

Pursuing Excellence

by George Warnock

The greatest need of the church is for God's people to recognize their great need for God and come to a place of poverty of spirit, so that they can produce fruit that will last and bring glory to God.

Duration: 55:02

Scripture: Ephesians 4:11

Topics: "Excellence"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of walking in the spirit, just as Jesus did. He highlights that Jesus revealed the Father's name and prayed for it to be revealed in his people. The preacher expresses concern about the state of the church, with many individuals focused on earthly riches and self-magnification. However, he believes that God is preparing for a mighty move in his harvest field, with revival, miracles, signs, and wonders. The preacher also emphasizes the need for believers to walk in love and to know God by following his ways.

Transcript

For many years I've heard of the good work being done here by Brother and Sister Green. And then, like it's already been mentioned, we met, oh, probably a year or so ago, we met Mike and his family. Who further felt to encourage us to come down this way after there was some suggestion that they should have a gathering.

So we're glad the Lord made it possible and we look to Him to move in our midst by His mighty presence. We need more of Him. Someone asked me one time, would you consider to be the greatest need in the church of this hour? Like a flash that seemed to come to me.

I think the greatest need of the church in this hour is that somehow God's people would come to recognize their great need. Really, that's the great need. Because God has everything the church needs.

He has every provision for His people. But if we're led to sin, what can God do that He has not already done? When we're saying, well, we're not doing too bad. We're rich, we're increased with goods.

And have need of nothing. What can God do? God looks down and He says, you don't know it. But you're wretched and poor and blind and miserable and naked.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that you might be rich. I shall denounce your eyes that you might see as white raiment to close yourself. That the shame of thy nakedness does not appear.

And I think we all recognize we're in that Laodicean hour. And I know if we don't have vision from the Lord, we're inclined to say, well, we can't help it. We're in the seventh church age and it's apostates and so forth.

And I'd like to remind people that God has held out to those in the Laodicean church some of the greatest promises that He's given to any of the churches. Gold tried in the fire that you might be rich. I shall denounce your eyes that you might see as white raiment to close yourself.

That we might walk clothed upon with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. What more could you want than that? But if we don't realize we're in need, what else can God do? That's why Jesus said in that great sermon that's called the Sermon on the Mount, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And I know there is developing in the midst of God's people a lot of hunger, a lot of heart searching, a lot of poverty of spirit.

But be thankful for that. Don't think, well, it's hopeless. Because God's promises are to those who are poor in spirit.

God's promises are to those who are hungry, not to those that are filled. God's promises are to those that mourn, not to those who try to put on a show of happiness. Blessed are they that mourn.

Happy is the one that mourns. If your mourning is not for yourself, it's for the desolation that goes on in Zion, then you're truly blessed. Because God mourns over his people.

God's concerned about his people. God doesn't mourn as you and I often mourn with a feeling of hopelessness. But God expresses his mourning because, oh, it's hard for us to realize, God needs his people.

Oh, you say, yeah, I know, I've heard that. God needs his people. He has no hands but my hands, no feet but my feet to take the gospel.

And God does need his people, but primarily it's not to work for him. Primarily he needs the people to satisfy the longing of his own heart. For fellowship, for communication, a place to dwell, a house to dwell in.

That's what God needs because he can't find it out there. In the vast realms of faith, God's never been able to find a dwelling place, nor will he. That's why he doesn't hesitate when he's finished with it all, for whatever purpose he created all that we see out there.

He's just going to burn it up with fire to bring forth the new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, where God will have found the home he's been looking for. A home in the hearts of men. That's what he's looking for.

He's always been looking for that. We think God's slow. I know because we're creatures of time and our lifespan is very small, we think God moves very slowly.

He does from our standpoint. But from his standpoint, he's been moving steadily from the beginning on towards that ultimate end where he would have a people whom he made in his image and who fell from his image. He'll have them restored to him.

