

# The Bread of God - the Church

by George Warnock

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*The sermon emphasizes the Church's role as the living bread of God, called to meet the world's needs through faith and total commitment to Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:16:29

**Scripture:** John 6:3

**Topics:** "Church"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of becoming one with Christ. He emphasizes the idea of being joined unto Him and absorbed into Him, rather than trying to stay equal with Him. The preacher refers to the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand as an example of how God can use our small offerings to do great things. He concludes by highlighting the importance of suffering and sacrifice in becoming vessels of mercy and bringing the message of Christ to the world.

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## Transcript

I'll mention that anyone wanting writings, I don't generally take them around with me. Just leave your name and address and whatever writings you desire to have, leave your name and address and give it to myself or Ruth, and we'll mail them. I want to read a passage from John chapter 6. John chapter 6, verse 3. Jesus went up into a mountain and there he sat with his disciples.

In the Passover, a feast of the Jews was nigh. That's significant that this should have been inserted there in the story of the feeding of the 5,000. That Christ, our Passover, is our living bread.

And so at the feast, or when it was nigh, Jesus performed this great miracle. And when Jesus then lifted up his eyes and saw great company coming to him, he says unto Philip, When shall we buy bread that these may eat? You know, we hear those questions. Oh, there's such a need everywhere.

What are we going to do about it? You know, let's start an organization, and let's get the money in to feed the multitudes, or to minister to them, or to send missionaries. The need is so great, and it seems that God is always poor. You know, Jesus Christ is always so poor.

And there's such an effort to pull the money out of people to get the job done. You know, I don't care if all the money of golden Fort Knox was given to the church, it wouldn't get the job done. God has a way of getting the job done, but I don't like using that expression.

God has a way of meeting every need of the human family. But Jesus raises the question. Don't you see the need? These people are hungry.

Don't you see the problem? Not to get them activated to do something about it, to challenge them. He had the answer. He knew what he was going to do.

Just because God raises the question, Oh, yes Lord, I see the need. This He said to prove Him, for He Himself knew what He would do. He was just testing His people, because He knows what He wants to do.

He knows what He will do. Philip answered Him, 200 penny worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. You know, we just know that's the way it is.

I get letters from India. I get letters from many nations, but India in particular seems to be so... And the needs are so great. Oh, we try and send a little.

It isn't even a little. It isn't even a drop in the bucket. We know that.

I always write them and encourage them to get the people of India seeking God. And when they come to the place where the Church of the Living God in India, and I know it's small, but God doesn't require big things. If somehow the Church in India could come to understand divine principles, and this principle that is declared here in the Word, there's sufficient in India to meet every need for every person in India if the Church would go God's way.

It's sad to say, in most of the world, the Church has been westernized. Perhaps it's going to take a lot of trouble in this nation to bring us to the place where God's people will have within them sufficiency for every need of the nation. Not in their gold and silver, but in themselves, in the living Christ who dwells in us.

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, says unto him, there's a lad here which has five barley loaves and two small fishes. He's a little afraid to even mention that. Of course, you know, that doesn't amount to much.

But somehow he had a little bit of faith there, I think. What are they among so many? And Matthew, in the same passage, says, Jesus said, Bring them hither to me. And that's the secret.

It's not how much you've got. It's bringing it to him. Placing it in his hands.

And I'm talking about your money now. I'm talking about you yourself. I don't have much.

I don't have great talent. But I like to go to church. You know, I'm nothing.

And that's true. This is the day and hour when God's going to raise up the nothing ones to do His mighty works in the earth. For God has chosen the foolish things of the world and the things that are weak and the things that are despised and the things that are not to bring to naught the things that are.

One of my writings, I remember I did something about that. A man wrote me and he said when he got this writing, he felt the Lord was telling him to read so much and he felt the Lord would say that's enough for tonight. And that day at work, he was complaining to the Lord in a good way.

You can complain to the Lord in a good way, you know. So he said, I poured out my complaint unto the Lord. He loved him so much he was just reminding the Lord of it.

He wasn't complaining against God. And he said, I was complaining at work. Lord, I said, you brought me right down to zero.

And then he said he'd put a bookmark in the book and open it up and the next part, God is not out to bring us down a notch or two. God is out to bring us down to zero. So he felt God was speaking to him.

And he wrote and told me, and that's true, he's going to use the things that are not, come to nothing, to bring to not the things that are. To bring to nothing the things that are by a pink letter, nothing. That God might be all and in all.

