the coming of the Lord. So to me that was a life-changing thing for myself.

It changed me in a whole new direction. I shouldn't say a whole new direction, it gave me new hope, new vision. Though I had a certain vision and hope of great and mighty revival and expected that I would be anointed with the true anointing of the Lord in whatever God would do, to me it clarified that vision, it confirmed it, it gave me much assurance that God was going to have in the church a people who were walking with him, a glorious church, and without spark or wrinkle or blemish or any such thing.

And that became, it wasn't just a personal revelation, it seemed as something that came to the congregation. They knew it. And so that was my background.

A year later they invited me to come and stay there and help in the office and answer the mail and minister in the local church a little as the Lord might lead. But I always want to point out that I was not one of the leaders of the Lateran movement, that I was not recognized as one of the leaders even there. I did help in the local church.

While there I wrote the first book, Feast of Tavernas. And from that, many who were not familiar with what happened take it that I was one of the leaders there, but I was not. And two or three years after I wrote it, I felt I had to leave the movement, not knowing what I would do, and greatly discouraged because I felt that that was a move of God that would go on until Jesus came.

And in a sense I believe it did. And they never called it the Lateran movement, they just called it this move of the Spirit. And so people who consider I was one of the leaders in the Lateran movement, I was never in the Lateran movement as such.

That's what the name it took on when it went through the states here. And many, many revivals broke out all over the United States, especially in the bigger centers. At first, Portland and Seattle and Detroit and St. Louis and San Diego and down in those areas, the first thing you know out from those bigger churches, there was revival all over America, particularly a little bit in Canada and other parts of the world.

There wasn't a nationwide revival, it wasn't a worldwide revival in that sense, but God was meeting, primarily at first, Pentecostal people, people who had a Pentecostal background, that's what I mean, and established something in the hearts of people that was fresh and new and vital and brought them into a new and living relationship with the Lord. It was never organized as the Lateran movement, but it got that

name, a sort of a name that was tagged on. And so I've gone along with it in the sense that I refer to the movement that I was in as the beginnings of that which became known as the Lateran movement.

But they never called it that, and I never belonged to it, I never belonged to any movement in my life, really. I did partake of that in a little bit. Helped in the office work, was considered sort of a deacon around the work that was there at North Alvord, the little town where the revival started.

Never traveled in Lateran circles, maybe locally to a few little groups nearby, but so I was not one of the leaders of the Lateran movement. Nevertheless, I accepted what God did there, but I never went along necessarily with what went on after it left there and went around to the various churches, and nor did I ever try to figure out what really happened. When I left there, I was discouraged, and I wrote the Brethren.

I didn't feel I could go along anymore because of the control that was coming in under the guise of apostolic authority, and I felt I would lay down my ministry, and that was it. I just went back to work, stayed carpentry on then on. In the meantime, Dale Britton wrote and asked if he could keep my book in print, and I told him to go ahead.

So I just, that's what happened, and I went into sort of a wilderness, I guess, in a way, because I didn't find that fellowship that I had known there for those two, three years, the real flowing of the Spirit. Never found that fellowship, except off and on for the next 20, 30 years. You find here and there sort of a remnant of it, you might say.

And so it wasn't until recent years, really, that I began to do some more writing, because I felt the Lord was beginning a new thing in the earth again. I never got involved with the charismatic movement either, because I saw what it was. As the latter rain movement began to go forth, it was rain.

I'm not saying it was THE latter rain, the only rain, or the major rain of the end times, but I think it got its name from a course that was given, I believe, by the Spirit in those days. This is the promise of the coming latter rain. Lift up your eyes, behold the brightening grain.

Many signs and wonders done in Jesus' name. Drink, O drink, my people, for this is latter rain. And one of the teachers up our way pointed out that the course began, this is the promise of the coming latter rain.

They refused to call it the latter rain. So we never called it that. Not denying it was a foretaste of what God would do.

And so having, you know, gone through a sort of a wilderness and you're out of it all, I thought at the beginning of ministry, instead of that I was there two or three years, just beginning to minister a little in the local church. Traveled very, very little, maybe once or twice I went out to some of the smaller groups. And then realized I had to lay it down, and troubled about it, and in those days God began to speak to my heart.