He'll have a people in his image and whom he will be able to dwell in all his fullness, delighting in his sons, even as he now delights in his only begotten. God found total delight in our Lord Jesus Christ when he walked this earth. Before we pass that, I want to mention this one very important thing which I don't think was impressed upon me too much until some months ago.

That before Jesus had gone forth in ministry, before he performed any miracles, before he turned the water into wine, before he prophesied, before he taught, except for that occasion he talked with the wise men in the temple, before he went out in the ministry of teaching or evangelizing or prophesying or healing or miracles, before he had done any of those things, God the Father spoke audibly from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased or more clearly I understand in the original, in whom is my total delight. But you and I think, well to please God we've got to get out in the ministry or we've got to preach or we've got to go to a foreign field. God wants an approved vessel before that.

Jesus was approved before he had done any of that. My beloved Son in whom I find total delight. So may God help us to understand and know what really delights the heart of God.

I'm going to read a verse from Philippians chapter 1. Paul, writing to the Philippians, people to whom he had ministered, said in verse 8, chapter 1, God is my record. How greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

A word that has a variety of different shades of meaning. And here I'm sure it's not referring to the fact that if we have God's love we'll know how to judge people better. But discernment.

That your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all discernment or understanding of situations or of people. That your love may abound in that area. That you may approve things that are excellent.

God wants us to approve what's excellent. He's not talking about having a greater gift of discernment. There are gifts of the Spirit.

And discerning of spirits is one. And certainly the church needs all those precious gifts of God. Let's never lose sight of that.

But God wants us to approve things that are excellent and more excellent. And Paul tells us there's something more excellent than the gifts of the Spirit. That doesn't mean we discard them because of that.

But it does mean we don't exalt them because of that. That we don't pursue that. And I know there was a great revival that started in the middle of this century where God began to restore gifts of the Spirit to his church in a manner perhaps that he had not done previously in this century or maybe for some hundreds of years.

Because we need those gifts. But if we fail to realize God's purpose in giving the gifts then we fail to come to the more excellent way. And we abide in a lesser realm.

Because the gift realm is not the best realm. It's necessary. But it's not the best way.

It's not the more excellent way. And so Paul says follow after, pursue charity, love. Pursue that but desire these gifts because we must have it.

Now I can illustrate it. I didn't intend to get too far along this line regarding the purpose of the gifts. But we might liken it to rain from heaven.

Your garden needs that rain. Your farms need that rain. Your farms can't do without that rain.

But if you just have rain, rain, rain every day, every day of the week, every day of the month, every month of the year, you don't want that. You don't want it because the purpose of the rain is to bring forth something else. To bring forth something that's a harvest from that which you planted.

And if it doesn't bring forth that harvest from the seed that you planted and you come to harvest time you say it's been a totally wasted summer if there's no fruit. All that labor in vain. You know that's true and it's not difficult to understand that, is it? But somehow when it comes to God it's difficult to understand that.

We think if a man prophesies all his life with a mighty gift of prophecy or heals the sick for many, many years and there's signs and wonders and miracles or if he can preach or teach or pastor church or whatever all his life that's fruit. I trust there's fruit coming forth and all that. But at harvest time God is looking for the results of that word that was given, the results of those healings that were performed, the fruit, was there any fruit from those miracles that were performed? And if there's no fruit from it it's all wasted.

God's a good gardener. He's been sending forth a lot of blessings. He's showered his people with mighty gifts.

Thou, O Lord, the psalmist saw it in prophecy way back there. Was it Psalm 68? Thou, O Lord, didst send a plentiful rain whereby Thou didst confirm that inheritance when it was weary. And I found a tremendous blessing.

New illumination, new understanding from the gifts that God poured out in the mid-forties. But that seemed to be ultimate in those days. God pouring out his gifts.

And so once again God sends dryness, barrenness. It's disturbing. People would come, what happened this revival? It doesn't seem to be there.

It doesn't seem to be the way it was. I didn't have an answer really for some years myself when I realized if it rains and rains and rains all the time, you've got a jungle. And God doesn't want a jungle church teeming with life but no fruit.

