

Loving God for Himself

by George Warnock

The sermon calls believers to love God for Himself, seek His glory, and reflect His presence through genuine worship and fellowship.

Duration: 1:28:26

Scripture: Exodus 3:5, Exodus 33:11, Matthew 5:8, Revelation 1:10-13, Revelation 2:10

Topics: "God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that the reality portrayed in the world is not the true reality. The true reality is what God has said is true. The preacher compares the opening of the sixth seal to the end of Mission Impossible, where people will be shocked and regret not believing what they were told. The sermon also discusses the importance of following God's word and the consequences of not doing so. The preacher mentions Isaiah 25:7, which talks about God removing the covering that hides the things of God, allowing people to see into the spiritual realm.

Transcript

And I appreciated the praise and worship here this morning, and I thought it is beautiful, and I felt it was ascending from hearts who loved him, and I want to see more of that. I'm not downgrading noise or anything like that. I want to see more of the real praises of the Lord.

But I get so weary of the entertainment that comes into the churches, and there's a big noise, and they call it the high praises of God. The high praises of God are the ascending praises. That's what the word means.

Ascending praises. As you go to the brazen altar, and get the coals of fire, and put incense upon it, there's got to be an ascending of that incense before the Lord. And the Lord smells a sweet-smelling savor, because you're praising the Lord for his faithfulness.

You've committed all to Him. You've put all in the altar. You claim nothing for yourself.

You want nothing for yourself. You don't want the enlargement of your ministry. You don't want to be successful, but you want to be approved of God.

And out of a heart that is known the fires of God on that brazen altar, you're able to praise Him and thank Him for His faithfulness. And you see the Lord in a new way. And those people who know, who have

learned to come to the place of true worship and praise and prayer and intercession, are the people who are standing right before the veil.

And one day God is going to be pleased to draw back the veil and reveal Himself. And we'll find ourselves in the immediate presence of God. And Moses said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory.

God said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And God said, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there's a place by me.

Now shall stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. That scripture I remember from my earliest childhood memories.

The picture I saw there of God putting Moses in a cleft of the rock. And somehow, though I didn't have a concept of God really any more than I do now, somehow you could see God just covering Moses there, and God walks by. God takes his hand off as he walks by, and Moses looks, and he sees God's back parts.

And I don't understand what kind of a form Moses beheld, but I believe that there's a picture there of the God who has walked by, and we've sensed his presence as he went by. And we knew God was there because God was doing certain things, and we felt his hand upon us. But he goes by, and all we see is the God who has passed by.

And that's been about the concept of the Church of Jesus Christ in this hour. The God who has walked by. The God who has walked by.

And we thank the Lord that he visited us, and that he put his hand upon us, but now he's gone by. And where are you, Lord? Won't you please wait? Won't you? And somehow I believe God is waiting for this people who will have that same passion that Moses had. Lord, show me thy face.

And God says, you shall not see my face and live in service. Okay, Lord, I'm sorry. A people who will continue to say, Lord, show me your face.

Show me your glory. Let your glory be revealed in our midst. And God says, you shall not see my face and live.

And we say, Lord, show me your glory. I don't want to live. I want to die when I see you.

And God is going to reveal himself to such a people. If we're prepared to say, Lord, yes, let me die by the shining forth of your glory, by the manifestation of your presence. Let me be as one dead, but I want to see the Lord.

And in all these visitations, there's a work wrought in the hearts of God's people because they've seen the Lord. Only in part, I know, but we've seen him and so it changes us. And that's the work that's going on in the body of Christ today.

And all of us want to see the Lord, but there has been, there's been a manifestation of the presence of God in your life. He's imparted a gift or a ministry of some kind. You say, I don't have much.

You don't need much. Bring what you have to the Lord. Expose it to him.

Lord, this is all you've given me? Just the one talent? You haven't given me five talents like you gave this other one. Oh, I don't have much. I'll go bury it.

No. Take what you have. Invest it in the body of Christ.

And so we're all with open face. That means with the veil removed. The word open there is unveil.

We all with open face. Beholdens in a glance, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image. From glory unto glory given is by the spirit of the Lord.

We all with open face. This is not going to come by any mighty apostle or prophet. It's going to be when we all, the members of the body of Christ with open face, as they gather together, they begin to reflect that aspect of the presence of Christ, which has been made known to them.

And I don't mean by that, that every time you get together, everybody's got to get up and give a little sermon. But every man should be responsible in the assembly to seek the Lord before they come and when they come to be simply ready. That's all.

Simply ready. And to know when to speak and when to stop speaking. Or if to speak at all.

To know when to keep silent throughout the whole media. I'm not talking about talking. I'm speaking about coming with that light that you can reflect upon your brother.

If we don't have a light to reflect upon him, let us do what Moses did. Put a veil over our face and seek God until we do have that light. And that's what Moses did.

For when he came down from the mountain of God, having been with the Lord forty days and forty nights, and the very glory of the Lord shone forth upon his countenance, though he knew it not. And as he came down into the camp, he saw the people afraid to draw nigh. Their eyes were sensitive.

They were squinting. They couldn't stand it. And he beckoned to them, and fearfully they drew nigh.

And while the glory was radiating from his countenance, he was able to minister life to them. Words from God. But he sensed the glory was fading away.