Remember ye not the former things, nor consider the things of old? Behold, I do a new thing. And now it shall spring forth, shall ye not know it? And so I sort of clung to that, and went back to work carpentering. And I wouldn't say, you know, people write me, you know, and sort of wonderful how you've retained this truth of God all these years and stood for it.

Well, I guess I have tried to in a way, but I was just, I was just a carpenter doing my job the best I knew, and finding very little fellowship or any moving of the Spirit in my own life. And nevertheless, I think what

might have kept me steady in a sense was the vision of it. In times of great temptation when I could see, looking back, I could very easily have just dropped it all and forget it.

Not that I didn't believe it, but the trials of the wilderness, you know. And when I was studying and wrote the book on the way through the wilderness and the journeys of the children of Israel, I could see myself in those places. And I find that people were blessed in reading about it.

And here I had to go through those things to be able to write about it. And I know what it is to come to the bitter waters of man and to try to drink and find them bitter and grumble and complain against God. And then to go on and further and further away from the land of Canaan.

All the time they were journeying south instead of going, instead of going north where Canaan was. Going, let's see, what was it? West, I guess it was. When they came out of Egypt, instead of going straight on to Canaan, God says, turn south now.

Canaan's over there and we're going south. But God was leading them. So I think I've been able to encourage people that God was leading, we didn't know it.

God said, I'll lead you in a way you know not. And so down to Sinai, to learn of God's holiness. And so is the way of the pilgrim as they would go to Canaan.

It's not the direct route to Canaan. The direct route is called the way of the Philistines. You look in the map, the way of the Philistines is a more direct route to Canaan than any other way.

The highway of the Philistines. Philistine means to roll in the dust. Roll in the dust.

God would not let them go that way. He didn't want them to see the wars of the Philistines. And after it's all over, I was thankful that God did not allow me to stay in ministry.

The only one thing I wanted to do, from the time I was five, six years old, it was all over. I'm glad he didn't get involved too much. And then it was revealed in prophetic voice after that God wouldn't let me feel comfortable in many of these moods of the spirit world I had been.

God wouldn't let me feel comfortable because he didn't want me to feel comfortable or whatever the phraseology was. Feel a part of it. He didn't let me feel a part of it because of what he would do in the end time in which I would have a part.

And so I thank him for the way. When it's over you can thank him more readily than we're going through it. Thank him for all the way he's led us.

Yeah, devastations and that. And you look at times and I could have fallen in the fields of Kibra Tava, called the graves of lust. They were on their way to Canaan.

And the temptations come in by the daughters of Moab and many of them went and fell. And there was a great slaughter in Israel and I could see. If I was in ministry, I think I would have made total shipwreck.

I don't condemn those who made shipwreck in ministry. In a system where there's no flowing of the life of God and you're trying to keep things together. The burdens on the shoulders of a pastor.

He fails, everybody fails. I mean it's all thrown on his shoulders. Carry the load and Babylonian system.

God wants his people to be flowing in the spirit. All of them that if there's a weakness anywhere in the body of Christ, the rest of the body can heal that wound. And it's not that way.

And how could I survive? I don't think I could have. So I thank the Lord for bringing me to this hour. When they came from Kibra Tava, having buried the young men in Israel that fell in battle, they called the place the graves of lust, where they buried those that fell in battle.

It should have been a resting place for the people of God. God went before them to search out a resting place for them. But because their hearts were not conditioned of God and they did not know God's ways, they fell by the wiles of the daughters of Moab.

And the false prophets who could not curse Israel taught them, you get the daughters of Moab to call you to a party and that way they'll get you. They were not false prophets. God sealed his, circumcised, no I shouldn't say circumcised his lips.

He motivated his lips to declare a true prophet concerning the goodness of Israel, the greatness of Israel and God's favor for them. And that false prophet went out and told the people of Moab, I can't curse them, but you can defeat them if you'll get the daughters of Moab to go over there and invite them to your parties. They'll fall that way and it worked and it happened.

I'm afraid there's a lot of the doctrine of Balaam in the church. You just live it up and have a good time. God wants you to, if it feels comfortable, do it.

If you like it, do it. The philosophy almost embraced by the church. When I say the church, I mean that structure, that old system.

I don't mean that true church of the living God. Doctrine of Moab is there. God is preparing a people to take Canaan because he's sworn to them, I'm going to take you in.