So God stops the rain and he starts to send heat, fire. Let's put heat first. Heat to dry out the grain.

And that stalk that was so fresh and green dried right up. Dries right up. I was raised in old North Central, not really North Central Saskatchewan, which is you might say the Wheat Bowl of Canada.

How beautiful when you see, as far as your eye can see, beautiful wheat fields. Sometimes two, three foot high. And how wonderful when you see it in summer, green and fresh.

But the heat comes. And if there's enough rain, if you get the rain, you can take the heat. And it matures and it brings forth a head in the wheat.

And then the combines come and they fresh it up. And everything else is chaff at harvest time. You know that harvest time, are we in harvest time or is it not upon us? You know that everything but God's

character and nature that's produced in the lives of God's people is going to be chaff in this harvest time.

But you see, God blessed the back there and God gave me this. I know He gave you that gift. He gave you that blessing.

He healed you. He caused you to perform miracles perhaps in the lives of others or give you a ministry to minister this Word to others. But in harvest time, God comes to you and I, not asking you how many sermons you preach, how many nations you travel to, how many miracles have you performed, how many healings have you seen, how many souls have you brought to the Lord.

He comes looking for the fruit of the Spirit in your life and mine and that's all He wants. The husband then waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it till it receives the early and the latter rain. For what purpose? To cause the seed that's been sown to mature.

For God says, My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so are My ways above your ways and My thoughts above your thoughts. And then immediately He goes on.

I never always got the connection. He says, I don't think the way you think. I don't do things the way you do things.

For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and watereth the earth that it might cause the things that are planted in it to spring forth, and I'm not quoting it exactly word for word, so shall My Word be that goes forth out of My mouth. It shall accomplish that which I please. It shall prosper in the thing whereinto I have said it.

And He tells us the purpose for which He sent the Word as the rain to water the soil, to water the seed that's in the soil, that it might bring forth seed for the sower and bread for the eater. And so I believe we're in the verge of a mighty move in God's harvest field. Great revival, great miracles, great signs, great wonders.

Yes, I believe we'll see all of that, but there's going to be a lot of devastation as far as man's concerned. God, what are you doing? You're destroying the thing that we've built up. Lord, You've blessed this all these years.

And now, God, if the economy falls and big churches will be going bankrupt, God, what are You doing? God's looking for one thing because it's harvest time. He's looking for the precious fruit of the earth. And if you know what the seed's like, then you know what the fruit's like.

And if the seed that was planted in the earth was our Lord Jesus Christ, the fruit is going to be a people walking in the likeness of Jesus, walking in His righteousness, walking in His truth, walking in His love, walking in His mercy, walking in His patience, walking in His longsuffering, kindness and righteousness and holiness and justice. That's the fruit that God's waiting for. He continues to wait for it.

So, I know it's going to be good because we've seen some good harvests in the past in church history. We've seen some good times. I don't mean personally perhaps, but you read history and we know God's brought forth some good fruit in harvest time all through church history.

But He's still waiting. Therefore, I know that this harvest for which God is waiting is going to be something that He'll be able to say, I'm glad I waited for this. He's going to have a people walking, moving, living, abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Didn't Jesus say, Abide in me and I in you? Funny how we can read the Scriptures and read so many precious things that are declared. We say, yeah, no, that's right. We should abide in Jesus and we should come to the perfection that God has in mind and we should have unity of the Spirit but we won't have it in this life.

I want to quote a part of that verse again in Isaiah 55. God says when He sends forth His Word upon the earth, there's rain or there's snow. We won't go into that.

You say, I like those refreshing showers, but it's been so cold and I feel so frozen up. Don't worry about it. And God sends the snow too for springtime.

Winter's not the last season. Harvest time is the last season. Winter, spring, summer, autumn.

That's the order in God. And God says, the Word that goes out of my mouth goes into the earth just like the rain goes into the earth. When the rain goes into the earth, He says, it's going to accomplish that which I purpose.