And when he sensed the glory was fading away, he put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel wouldn't see the fading glory. He did not come down from the mount with the glory of God radiating from his countenance. And the people of God said, We can't stand that.

Moses, cover your face. He covered his face. He didn't do that.

I know it says in the Authorized Version, Till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. But the Hebrew and every other version I've read confirms and Paul the Apostle confirms that it was when he had finished speaking with them, he put the veil over his face. It was when he had finished speaking with them.

He refused to cover that glory. He refused to accommodate their blindness of heart. Because the veil was really, the veil that Moses put over his face was really the veil that was on their heart.

And that's what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3, Their hearts were blinded for until this day remains the same veil not taken away in the reading of the Old Covenant. The veil remains not taken away. The veil was on their heart.

And because they were not able to receive the words and to dwell in the presence of God as Moses was, the glory faded away and Moses covered his face out of an acknowledgement of the fact that the glory of God had departed. But, says Paul, we have great boldness and not as Moses who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look to the end of that which was abolished. He put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not see the last rays of the fading glory.

But we, he says, we're ministers of a new covenant. We're ministers of the glory of God. We all with open face, with unveiled face, reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

And that's God's plan, that His people gather together that everyone shall have been in the presence of God so that the glory of God emanates from them. So that when they gather together that emanation of the glory, they're not visible with a natural eye as it was in the days of Moses. It's there.

And whether they speak or sing or stand to pray or stand to give an exhortation or stand to give a teaching, it's nothing less than the shining forth of the glory of God in the midst of His people. And it's a glory that increases, that glory is one that fades away. And it's the glory of the old covenant was one that faded away because it was the ministration of death.

How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? You might read the Old Testament and say, wasn't that a tremendous thing? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had things like that today? The apostle Paul says that the ministration of the Spirit of God in the habitation of His saints is more glorious than the ministration that Moses had in his day. God's going to fill His temple with His glory. There's going to be the recognition of an awesomeness of His presence in our midst.

Let's prepare for it. Let's prepare for it. It's coming.

But know also this, that with the manifestation of His glory, there's going to be the fear of God settling upon the congregation. The fear of God is going to be there because God's holy fire is coming to abide in His temple. It's the same fire that He saw out there in the deserts of Midian, burning the bush but not consuming it that Moses saw up on the holy mount.

But it took on an exceeding greater greatness of the glory because there was a man who would not let God go and said, show me Thy glory. And Moses talked to God face to face as a man speaketh with his friend. Are you content with seeing the back parts of God? Talking about the great revivals of the past? Talking about what God did in 1902 or in 1948? Like many are, God moved in a wonderful way back there.

I can show you the room where it started. I know He did. But you're looking at God's back parts? It's the day and hour when God wants you and I to come into His presence and behold Him face to face and see His glory in the midst of the congregation once again.

And there'll be no problem with sin in the midst when that happens because as you come to the light, as you walk in the light, there's fellowship one with another and because there's fellowship there's sharing and the glory of God that rests upon your brother and upon your sister here and there radiating together will consume all the sin in the camp of God. Don't fear to come to it. He hasn't come to consume you.

He's come to consume your sin that you might have a pure heart, that you might see Him as you have never seen Him. But John saw Him. John saw Him.

He saw Him in his earthly ministry. He's very close to the Lord. He seemed to have been closer than the others.

He was one who could rest in the Master's bosom without fear because he loved Him. And perfect love casts without fear. The awesomeness of God's presence comes.

There's going to be a great fear, but fear not. He doesn't come to consume you. He comes to consume your sin.

Don't you want to get rid of it? So John loved the Lord with such an intensity that he was called the disciple whom Jesus loved. Jesus loved all the disciples. Jesus loves the whole world, but John had the distinction of being called the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Doesn't even say he loved Him more. It was just a recognition that this was one that Jesus loves. And he lay in his bosom and had intimate relationship with the Lord and writes many years later, that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes.

And I think by and large in the ministry of the Lord and His people thus far has been one of hearing. And our hearts have burned within us as we heard His words. Like the two who walked along the Amish road, they testified later, did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us along the way? But they didn't see Him.

Their eyes were held. Their eyes were holden that they did not see Him. Because the Lord was waiting for that opportunity when He might reveal Himself, but their hearts weren't ready yet.

We think we're ready. We say, come Lord Jesus and show Yourself. We want to see You and we'll continue to pray that.

But God says, yet a little while. I've yet to work a work in your hearts to prepare you. You've got to come to desire Me more earnestly.

And He seems to leave. Well, I'm sorry He's gone now, but I had such a visitation of the Lord. No, come back Lord Jesus.

Come and dwell with us. And they took them to their home. And He sat down at the table and He supped with them and they ate with Him.

And they had glorious fellowship together. But they didn't see Him until He took the bread and broke it and their eyes were opened and they saw Him. We sang earlier, are you willing to be that broken bread, that poured out wine? Are you willing to be that? Until we're willing to be that broken bread, we're not going to see Him.

We might still hear Him. We might still hear gracious words from His lips. It will thrill us.

But the time has come in the church of Christ to bring about that purity, that cleansing that God will have in His people where there has to be the revelation of the Lord where His people will see Him. And when they see Him, they're free from sin. The reason we sin is because we've not seen the Lord.

John saw Him. That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life, for the life was manifested and we have seen it and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. This is going to take on reality in our midst. It's no longer going to be a doctrine or a teaching.