Your fathers failed me, but when your fathers failed me, I swore to you, younger generation, I'm going to bring you in and I'm going to do it. And for his oath's sake, he brought them in. You say, would he bring in a corrupt people? No.

He prepared them for Canaan. And though they weren't any better than their fathers, because God swore him with an oath, God had to do it. You say, was he going to bring in a disobedient people because he swore with an oath? No, because of God's oath, he would exercise his great power to bring about that circumcision of the armies of Israel that was required for them to take Canaan.

And they crossed over the Jordan, ready to take Canaan. And they camped at Gilgal. And the inhabitants of Jericho were terrified to see the Israelites, God having swept back the river Jordan to provide a passageway for them across the Red Sea.

And they were terrified that God had done something he did when they came out of Egypt. He opened the Red Sea, now he opened the river Jordan, and there they are. And the Israelites there, right at the gates of Jericho.

And God says, go through the camp of Israel and circumcise all the young men for battle, that are ready for battle. Circumcise them all. Totally crippling, totally crippling the armies of the people of God for the conquest of Jericho.

Totally crippling them. Not just half of them, so they'd have a little bit of strength in the army. He crippled the whole army in one single stroke at Gilgal before the conquest of Jericho.

By how we've got to learn God's ways. He's not raising up a dynamic young army in this day and hour to go forth to battle. And I know maybe some of you young people were caught away with the thrust.

Get into this thing. And I'm not going to name them. You know what I mean.

Get into this eunuch group and let's go forth in the nations to preach the gospel. God preparing an army of cripplemen. Crippled people.

For his army. Crippled. I say it, and I mean it.

They were totally crippled. They were totally incapacitated for battle. But because God was doing it, and because that speaks of the circumcision of baptism, whereby we are baptized into Christ and baptized into his death and crucifixion, baptized into his suffering, which is God's way of victory.

That's why God allowed it there in type to cripple the army in circumcision. That they might know that it was not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord, that they might take the land of Canaan, not by the weapons of carnal warfare, but by the ark of the covenant of God going before them. So with a crippled army, they stood ready to attack Jericho.

One day, Joshua was out there looking at the walls, no doubt meditating upon God full of zeal. And he had the authority of God to take the city, but he wanted to know God's way. He saw a man with a drawn sword in his hand, and he walked up to him, bawling, who are you? Are you for us or for the enemy? He said, neither one, but as captain of the Lord of hosts have I now come.

Joshua fell on his face and said, take the shoes from off your feet. Joshua was to be the new leader, but no, not really. The new leader was to be the Jehovah God of Israel.

And that's God's message to ministry in this day and hour. Much is made of leadership. God has a true and tested and tried leadership, but he's not sending forth leadership into battle until they take their shoes off and fall on their face before their general, henceforth being totally in subjection to the captain of the hosts of the Lord.

Not saying to you and I, I've given you gifts now. You go ahead and establish my church and bring my body together. But retaining his position as head of the church, as the captain of the armies of the Lord, and any other leaders there are, they're only leaders in as far as they are moving under the direction and orders of the captain of the hosts of the Lord.

And when he moves away from that headship, he's no longer a valid leader. So Joshua got the blueprint for the conquest of Jericho. Strange weapons that God uses.

Let the priests of the Lord take a trumpet and the Ark of the Covenant and walk about the city. What about the sword? Forget your sword. Let the priests of the Lord take a trumpet and walk about the city.

As they were walking in obedience, stupid and foolish as it looked, the inhabitants of Jericho were totally terrified of the people of God. You're not going to strike terror, terror into principalities and powers and heavenly places by victory marches around your church. By waving banners made of fine tapestry and all decorated with colors.

By marching on Washington and telling, we're the church of God, we're going to do something about this. But when we get priests of the Lord who know how to talk to God and carry the presence of God with them around these strong works of Satan, just carrying the presence of God with them, you're going to strike terror into the hearts of principalities and powers and heavenly places. Because you carry the Ark of His presence and that's simply the presence of God clothed upon you.

The Ark of the Covenant, which is the mercy seat where the blood was sprinkled. You'll overcome by that blood that's sprinkled on that Ark and by the word of your testimony. That's God's way of battle.