It's going to water the seed that's there so that that seed will spring up and grow giving more seed for another harvest but at the same time providing food for the eaters. He says, my Word's like that. I send it into the earth.

I will not take it back until it accomplishes the purpose for which I sent it. You and I can say, oh yeah, it's too bad it didn't happen, but I know God said it. God said He won't take that Word back until it's fulfilled the purpose for which He sent it forth.

When I saw that one day, I think it was probably that had much to do with having a different vision. Whereas before, I used to read the Bible a lot and memorize large portions of it and all that. You know, you'd read Ephesians there, how God sent gifts into the church, raised up ministry for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till we come unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man.

I know you'd read those. Lord, we've missed it somewhere. It was too bad.

Then you'd read John 17. Father, the glory You have given me, I have given them, that they may be one. Father, as Thou art in me and I in You, that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.

Oh, if we could just get God's people to be one. But it doesn't seem to work. We've tried it a thousand times and it doesn't work.

Realizing the Word of God that's not fulfilled is a seed in the ground and He's going to continue to water it until it brings forth after its kind. He won't take it back until it does. And then many years ago, meditating upon that thought, I was reminded that Jesus was the ultimate Word.

He was the ultimate Word. Any other Word from God in times past or yet to come, it's only a further expression of all that's in Christ. So that God was under time and in diverse manners, spake in times past

unto the fathers through the prophets.

It happened these last days, spoken unto us in His Son. And I don't know Greek fluently, but I understand in examining that in the Greek, it says instead of in His Son, it says He spoke now in sons. Like He spoke in type and shadow and He spoke in the tabernacle.

He spoke in the Lamb of the Old Testament and the goat. Now He speaks in Son. In other words, that One who became the Son of God, that was God's Word in flesh.

It wasn't just that Jesus spoke God's Word like Isaiah did and Jeremiah, but God spoke now in this man. He was that spoken Word of God in flesh. So He was the Word of God as He walked this world, walked that little portion of land that God gave Him to walk on.

He was the Word of God. Not just in what He spoke, what He did, what He thought, or if He said nothing, He was still God's Word in silence. Eloquent in His silence.

As eloquent in His silence as in speaking forth prophetic words. Causing the Roman governor to marvel that when he questioned Jesus, He said nothing. It was God's Word in silence speaking to that Roman governor.

What I emphasize is that He was the ultimate Word and God would not take that Word back to glory until He fulfilled the purpose for which God sent Him forth. Though it was agonizing as He realized the time had come for Him to be that seed that would die and go down into the ground. Agonized over there in Gethsemane.

Nevertheless, He said, Father, Thy will be done. How else will the Scriptures be fulfilled? God sent Him. He knew He had to finish the work.

He finished the work that God gave Him to do when He became the seed that fell into the ground and died. And God received Him back into glory with the promise that He would become that seed that would go down into the ground and die. There would come forth a harvest like Him.

Because of His sacrifice, if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. What kind of fruit? When you plant registered wheat. I don't know if you grow much wheat here.

You plant registered wheat because you want the best wheat so that you'll have the best harvest. So you think God is sending forth His Son the very ultimate of perfection and is going to be satisfied with a harvest of 90 percenters, 80 percenters, 50 percenters? He won't be satisfied until He has people in His image and likeness. You always say, I know when we all get to heaven we'll all be like that.

Jesus said, The kingdom of God is like a seed that goes down into the ground and springs up first the blade and then the ear and then the full corn. In heaven, the full corn in the ear while it's yet there in the ground. Speaking this way, some people are inclined to feel that, Oh, you're robbing Jesus of His glory.

Who are you and I to think we'll never be like Jesus? Robbing Him of His glory. Let me tell you, that's the only way God's going to be glorified because Jesus says, I am glorified in them. And the glory you've given me, I've given them that they might be one with me as I am one with you.

But you're stealing God's glory if the glory God gives you does not radiate back to the Lord who gave it. If you retain it for yourself, God gives you a gift and you see God working through you and you retain some

of the glory of it. You say, no, I give God all the glory.