But when there arises a people who are going to be able to say, not just because they've got Scripture for it, but because it's become experience in their lives, I've heard the Lord and I've seen Him. Seeing Him is invisible, I know, but you've seen Him. You've seen His person.

You've seen His purity. You've seen His love. You've seen the joy of His heart.

You've seen those inner attributes of His being in such a way that those attributes of Christ have been implanted upon you. For in seeing Him, the very character and nature of Christ has been transferred to your own heart. That's what happens when you see the Lord.

You can't see the Lord and remain the same. He changes you into His image and in His likeness. And when this people arise, represented here by John the Beloved, they're going to be able to say, Brethren, walk in the light as He is in the light.

Have fellowship with us. For if you walk in the light as He is in the light, we've got fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

It's going to be a cleansing wave that sweeps over the people of God. I see it. The cleansing stream.

I see. I see. I plunge.

And oh, it cleanseth me. Oh, praise the Lord, it cleanseth me. It cleanseth me.

Yes, cleanseth me. And so there's an increase of this revelation of the Lord. And so because John had such an intimate relationship with the Lord, saw Him so clearly and abode with Him and walked with Him.

I'm not saying the others didn't, but John was the one that Jesus loved. Yeah, I know He loved them all, but He loved John. And Jesus said, If any man will love Me, if any man will keep My word, My Father will come unto him.

I haven't been able to quote exactly. If a man loves Me, he will keep My word. And My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode in him.

It's the response of our love, but we got that love from Him. And so He originated it. And so we get a portion of it.

And then we respond with that, and that draws more love from Him to us. We have more love, and that draws Him closer. And so the work goes on.

We all with open face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, one to the other. With that little measure of light we now have, the light increases as we walk in the light and have fellowship one with another. So have fellowship one with another.

You say, Well, there isn't a fellowship in our area. Well, there's probably another person. So if you're faithful where you are, seek the Lord.

I think God will give you one other. That's all it takes for true fellowship. That's really all it takes.

So if two of you shall agree concerning something in the Spirit, God has given you the divine faith, two of you to agree, it shall be done. I know it's good to have 2,000 people in the congregation gather for prayer and pray. That's good.

If two of you are walking in the light and walking in fellowship, walking in union with the Lord, you can ask what you will, and it will be done. In closing, I want to observe the revelation of the Lord to John in a still greater understanding, in a still greater unfolding. In the book of Revelation, John had seen Him, walked with Him, talked with Him, handled Him, handled the Word of Life.

He didn't just see the man, the Messiah, but he saw the heart because he saw the heart of the Lord. He began to take upon himself the likeness of the Son of God with whom he walked, began to take upon himself the likeness, the image of Him, because he not only heard words like the other disciples heard, but he saw Him, took upon himself the reflection of the glory of the Son of God. And so he was the one who was given the still greater revelation of the Christ.

John was on the isle that was called Patmos for the testimony of Jesus, exiled for the Word of God when the heavens were opened, and he saw visions of God. At first, he heard the sound as of a great trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and what thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia, unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me.

There is God initiating, and there is John the Beloved responding. He heard the voice, and he turned to see the voice. Moses saw the sight, he turned aside to see, and God responded, not in curiosity, but in a genuine desire to know and to see this one who was being revealed.

I turned to see the voice. I heard a man say, you know, the Bible isn't really accurate in a way. You can't see a voice.

John saw this voice, for this was the Son of God, the Word made flesh. I turned to see the voice that spake with me, and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. We're told later on that the seven

golden candlesticks are the seven churches, in other words, the body of Christ over all the earth and over all the centuries.

For the seven churches not only represent the seven churches of Asia of that day, but they represent the seven aspects of the church in this day and hour throughout the whole earth. And the candlestick speaks of the churches, plural, the many churches but one church, many assembling places, many gatherings, but one church. And John wanted to see this voice, and he turned to see the voice, and the first thing he saw was the seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one likened to the Son of Man.

He didn't say it was Jesus. He says one likened to the Son of Man, and yet you read the account of it, you know it was Jesus. And yet you know it wasn't just that Jesus that John had laid his head upon in the upper room at the time of the Passover.

The same Jesus, yes, but a Jesus who had become aged. A Jesus who had become so aged that he wasn't just an old man, he was like the Ancient of Days that Daniel saw, the very same image many hundreds of years before. The Ancient of Days, his hairs were as white as wool.

The Son of Man clothed with a garment down to the foot, girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were like, quite like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like undefined brass as if they burned in a furnace.

And his voice is the sound of many waters. It's the sound of many waters, because God's people are also likened unto the river of God, and not only to the river of God, but many streams that comprise that river. The river of God, many streams in that river.

The streams are also made glad the city of God. And so it's God's people. It's God's people who are union with Jesus.

So you look and you say, I know it's Jesus, but he's different. He's aged. He's the Ancient of Days, his hairs white as wool.

He's got eyes as a flame of fire. In fact, we're told a little later on that he had seven eyes, because he's speaking of the fullness of the Spirit in this womb. He was like the Son of Man.

It's this corporate man that Paul spoke about, where he said that God's intention in sending ministry into the church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and we don't make light of those things. We're just saying that they're a means to an end, that they're necessary, that the purpose of it is that they might so minister unto the people of God for the perfecting of the saints, for their work of ministry, till we all come unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man. Well, that's Jesus, I know, but it's the man Jesus who has taken unto himself the body, so that we're one body with him.