That's God's equipment for battle. Instead of sending out a bunch of young people with their drama and their mime and their pantomime, it kills me with a holy anger. We put on a drama there in our little city portraying the toy maker and Jesus and Lucifer.

I met a man who did an audition to be Satan in this drama. He didn't qualify. He laughs about it now but with regret.

He's glad he didn't qualify. He didn't qualify to be Satan in a drama that young people were going out supposedly to preach the gospel to the nations, conscripting one of the young people to take the part of the devil. What kind of nonsense goes on in the name of Jesus.

It kills me with a righteous anger. Instead of going as a priest of the Lord bearing the presence of God upon your shoulders. Not by might.

Not by power. By my Spirit, sayeth the Lord. Cripple our young people, Lord Jesus.

Those whom you have called upon whom you have laid your hand. They know they have a calling. They're trying to fulfill it, Lord, in these stupid ways.

Yes, Lord. Quicken them, Lord, to know, Lord Jesus, that their only victory is in the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Yes, Lord.

The witness of Christ in their lives because of the blood. God, that's your way. That's your only way.

And as they went forward bearing witness to the blood surrounding Jericho with the witness of the blood on that mercy seat. But that's where God dwelt because of the sacrifice and the blood of the sacrifice that would be sprinkled upon that ark every day of atonement. The inhabitants of Jericho were terrified.

The walls fell flat as they blew the trumpets which speaks of the word of going forth from the anointed hearts of a priesthood. The trumpet give an uncertain sound, Paul says. Who's going to prepare for battle? God wants that trumpet.

God's beginning to blow the trumpet. And the trumpet's going to have a certain sound. We're not always going to have this confusion in the church.

We're not always going to have this uncertain sound. I heard a trumpet sound. Yeah, but I hear another sound over there.

God's going to have a priesthood that will have a certain sound that people will know this means a sound for war. That's right. They had it in Israel.

When they blew a certain sound, they said this means we're in trouble. This means battle. Prepare for battle.

And they knew how to prepare. They knew the order of it because there was a captain at the head of them. The Lord of Hosts Himself.

One of God's titles in the Old Testament. The Lord of Hosts. The Lord of His warring hosts.

He's the Lord of it. The battle is the Lord's whenever the battle is the Lord's. God's strategy is entirely opposite to the strategy of man.

God's preparing for that sure and certain sound to go forth from the trumpet of His priests. That encourages me to know that God is going to have a sure and certain sound going forth. In the midst of all the confusion.

God has enabled us somehow to filter it out. That doesn't quite sound right. You hear a sound, you know it's right, but He's going to make a certain sound.

That God's people have ears to hear will know this is the voice of God. This is a certain sound. He does that.

He does it in times of apostasy. I encourage people with that. We think when revival comes, well, yeah, we can expect to hear this real certain truth.

But He does it in times of apostasy when people don't know what to listen to, what to hear. Eli was corrupt. I shouldn't say Eli was.

His system was corrupt. His sons were corrupt in ministry and God said He's going to deal with it. He warned them first.

He gives them plenty of opportunity. He warned them, but all the time God was warning them. He knew His warnings would go unheeded.

And God was preparing, right in the time of the dying, someone selfish. When I say selfish, I don't mean it in a wrong sense, because it is natural that a woman in Israel would desire a son. It seemed to be something in them, perhaps from the promise that God gave in the beginning that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head.

It seemed to be a great passion in women in the Old Testament to have a son. And God deprived her of that because He loved her. The Lord loved her and deprived her of that inherent longing for a season.

And if you have that real longing for God and God deprives you of the longing of your heart, thank Him for it. He's only depriving you of that which you're longing for, that you will not settle for anything less than that. That your longing will become more and more refined, more purified, until you long for that which is the longing of God's heart.

You don't long for ministry anymore so much as you long to bear fruit that's pleasing to God. Not just to be a minister, but you long for true fruit, whatever the pathway might be. And so God kept Hannah waiting and waiting and waiting.

She was always loving Him and always going to the temple to worship Him. Oh, lamenting the fact that she was barren, while her rival was fruitful, taunting her a little, perhaps. See, I'm fruitful, I'm doing things for God.

You just forget all these crazy ideas you got, you could be fruitful too. But the Lord loved Hannah. She sat there before the temple gate at Shiloh, mumbling a prayer under her breath.