And I've heard that prayer all my life. I grew up in the church. Lord, do this and this and this and this.

We'll be careful to give you all the glory. And that's a good commitment. Precious commitment.

But you and I don't have the ability to give all the glory to God without His enabling grace. It might sound good in public to say, Lord, heal this one. Here's this crippler.

Here's this blind man. Lord, we'll give you all the glory. It's always healed.

Oh, there's excitement in the audience and they're clapping. I'm not saying you shouldn't clap if God performs a miracle. But make sure what the clapping's unto.

If you're not sure, ask God to search your heart and let that one whom God uses to do anything that's worthy of mention in this world or in the next. Let's keep our hearts right before Him lest we steal the glory all the time, saying loudly, I give you all the glory, Lord. All the time stealing it.

You say, how can I know? How can I be sure I'll give God the glory? There's only one way you can be sure, and that is if you and I are walking in the Spirit and led of the Spirit, motivated by the Spirit. Because only the Spirit of God can truly glorify Jesus. He shall take of mine and show it unto you.

Only He can do that. We can only glorify Jesus if we're moving in the Spirit because the total purpose of the Spirit coming to this earth to abide in you and I is to make Christ real. He shall glorify me for He shall not speak of Himself or literally out from Himself but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak.

Only as you and I are speaking words from the heart of God are we glorifying Jesus. Oh, they say we're doing this for God's glory. Bring in your rock band and sing about Jesus.

We're doing it for God's glory. We're doing it to glorify Jesus. And they'll sing songs exalting Jesus, doing things that the Spirit of God is not authorizing them to do.

They think they're glorifying Jesus. You can't glorify Jesus unless you're moving in the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, living in the Spirit, ministering in the Spirit, teaching in the Spirit, prophesying in the Spirit, healing in the Spirit, performing miracles in the Spirit. You can't do it in the Spirit.

If you're not doing it in the Spirit, you're glorifying yourself. You say, I couldn't even do it unless it was in the Spirit. Well, why does Jesus say people are going to be claiming on the Day of Judgment to have done these things? And you'll say, no, you're not.

So we need God to search the hearts, our hearts, the hearts of His people. We need to make that an earnest prayer. Search us, O Lord.

Search us out. Don't be afraid to ask God to search you out. You say, I know He'll find a lot of things there that aren't right.

Well, continue to come to Him asking Him to search your heart. Never stay away from the light because as you approach the light, you see your darkness and it terrifies you. Never flee from the light because, oh, I feel undone.

I'll run from it. No, always come to the light because the light is intended to banish everything in your life and mine that's not of the light. God causes the light to shine through His people, not to bring people to death, but to banish the death, to banish the darkness, to banish the sin.

We run because we want to hang on to it. Come to the light. Never run from the light.

I know it makes manifest the secrets and the intents of the heart. We know that, but let's have grace from God. Ask God for grace to pray as David prayed.

Search me, O Lord. Know me. Try me.

Know my thoughts, my intention. Discover. Reveal, Lord, the intention of my heart.

I thought I was out there, you know, working for God. I wanted to get into ministry so I could do things for God. Search my heart.

Did I want to help people or did I want to have a ministry so that after 40, 50 years of faithful ministry, I could say, see what I have accomplished? Rather than coming to the place where like His only Son He laid it all down and went to Calvary. Because God's going to have other sons like Him. Not other lords.

Not other rulers. Not other kings except in union with Him. And I know there's quite an emphasis these days.

You're kings. You're God's kids. You're kings.

And I know the Bible says we're kings and priests under God. But it's not two different things. If you're a king and a priest, it's the two offices in one.

And as a king priest, I know there are sacrifices of praise, but the ultimate praise unto God is when that priest presents himself unto God as a living sacrifice wholly acceptable in His sight. The priests in the royal priesthood, which we are, have no sacrifice to lay down but themselves. Present yourselves as a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.

Or as some translate it, your spiritual sacrifice. Kings. Oh, we want to emphasize the kingship of Jesus so we get a little share of it.