I don't think we've understood. I don't think we've begun to understand the mystery of the body of Christ, that just as truly as when Jesus came into the world, God prepared a body for him. He prepared a body.

We read about it, a beautiful story in Luke, how the Lord appeared unto Mary and said, Fear not, Mary, for thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son. And she said, How shall this be? Seeing I know not a man, for she was a virgin. He says, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most

High shall overshadow thee.

Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And just as truly as God arranged and prepared for that holy body to come forth, so once again the Spirit of God is coming upon a virgin people, a virgin church. And they say, How can this thing be? Because we're not organized.

We're not joined to any organization. We're not joined to any man. God says, The Holy Ghost shall come upon you.

The power of the highest shall overshadow you. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called Holy Sons of God. I'm not taking away any glory from Christ.

I'm saying that because God loved Jesus so much, I must have many brethren like him. Like Brother Lee Allen used to say when Joseph was born, Rachel in her dying moment said, Call him Joseph, because God will add another one. You ever hear a woman in travail saying, I want another one? But Rachel did because she said it by the Spirit.

And she had another one, and that one was Benjamin, the son of Joseph's right hand. Rachel called him Benoni, the son of my sorrow. But Jacob said, No, Benjamin, the son of my right hand.

So Joseph and Benjamin are one. They're identified, very much identified, and as true as there's a Joseph, there's going to be a Benjamin. And Benjamin doesn't take away from the glory of Joseph.

He's his brother, his younger brother. And Jesus is going to say on that day when he's got his brethren where he wants them, where he's perfected them, where he's joined them unto himself, Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.

Therefore he's not ashamed to call his brethren, not ashamed to call his brethren, even though we're oftentimes ashamed to be said, to have it be said that we're a brother of Jesus. He's not ashamed to call his brethren because he knows that the Holy Spirit that proceedeth from the Father and the Son is in the earth with a commission to prepare a holy bride for the Son of God. The Holy Spirit has been commissioned from the throne room to come to earth and to abide in the people in the earth to prepare them to be the holy bride for the Son of God to be joined unto him in one body.

Wait before the Lord if anything else he would say or speak, whatever the Spirit may lead you to do, be free to do it. No man are able to compete with these things. They don't work in terms of the intellect or muscle or money.

They live in another realm. And God has given us the opportunity through Jesus to have that part of our being made solid in the Lord and to gain his fellowship and the wisdom of God and the Holy Spirit of power so that we can overcome. But if we say, oh no, Birmingham is worth two in the bush, everybody else has got it and I'll take my furniture, this is what I want, take it back and argue with the clerk and waste your time on wood, hay and stubble.

I'm not saying don't buy presents, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the thrust of our life, what we basically are and what we basically do. And that is revealed in the frequency of nouns that we use in our speech.

People could count them, count how many times you're talking about the things of the Lord, not in an artificial way, not churchy talk, but where it's coming up genuinely and how much time you're spending talking about things is a mighty good index of your heart and where you are. And the only person you're harming is yourself. Stars are going to fall.

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens. And I said that to say this, we do not understand the status of the heavens. And in terms of our mythology, this doesn't make any sense.

In fact, it commonly is taught that Satan was cast out 2,000 years ago when Jesus said, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Most evangelical scholars believe he was cast out at that time. He wasn't cast out at that time.

We're wrestling, as Paul said, against wicked spirits in the heavens. And they affect people in the heavens. They affect the inhabitants of the heavens in some way.

And therefore they rejoice. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea. For the devil is come down unto you.

This is a great woe. It's a great woe to the inhabitants of the earth that is coming. This is not counting the rest of the seals, which we said are the natural consequence of man's misbehavior.

It's not talking about the trumpets in which God is chasing his people to prepare them for his coming or Armageddon or the balls of wrath. It's just talking about the fact that God says to Satan, you want flesh? Here it is. And he's going to be as angry as a hornet's nest over a fire.

And he's going to make the inhabitants of the earth smart because of his anger. That's what's ahead. He knows that he has but a short time.

Thank God, God has everything under control. Do you see that from that scripture? He has but a short time. God says, this is it, and that's the end of it.

It's not haphazard. It's not something Satan's going to determine. He knows.

God has put a time frame on him to let him and the people that have loved him and have served him, let them get married. Let them have one another. That's what God does, you know.

If you push hard enough and God says, don't marry that person, don't do that. I want to do it. Okay.

Okay. Enjoy your choice. Sometimes it's difficult, isn't it, to keep yourself under discipline.

But what pain we save ourselves when we do what God has said. Isn't that so? All right. Now, I want to talk a little bit about, I've talked about that departing of the heavens.

Let's look at Isaiah 25, verse 7. He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people. The things of God are hidden from us. We can't see them as a covering.

And in the last days, God is going to remove that, and we're going to be able to see in the spiritual realm. Some years ago, there used to be a program on television. It was called Mission Impossible.

It consisted of a complete fabrication of environment so that people were persuaded that something was true which was not true. And after the desired behavior was gotten from these deceived people, the

fabricators went back to their place where they were, and this person suddenly realized, I was completely misled. The whole thing was wrong, and I was completely deceived, and I wasn't there at all, and that wasn't going on at all.