Jesus Christ might be Lord of all. So if we come to nothing, don't worry about it. He's trying to bring the church to nothing.

Nothing ones. Zero ones. That we might fade away.

That the presence of Jesus might be all that's seen. That what is written might be fulfilled in us as it was in the Apostle Paul. I'm crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me in the life which I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

I've got five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are these amongst so many? Matthew adds, Jesus said, bring them hither to me. Jesus said, make the men sit down. Oh, there was much grass in the place.

So the men sat down and numbered about 5,000. Writers in the Scriptures weren't anxious to magnify the crowds. There's probably 20,000 people there.

Maybe more. 5,000 men. Well, also probably 5,000 women or more.

Probably 10,000 children. But they weren't out to magnify the numbers, you know, like we do today. I just did that in passing.

And Jesus took the loaves and when He had given thanks, He distributed it to the disciples. And the disciples, to them that were sat down, and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would. Jesus took the loaves and the fish and He break them.

I felt one time reading about the five loaves and the two fishes that it was perhaps a symbolic number. Five is taken to be the number of grace, I know, but I'm not denying that. But it seems to me it's the number of ministry that God has set in the body.

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. There were five pillars that held up the hanging into the holy place of the tabernacle. And without going into that, I think we can show how that the holy place was the place of the ministry of the priesthood, where as you entered in, there was a table of showbread on your right, and then the altar of incense.

And that was the realm of holy ministry. And I understand that's where we are today in that realm of the holy place with the bread of the showbread, the living Christ. But there's a greater dimension of the revelation of Christ for those in the holy place.

The manna on the outside for everybody, but somehow the bread. A bread that had lain there in the presence of God for six days. And then the priest ate it on the Sabbath.

He said, oh, I wouldn't want to eat bread six days old. Let me tell you, that was in the presence of God for six days. And that made it fresh and vital.

And that was their bread on the Sabbath day. Because on the Sabbath day, it is a day of rest. And God is beginning to give us a little rest in the holy place.

There's a new area of worship, the altar of incense. David says, my prayers shall be set before thee as incense in the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. A place of worship before God on the altar of incense, made of gold.

It wasn't made for fire. It wasn't made for strange fire. There's an awful lot of strange fire coming into the holy.

And the reason fire doesn't come out from the presence of God and consume the offerer is because there's no fire present in the church to do it. Let me tell you, when God's holy fire comes back to the church and men continue to offer up strange fire before Him, there's going to be a fire coming forth. God's not pleased with all the trash that's being brought into the church these days with all your clanging music and rock bands and all that junk.

Doing it in the name of Jesus. God's against it. Puppets and dramas and all sorts of junk.

Bringing it into the holy things of God. When the presence of God came into the camp of Israel, there was a time when they called the people to sanctify themselves. God says, I'm going to appear this afternoon.

Get the priest to offer up the sacrifice. Be prepared for it. And the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle.

But right in the midst of that, it doesn't say how long later, a few days maybe, Nadab and Abihu decided we'll go in there and we'll offer up fire before the Lord. And they go in with their strange fire. And God consumed them right in the spot.

God says, don't even stare and don't even mourn over it. He says, I'm going to have a holy sanctuary. The awesome thing is that that's under the law, I know.

God is always more gracious in this dispensation, but His judgment sometimes can be just as severe. He's going to have a holy church and it's not going to be defiled by anything unclean. Think you can just bring anything you want in the name of Jesus just because you're singing songs about Jesus and heaven and the Bible? A lot of nonsense, most of it.

Fire came out from the presence of God. Consumed them. The fire, the praise, the worship that ascended from the altar of incense was kindled by coals of fire, but the altar of incense wasn't made for starting a fire.

Do you know where he got the fire to cause the incense to ascend unto God as a sweet savor? He went out with his bucket or whatever they called it to the altar of burnt offering and got coals of fire from the burnt offering and put the incense on that and therefore it ascended to God as a sweet smelling. If your praise, if your worship, if your adoration does not ascend to God from coals of fire from the burnt offering,

what does that mean? There were five offerings mentioned in particular in Leviticus before we finish this story. Let's just turn to Leviticus.

There were five offerings. I'm not going to go into them all. I'm going to just mention them and deal with one of them in particular.

First was the burnt offering. The burnt offering speaks of that sacrifice unto God where one commits himself to the Lord. And that's always first and foremost.