You try to make a hero out of Jesus. Try to make Him to be a king after their own carnal hearts. Pilate said, are you a king? Everybody's saying you're claiming to be king.

He said, yes, I'm a king. For this cause came I into the world that I might bear witness to the truth. God's kings bear witness to truth.

And if you're bearing witness to truth, you'll know your cross as truly as Jesus did His. And there'll be no reigning and ruling and power and glory except as we suffer with Him. Start to talk about excellent things.

When Paul began to talk about gifts of the Spirit, which the church needs, still needs them, he digressed to show that there is a better way. But he came back to the gifts. Because we need the gifts to come to that better way.

But there's a better way. And that's the people walking immersed in the love of God. He said, I know that's what we need, so forget all the teaching and let's just love one another.

I mean, if that's all we need, let's just love one another. Failing to realize you can't just do it because the Bible says it. You can't come to love until you come to know God.

You can't come to know God until you walk in His ways and learn of Him. Jesus said, take my yoke upon you and learn from me. You think you just come to love because, oh, let's just do it.

Working out the mighty working of God in your heart and mind. That's why Jesus prayed just before He went away, Father, towards the end of His prayer, I pray that the love wherewith You have loved me may be in them. How? How can that love that was in Jesus be in us? Just by having it? Just think, oh, He wants us to have it.

Let's just love one another. Love becomes a sentimental thing, you know, and big conventions. Oh, you know, come on, forget all your doctrines and everything you learn.

Forget all those far out teachings of some of these guys. Just love one another. Jesus says, Father, I have made known unto them Thy name, and I will make it known.

I'll continue to make it known. And I believe what the Lord is saying in many other places. I am doing it and I will do it.

The hour is coming and now is. He's emphasizing that time is going on. It's not just for this generation that I'm speaking to, but the hour is coming and now is.

I have made known unto them Thy name and I will make it known. Even after He's ascended from the heavens, He's there to make known the Father to His people through the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit came to abide in you and I that He might reach out and take from Jesus unto you.

The Holy Spirit takes all that's in Jesus and makes it known to His people. Shining upon His people by His truth and love and righteousness and wisdom. And in so doing, He's making known the Father's name.

For the Father's name is not just Yahweh or Jehovah. Nobody knows how they actually pronounce God's holy name. And Jesus never once went around saying, Oh, don't forget my Father's name is Yahweh or my Father's name is Jehovah.

But He made known the Father's name because in everything He did and everything He said, He was unfolding the heart of God the Father. Therefore, He said, Father, I have made known unto them Thy name and I'll continue to make it known that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them and I in them. You're not going to have that love that was in Jesus in you until God reveals Himself through Jesus.

Jesus takes from the heart of God all those glorious, beautiful attributes of Godhead and begins to work them in our hearts and lives by His grace and by His Spirit and by His dealings, all summed up in love. But if you want to dissect it, which probably sometime gives us a little more understanding of what's involved in love, it includes patience and longsuffering and mercy and kindness and gentleness and meekness as well as power and glory and righteousness and truth. It's all in the Father.

It's all in Jesus. And Jesus prayed that that name of the Father would be made known in His people in order that this love might come forth. Forget the nonsense.

Oh, just love one another and forget all this teaching. Until you come to know God and walk in His ways, you won't have that love. You won't know it.

But as God leads us in His way and He's leading the people in His way who are obedient to follow, there's going to be a people going forth in the beauty of the nature and character of our Lord Jesus Christ. Never is equal in any sense of the word, but partaking of His same nature and character. God wants that in the earth.

And God promised to give it in the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead. The fact that Jesus was faithful to go down into death and die. God was faithful to raise Him from the dead.

God giving assurance to all creation the time will come when He'll reveal His Son in like manners He revealed His only begotten. Walking in the meekness and gentleness of Christ and in His righteousness and truth. It's going to take that to deliver this groaning earth from her bondage of corruption.