It was a complete thing built up around me to cause me to behave in a way that I never would have behaved had I known where I actually was and what the circumstances actually were. And there never was a truer picture than life on earth. If our eyes were open and we could see things as they are, how differently we would behave.

All that we have is God's word to tell us, what you see around you is a lie. It is not like that. The things that are made with you are not made of things which do appear.

Don't be conformed to that. It's wrong. And then our eyes tell us, but this is truth that we see.

And God's word says, it is not truth that you see. And the only thing that we have to go by is faith in God, faith in his word. He said it is not really this way.

Reality is not the way it is portrayed in this world. This is not reality. The reality is what God has said is true.

Praise the Lord. In this day, the opening of the sixth seal, it's going to be like the end of Mission Impossible. The thing will be rolled away and people will say, my God, why didn't I believe what I was told? Just that simple.

And just that quick. But there will be no changing then. That's where Revelation 22 as a verse 11 or 13 something comes in.

He that is filthy, remain. There comes a time when God moves and there's no revocation. As for example, in the foolish virgins.

They didn't get a warning and then it happened. The warning is in the word for 2000 years. It happened.

Bang. The door closed. That's characteristic of the end time.

And God pleads with us endlessly. Raises us. Does everything in his power.

Just do it. Declare this and then you'll declare it. We're talking about God's discipline of a prophet who was also a priest.

You still want to be a prophet? I'll just write one down. It's a little more heavy. God told Ezekiel in chapter 4, take a tile and draw it in the city of Jerusalem and do it out there on their site.

This is the city and then make battering rams and so forth and come against it. How would you feel if God says go down there in the streets of Chicago and set up a map of Chicago and make yourselves little total battering rams or maybe missiles or something and start shooting them. People going by.

This is what God's going to do to this city. Oh ho. Look at this.

I want you to lay on your left side and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt bear their iniquity. I've laid upon you the years of their iniquity according to the number of the days, 390 days.

Ezekiel When you finish the 390 days, I want you to lay on your right side for 40 days. And if you think you won't be able to do it, that's just, I laid bands upon you so that you won't be able to turn from one side to another until the end of the days of your siege. How would you like to do that? Oh, nice to stand up in the church.

I'm a prophet of God. That's the Lord. God's going to destroy this city and say, you know, I appreciate the prophet.

God's raising up prophetic ministries even in this gathering. If you seek the Lord until you have a priestly heart and a priestly compassion before you start glowing in your prophetic office. Same thing also.

Get together some wheat and barley and beans and lentils and millet and pitchers, put them in a vessel and make bread. Well, that sounds like good stuff. Wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, pitchers.

I don't know what they all are, but it sounds like it's very wholesome. That's not too bad. You could have about one quarter of that a day.

And then about a quarter of water. What about butter? Butter it with cow's dung and eat that. So why be a prophet like Ezekiel? Let me tell you, God's men prepared of him have to bear the iniquity of the people to whom they ministry.

They have to suffer the suffering that the people are suffering. If they're rebellious and perverse, God is building upon God's prophets that they're going to suffer what they're suffering. They're going to be afflicted with their affliction.

They're going to have devastation. They're going to be sentenced in trial. They're going to be tried in the fire.

They're going to eat the book. Before that terrible night is going to come forth, a family month. God's raising up a priestly ministry in the earth.

They're going to speak fresh from the heart of God. They're going to speak an infallible word of truth. They're going along with black musicians and dance troupes to try to gather the messages to heaven and to entertain them.

They're picking up the book and they're going to go forth with a clear, clear word from God. And the peoples of the earth are going to hear from the throne because it's the they're speaking from heaven through the body of ministry in the earth. Let's read verse 8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

I know we present a very high standard, and oftentimes the people of God are inclined to feel it's too high. Come down to earth, you know. The standard is high, the vision is high, but it's far higher than we realize.

It's far higher than I could ever bring forth. But it's not something for you and I to try to climb up to. If it was for you and I to climb up to it, would it be as helpless as Jacob was, as he lay there with his head on a pillow of stones and saw the ladder erected into the heavens, and angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder, and were told God was at the top of it.

How could Jacob try to ascend that ladder that belonged to angels? So it's not a case of you and I trying to attain to what God has said. But as Paul said in Scripture, it has always been quoted in part, his desire to

apprehend. I desire to apprehend that for which God has apprehended me.

He says, brethren, I cannot know it myself that I have apprehended. I haven't arrived. But he says, this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

So I want to apprehend, I want to attain, but he says, I haven't come yet, I don't count, I don't consider or attain, but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, I'm pressing on, unto the prize of the high calling, and it was a joy to my heart when I looked up the meaning of the word, and it's an upward calling. High calling, full high, how many millions of miles away, but no, it's an upward calling. And because it's an upward calling, it's only one step at a time that we need to take, only one step at a time, as God enables us.

And actually we want to discover that it's a stepping down. That should make it easier for us, but somehow it seems to make it more difficult for us, because it's in our hearts by nature to want to attain, we want to succeed, we want to rise. The merciful spirit is strong in the earth.

I will ascend, I will be like the Most High. I think we sense a lot of that in what people call end-time truth. I'm coming into the kingdom.

I'm coming into kingdom life. I'm not going to die. I've got eternal life, I've got kingdom life, I'm not even going to die.