But it was the most eloquent prayer she'd ever prayed. But only her lips were moving. I like to hear that dynamic prayer, what we call a powerful prayer.

And I know there can't be a powerful prayer that's audible, but the most powerful prayer Hannah ever prayed was when nobody heard a sound except God. And only her lips moved. And the minister in charge thought she was drunk and said, put away the wine from you, lady.

And she says, no, my Lord. And Handmaid has a grievous spirit. He realized immediately that she was praying and he says, the Lord grant you the desire of her heart.

And she recognized it somehow as a sure promise from God. And she went home and she was no more sorrowful. But, you know what she was praying? Lord, if you'll give me this man child that I'm asking for, I've been asking you for this man child for many, many years.

If you'll give him to me, I'll give him back to you. And it's going to take that before God is going to give us our heart's desire. And I don't mean just to say we'll pray that prayer, but I think we should do that too.

But that we should seek him for grace to really mean it. Whatever you give me, Lord, it's going to be yours. We want fruitful ministry.

Whatever it'll take to bear fruit that's pleasing to God. And I think in my own heart I was more concerned about ministry than I was about doing something for God's glory. And I think if we examine our hearts we'll find that maybe that's often the case.

I want to be a successful minister of Christ. I want to be that successful minister. Instead of I want to be something that will lead to the praise of his glory.

If you'll give me this man child, I'll give him back to you. We have to walk in God's ways to know how to do that. I think we covered that last night.

That was in Jesus, the burden of Jesus' heart to give the Father all the glory. But in walking in God's ways he was able to do that. And God was pleased in the manner in which he did it.

Because he walked in the Father's ways so that all the glory God gave the Son immediately reverted back to the Father. Because he took a place of helplessness. He deliberately took it.

He wouldn't try to promote anything that he had in mind. Always in union with the Heavenly Father knew what the Father had in mind. And that's the way he went.

Fully so it seemed in the eyes of the disciples, in the eyes of the populace, in the eyes of the religious leaders. He had an ear that was tuned to the Heavenly Father. And so in saying, Lord you give me, make us to be this fruitful son in the house of God and we'll give him back to you.

We ask the Lord to show us how to do that as we go along. That we will never seek to retain any of this gift that God gives as something that is ours. For our benefit, for our glory, for our honor, for our enlargement or for our success.

But it's his only. His only. So Samuel was that boy.

Samuel was the result of clear word, clear prophetic light in an apostate Israel. God's going to do it again. Clear prophetic voice coming forth from the congregation of his people.

Clear word of prophecy. Testimony of Jesus which is the spirit of prophecy. Coming forth from God's people.

We're asking for that. We're asking the Lord to make that commitment so real that we'll know how to do it. God gives that voice.

It's yours Lord. It's not for our sake. That he gives that gift.

Gift of healing. Gift of miracle. No it's not resident in me.

I give it to you. Maybe you give me a gift but Lord I give it back to you. Give it back to you.

Give myself to be holy and acceptable to God. So let us not lament anymore but let us humbly, what shall I say, let us not condemn people who have fallen. People who have great ministries who seem to have spoiled it somehow.

Without necessarily judging them we can't help but feel that many have spoiled the beautiful gift God gave. Let there not be any thought of condemnation but fear rather that Lord we're looking for a greater enlargement from you. And God you give it to us and we could go the same way.

We will go the same way if you don't show us Lord how to give it back to you. We'll go the same way. I don't think there's any question of that.

Man cannot stand the adulation of the people and somehow God must show us when he begins to glorify himself and his people. Show us how to so react, is that the word, so committed, so dedicated to God that the glory of a modest people will go back to him. Can't just say God I'm going to give you the glory.

I don't know. There's got to be somehow a working of God in our hearts that we'll know how. And so what? Shouldn't we pray? I do.

Lord don't give this power, this authority, this glory, whatever we might call it, until we know and are disciplined of you that it will go back to you. Keep it promised until we're conditioned that way. Keep it promised until, Lord you prepared us.

We're circumcised with the circumcision at Gilgal. We're helpless and we know we're helpless. We're proven to be helpless.

That the victory is in the ark of the covenant in your holy presence. You can sing that Lord. I think it's very simple.

I give myself to thee. Holy and acceptable to God. I will give myself to thee as a living sacrifice.

Holy and acceptable to God. Thank you.

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