God's working towards that end. People say, don't talk about manifest sons because I know you're a heretic right then. That will happen at the resurrection.

When did it happen with Jesus? It happened all through His life. And that was the crowning part of it all. That wasn't the beginning of it.

Manifested as a son at the waters of Jordan. God revealing His Son all through His ministry. And every revelation of the Son we find in the three and a half years of His ministry was nothing less than the revelation of the Father through the Son.

Jesus emphasized that so much. Because He came to live as a Son in total obedience to the Father. Not just to do things because He was the Son of God.

Nor will you and I ever be manifested as His sons. We've got to begin to walk now in harmony with the Lord Jesus. And you can only do that if you learn to walk in the Spirit.

And He'll lead you in the pathway of the Son. Revealing Jesus through you and I. Unfolding the glory of the Lord Jesus. And our deep concern, our deep concern should be God prepare me to be that tabernacle in which you might dwell.

But prepare my heart so well that like you only begotten He will discipline me, try me, prove me. Beset me on every hand lest I go my own way. Don't let me go my own way.

Don't let me do my own thing. I don't want to fail. I don't want to end up taking glory.

And you'll do it. I don't care how much you determine you won't. You'll do it if you're not led of the Spirit.

Walking in the Spirit, you'll be getting glory for yourself. It takes the discipline of God to bring us to that place where when He pours His glory upon His people it goes back to Him. This is no small thing because I know God's going to work mightily in His people and the earth, but He's preparing sons like His only begotten.

Therefore, He must lead them in a hard way. Wait till the resurrection to be manifest as the Son of God. God wants to manifest sons in a groaning earth, crying out for deliverance, and God preparing sons to bring them that deliverance of Jesus who will walk in the same meekness and the same humility and the

same longsuffering and the same compassion and the same righteousness and the same truth that Jesus walked in because God won't settle for anything less because Jesus was the seed that went down into the ground and that's the seed that's coming forth is the harvest.

God won't settle for anything less or He could have settled a long time ago, but God says, no, I'm still waiting for that precious fruit of the earth and I've got long patience for it. Be also patient. Don't think that patience is a miserable thing that God caused you to walk in.

You want love? God says, okay, learn patience. Learn longsuffering. Learn obedience.

Learn to walk in the Spirit because that's what Jesus, that's the way He walked because He revealed the Father's name in everything He did and He prayed that the Father's name would be revealed again in His people that we might come to love because God is love. God wants us to know Him. Show me now Thy way, Moses prayed, that I might know Thee.

You and I are not going to truly know God until we walk in His ways. Heavenly Father, we thank You, Lord, that we've come to this wonderful hour in the history of Your church. Yet as we look about us, we say, Lord, what's happened to Your people? What's happened to Your church? Filled with their own waste, magnifying themselves with earthly riches, rich and increased with goods and seemingly in need of nothing because they've adopted the policy of the earth that money can do anything.

And You were saying, I counsel thee to buy me the true gold tried in the fire. We want the true gold, but we don't want to buy it with the suffering of fire. We want the true righteousness of Jesus Christ, those fine linen garments of righteousness, but we're loath to trade in our tattered garments.

We want the eye salve of illumination, but we hesitate to say, Lord, I'm blind. Anoint my eyes that I might see. Help us, Lord, even this night.

Search our hearts, even this night, that You might perform a great work of grace in these people that the word they've heard will not slide away and be forgotten, but will linger with them. Take heed of how You hear. Today, if you hear His voice, harden not your heart, but may the Lord work in our hearts and lives His own good pleasure, as God is indeed arising in the earth to deal with the iniquity in the world, but first in the church.

And in the midst of it, He will have a people walking in holy array, clothed upon with the beautiful garments of His righteousness, worshipping Him in spirit and in truth, going through the fire and suffering much, but discovering at the end of the journey that all the fire did was burn up the cords that bound them and bringing into their very presence one likened to the Son of God, even in the furnace. Watch over this word, we pray, and perform it in the lives of your people. In Jesus' name we ask it.

Amen.

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