And many people who make boasts like that have already gone on. So we're not making any boasts like that. There's going to be a people who's going to overcome, and the last enemy to be overcome is death.

But we're not making any boasts about whether or not we're going to go on living and living. And even when we do conquer death, God's going to have a people who are going to conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil, and death's the last enemy. Even when we've conquered death, if we're still living in this mortal flesh, we'll still have the ability to lay down our lives for the brethren.

There was no cause of death in Jesus. No man could take his life. But he dwelt in a mortal body, and he was able to lay down his life.

And I think it would be a higher prize for God's people. If so be they attain to the place where they literally conquered death. It would be a higher prize than going on living.

And that would be if, in the will and purposes of God, they were able to lay down their life for the body of Christ. So when the vision is high and we must keep it high, because we're depending on the Lord to take us into that high and holy calling. We're not depending on ourselves.

And then when we learn the secret of the way into life, it becomes increasingly more easy and at the same time increasingly more difficult. Because the way into life is through death. The way into true spiritual success is in declaring bankruptcy.

The way to appropriate resurrection life is to be identified with him and his suffering. The way to ascend is to descend. And I say therefore it's easier because we're living in that kind of a realm.

We're living in a realm of weakness, of death, of failure. We're living in that realm, but it's still more difficult because we shrink from it. We don't want to go that route.

We want an easier route. But the Lord accepts our commitment. Like Brother Pete was saying yesterday morning, perhaps we're bold to make a commitment as we see the prize before us.

Perhaps we don't understand the depths of the commitment when we make it. But God accepts it nevertheless and he holds us to it. But in holding us to it, he supplies the grace to fulfill it.

And so for every crown there is a cross and for every measure of life that we enter into, there will be a measure of death which we must learn to appropriate. Not by going out looking for it, but by simply taking up our cross, doing the will of God from day to day. The Lord is able to lead us in the way of a disciple.

He has formulated the discipleship doctrine in the earth. Many have fled into it because it's a very easy way. Just come unto this minister, come unto this apostle, come unto this pastor.

Submit to them, do what they say, and you'll be a apostle. You might be a disciple of that pastor, or you might become a disciple of that prophet, but you won't be a true disciple of the Lord. Jesus said, if any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and let him take up his cross and follow me.

It's much easier to become a disciple of some great minister, but you're denying yourself the privilege and the opportunity of becoming a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ if you do that. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. I always loved the Beatitudes, reading them, the simplicity of it and the beauty of it, but it always seemed something so beyond my ability to appropriate.

I couldn't hardly grasp it, but it's something very practical. And especially this verse. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

And oh, what a condition there is there in order to see the Lord, to be pure in heart. You try and you try and you try to come to that state of purity of heart so that you might really see the Lord and always give up in failure. But I began to realize that it's an ongoing work in God's people to bring about this purity, and that God is always faithful to give partial glimpses of himself until he has brought us to that place where there can be the full unfolding of his glory.

And apart from those glimpses that he gives of himself, we would be totally helpless to attain to any measure of grace that's acceptable in his sight. And so he comes on the scene. He begins.

The Lord always makes the initiative. It's never left up to man to make the initiative. The Lord makes the initiative.

He draws nigh to us. And he begins to approach, and perhaps he can hesitate. And we hear him saying, draw nigh to me and I will draw nigh to you.

But he's already taken the initiative. He's spoken. We heard him.

He's begun to come our way. And then it seems he stops, he hesitates, and perhaps walks in the opposite direction. And we can all goodbye.

Thank you, Lord, for talking to us. Good hearing from you. But as surely as he begins to walk in the opposite direction, it's just that he's trying to get that response from our heart.

So when they came to the crossroads on their way to Emmaus, they came to the wire in the road, and Jesus made as if or he gave the impression or pretended he was going off there to the left, started to walk

off in this other branch of the road, and if they'd have said goodbye, stranger, nice having talked to you, he would have gone on his way. But he gives the impression that he's withdrawing, to withdraw from you and I that response from our hearts that he desires so much. And we said, oh, come with us and abide with us.

And he turned around and went with them. That's what he wanted. That's what he intended.

But he must have that response from his people. I agree very much with what the brethren have said about his doctrines and how we're very assured that God's going to do it all. We don't have to be concerned.

God's going to do it. And I thank the Lord for some of those doctrines concerning the predestination and election that God has concerning his people. I think it has been a foundation in my own Christian experience.

It's something that you can trust in the sovereign God. But I know also that trusting in that doctrine will not mean that you will become a participant in the truth concerning it. And that if we are truly called, elect, predestined of God unto his purposes, if we are truly such a people, then there's going to be a response from our heart crying unto the Lord to do that thing which he has told us he intends to do, instead of just saying, well, God's going to do it.

I don't need to be concerned. Well, if you want to rule yourself out of the picture then and watch God do it in a people, you can do that. And you'll be an observer.

And you'll be able to say in that day, see, I told you God was going to do this. And you won't be a part of it. You'll be an observer.

But the people whom the Lord has chosen and called are also faithful. They're called and chosen and faithful. Faithful to the Lord, faithful to pray, to intercede, faithful to believe, faithful to stand the test of obedience, to go through the trial, faithful to lay hold upon the word of faith, to cling to it, to cry unto God that he will do that thing which he has declared.

For those who are chosen of God and faithful are going to be like the watchman upon the walls who will cry unto him day and night, saying unto God, I'm not going to give you any rest. I'll give you no peace until you establish and until you make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Called, chosen, and faithful.

Such is the description of the overcomers in the book of Revelation. So God draws nigh and begins to introduce himself, shows forth himself in some way. And we see the Lord in that limited vision that he's given us in order to inspire within us a walk of obedience.

And Moses was a man whom God had chosen not only to perform a great work in delivering the people of God, but a man who would come to that place where he would talk to God face to face as a man talks to his friend. And so God comes on the scene. I know Moses tried.

We're all trying to do that which God alone can do. Then having tried, we'll fail and more or less give up, still wondering what it's all about, still having our hearts open before him, but still I realize there's nothing I can do about it. And then God introduces himself and shows us that only he can do this thing which we desire to enter into.

Only he can fulfill the new covenant. And God it is who has got a right upon the minds and the hearts of his people his holy will. And yet for all this, saith the Lord, I will yet be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.

Even though God declares it in an infallible voice, I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this. It's my covenant.

He says, I'm going to be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. They're going to have to respond. They're going to have to.

Crying to me to do it, or I won't do it. Say, well, then maybe their work will not be done. No, it'll be done because if the people who know the facts of it and have the doctrine of it don't cry unto him that he does it, God will just raise up a people who will, so God will still do it.

God's going to do what he said. But I don't want to presume that because he's going to do what he said that I necessarily have to be a participant in it. And so Moses, out there in the wilderness of Midian, had been there some 40 years, faithful to God, I'm sure, but the vision probably having become so dim that he would like to have forgotten the whole episode that he went through in Egypt where he tried to be their deliverer.

And going about his daily work, the Lord appeared and visited him. I appreciate the fact that young people like to go to Bible school, you know, and get out there and get all ready to do the work of the Lord, but I really believe God's best plan is for our young people to stay there in their local fellowship, get a job, serve the Lord, and stay at their job. Because God can visit you right there at your job.

And Moses was there at his job looking after sheep for his father-in-law. When he saw a burning bush, he looked, but then he looked again and again, and it wasn't consumed. And he said, this is strange, I will now turn aside and see this strange wonder.

By this little bamboo bush or whatever it was there in the desert, it was burning, but it wasn't disintegrating. And when the Lord saw, he turned aside to see. The Lord spoke.

You see what I mean? God initiated. And Moses said, I will now turn aside to see. And so there was a response from Moses, and then God spoke and said, take off the shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

God had much more to reveal to Moses, but according to his present condition, according to his present need, God revealed himself in that manner. There would be a greater revelation. We want to emphasize that.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. But before we'll ever have any kind of heart purity, there has to be that revelation of the Christ in some measure, great or small. So God must initiate it.

That gives us hope. And then as we respond, then there will be a greater revelation of him. I still believe that in this gathering here, the Lord wants to visit his people in a way that according to your present need, God will meet you, including the young people.

And so pray about tonight, at least that was in my heart, that tonight there would be some kind of visitation of the Lord, gathering around and praying with one another, not to make a spectacle of the young. I don't

mean that. We'll all be together.

And furthermore, the thought comes to me that we should all take our place as little children at this time. For Jesus said, except a person come as a little child, he shall not receive the kingdom of heaven. It's a time for adults to take the place of little children.

Simplicity, openness before the Lord, hiding nothing. So let this be a day when God's people will become, all of us, regardless of our age, little children before the Lord. Because even they can receive a touch from God and a revelation of God according to the stature that they have in God.

Was it a year or so ago, Brian's two little children, I guess one was around three and the other around five, the boy around five, and Carmen come to his dad with a piece of paper and a crayon. Draw me God, Daddy. Well, I don't know why he was trying to figure out how to explain to a two and a half, three year old little girl that he couldn't really draw God.

And while he was trying to figure out a good answer without offending her, Nathan says, I'll draw God. So he took the paper and crayon and drew a burning bush. That touched me because I know there are little children sitting in a meeting and they receive things.

And they hear the stories that their parents read at home, these Bible stories. God reaches them, God meets them. And so we haven't set up Sunday schools, we haven't particularly seen the need of it.

I'm not condemning it. Sunday schools originated within the last century by a certain church, I think it was the Anglican church, who in a certain place, a certain city, these children were totally neglected. And they set up these schools for them so that they would have some Bible understanding, whereas at home they had nothing.

And so no doubt there's still a place for that. But Christian parents are responsible for the teaching of their young people. And the sad part about Sunday schools generally is that they become a babysitting bureau.

So the parents can go, well, you know, we don't want to bother you. You go up to Sunday school, the bus will pick you up, we don't even have to go to church, and we might come down later. And God never intended it that way.

Anyway, the little ones can receive according to their need. Just a little portion here and there, but that story of the burning bush made an impression that he was even able to draw on paper. And so God met Moses according to the need of his heart at that time.

But he would have to see the Lord in a greater way than that. And his heart would have to be dealt with, even after that. God would have to deal with his heart, but God must come and begin to show himself if we're going to have a heart that is pure.

And so we've emphasized walking in the light. And if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleansed us from all sin.

We walk in the light. So we encourage God's people to come to the light. Come to the light.

And I know that the Church has become such an institution that people can come to church and not be affected. And young people can play games at the back of the church while the meeting is going on. But there isn't that impact of the presence of God there.

And we must seek the Lord until there's such a presence of God in the midst of his people, that when his people come together, from the least to the greatest of them, there's a recognition of the awesomeness of God in this place. God desires it to be that way. And it's going to be that way in this day, in this generation, in this hour.

The glory of God is coming back to his temple. The fire of God is returning to his people. And God is going to lay a holy awe upon his people as they sense that he is there in the midst.

And he's there in the midst to be Lord of the congregation, to cleanse, to purify, to purge, to bring down to humility and weakness, that he might be Lord in their midst, and that his people might be characterized by the presence of God. There's one thing, one distinct thing, that God would have his people enter into to make the big difference between us and the nations about us. One distinct thing.

And Moses, when he was talking to the Lord, and Moses was pleading with God to be with him as he led these people into the land, God said, I'll send an angel, I'll let the angel lead you in. Because his people had failed him, God said, I can't come and abide in your presence. But he said, go take them in.

Take them into the land, I'll send an angel before you. Moses continued to intercede before the Lord. He wasn't satisfied with an angel.

We thank the Lord for the angels. But I'm not asking an angel to lead me. And I don't want to be led of an angel.

And I honor the angel, and I respect the angel. But I don't want to receive teaching from angels either. I don't want to receive teachings from angels.

Because they don't know as much about the plan of redemption as I do. And they don't know as much about the plan of redemption as you do. And angels desire to look into these mysteries of redemption with a curiosity and an intense desire to understand something concerning the mysteries of our great salvation.

Peter says angels desire to look into it. That's all they can do, is try to understand what's this plan of redemption all about. But they don't understand.

When I read a teaching published in a book by a man who had a visitation from an angel, and this angel was giving him instruction concerning the Feast of the Lord, and told this man that there would always be sin in the Church, because of the Feast of Pentecost, and I admit, the Feast of Pentecost, the loaves of bread were presented with lovin' which speaks of evil. I know that's false teaching. It's supposed to have come from an angel.

But the Bible says that if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we will fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. And there's nothing cleaner in heaven or on earth than that sinner defiled by Adam's sin and your own sin, who has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

Nothing cleaner. And the Bible says that God is going to cleanse his Church by the washing of water, by the Word, because though the blood was shed two thousand years ago, the Word concerning it goes forth today. And the advocacy of the blood is just as real today as it was then.

And by the washing of the water, by the Word that goes forth from the mouth and lips in this day and hour, God is going to cleanse and purge and purify her Church till she is holy and without blemish, without spot

or wrinkle or any such thing, saith the Lord. His blood is able, his Word is able, and the might and the power of our God is able to send forth that Word with creative force to bring forth the desire of God's heart. John said the reason men don't love and the reason they sin is because they haven't seen him.

That's why every time we come together, oh how we long, how we anticipate and we know that he is coming when there is going to be such a manifest presence of the Lord that the people will say, I've heard about it, I've heard the Word, I've rejoiced in the Word, but now I see him. And in seeing him there is going to be a change, there is going to be a purifying. And that's the one distinctive thing that makes the difference between the gathering together of the saints of God and the gathering together of a society of some kind, is the presence of the Lord.

God said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And Moses said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known, hey, that I and thy people have found grace in my sight? Is it not that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, or set apart.

We'll be distinct from the others. We'll be different from the others, from all people that are upon the face of the earth. And that's that one distinctive thing that we need in the Church of Christ today to make us different from anybody else.

It's not the way of worship, it's not how loud you can praise or sing, and there's all kinds of distinctive ways that people have in worship and praise. As they try to copy something that is there in the Bible, true praise and worship springs up from a heart that is in love with Jesus and is adoring him. Come, let us worship and bow down.

And that's the ultimate of any praise or worship. Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture.

And the song goes that far, but continue on. Psalm 95, I think it is, and it says, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart. We don't hear that coming out in the song.

I don't know what's in any song, but that follows that commitment of praise and worship. Come, let us kneel and fall down before the Lord our Maker, for he is our God and we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.

When your Father saw my works forty years, God said my heart was grieved with this generation, and I swear in my heart they shall not enter into my rest. Forty long years, he says, I was grieved with this generation, in spite of the fact that they knew how to praise and worship, and they protected the goodness of God and the blessing of God, but their hearts remained hardened, they had not given a place for God to mellow their hearts before him. And if the praise and worship of God's people does not bring them down on their knees, not only literally, but spiritually, can they bow before the Lord their Maker and make him to be more than God in their hearts and lives? Their praise and worship means nothing before the throne of God.

And that priest stood before the Lord at the altar, the golden altar that Ryan spoke about, the place of worship and praise and adoration and prayer and intercession. He had incense, but before that incense would ascend unto God, he had to go back to the brazen altar where the coals of fire were, and fill his

censer with coals of fire, and bring them into the holiest of all and put incense upon the coals of fire in order that the incense might ascend before the throne of God. You want your praises to be high? You don't make your praises high by making a big noise.

Your praises are high when you have committed yourself unto the Lord to walk in total obedience and go to the brazen altar of sacrifice where you have committed yourself to the Lord as a big offering, and get the coals of fire there, then the praises of God will ascend and will be high praises unto God, ascending praises unto God.

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