The burnt offering of total commitment unto the Lord. And Paul says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present yourselves a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Or, I believe, your reasonable service but your spiritual service, your spiritual priesthood ministry.

To present yourself a living sacrifice. There were five offerings. The next one is the meal offering.

Then there was the peace offering. Then there was the trespass offering and the sin offering. And I know we say, well, Jesus, when He died on the cross, He was a sin offering.

And God turned His back and Jesus cried in the agony of His soul, My God, my God, why has... And that's true. But there's no one offering, no one type, no one symbol that can fully portray what God wants to portray. So He has many symbols and types and shadows.

Many offerings. Each one having its distinct meaning for you and I. Because whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. And all these things were examples for us.

Types, shadows. And so there was another aspect of the cross in which God smelled a sweet savor. And that's the burnt offering.

When Jesus went to the cross in the will of God and hung there on the cross in obedience to the will of the Father, God smelled a sweet savor. There was nothing more precious in heaven or on earth in the sight of God than when His Son hung there on the cross. It was an odor of a sweet smell.

He gave Himself. He finished His long trial of learning obedience. All His life He had learned obedience.

Eventually by the things by which He suffered. He learned obedience through the things that He suffered. People say, so Jesus was disobedient.

He had to learn obedience. No. He never was disobedient.

But in heaven He couldn't learn obedience or come to that maturity that God requires of Son in heaven. He had to come to earth to come to that. You think you're going to heaven again.

Jesus came from heaven to earth as a Son, as a man, as a human to learn obedience by the things which He suffered. Disobedient? No. But growing up from childhood, every step along the way He had to learn obedience.

And no doubt in the synagogue there'd be a certain order there that He would subject Himself to. He learned obedience. And then when He went forth in His ministry, He had that great test there in the Mount of Temptation.

Satan would come to Him and tempt Him. You're hungry. I can see you're hungry.

The temptation to perform a miracle? Not really. He performed many miracles. He hadn't done so yet.

But later on, He started heeding other voices than the voice of the Heavenly Father. God hadn't said anything about turning the stone to bread. Nor had He said anything about turning the water into wine until a certain point.

You know, they're out of wine. A few moments or a few minutes, maybe, I don't know. Later, His time came.

And He did what the Father wanted Him to do. Why couldn't He have done it ten minutes before? Because He knew the Son of God having learned obedience thus. God wants other sons like that.

And we're in the process of learning it. Our problem is we grow up in disobedience. Did God by nature were disobedient? And so we have to come out of disobedience into obedience.

He just had to learn it fresh as a child. The Son of God without sin. Nevertheless, subject it to the trial of obedience.

Would He learn it or not? He always learned obedience. Anyway, that's the burnt offering. Fully obedient unto God.

But I want to talk about the meal offering because we're going to talk about the body of Christ as the bread of God. Oh, I know Jesus is the bread of God. Jesus said, I'm the living bread that came down from heaven.

I know that. I know He's the light of the world. Jesus said, I am the light of the world.

But I know also that when He went away, He did not take away the bread and He did not take away the light that He was when He was here. And that's the mystery of the ascension and enthronement of Christ to establish in His body and the earth the same virtues, the same glory, the same power, the same anointing that He had when He was here. I wish we could understand that.

Oh, when I say understand, I mean I wish somehow He'd give us grace to believe it. That it was better for Jesus to go away than to stay when He rose from the dead. Can we comprehend that? You know very well the church would think it would be better if He was here.

And we wouldn't all get to see Him maybe, but you know, some of you have traveled hundreds of miles. Methods of communication, surely they could get a big field that would, you know, they could get a hundred thousand people there and Jesus is going to be here and the rich would be able to fly. I thought that it's better.

Jesus is expedient for you that I go away because of His going away, they would lack nothing that was there when He was there in their midst. But it would be better because the Christ who was localized in a little town of Jerusalem or Nazareth or Capernaum, a little country of Palestine, Palestine we say, up our way. Localized in that little area of Palestine.

God's plan was that He would be seated on the throne of glory so that in sending forth His Spirit to form His body in the earth, He would be universalized all over the earth wherever there's a people walking in

union with Him. Jesus says, while I'm with you I'm the light of the world. But He said, when He was about to go away, ye are lights in the world.

He said, I'm the bread of life. But when He revealed to us the truth of the body of Christ, He tells us, know ye not that ye are one bread, one body, for ye are all partakers of that one bread. And we partake of Him who is the living bread that we might become living bread for this famishing world.

We partake of the glory that He had that we might become that light for this dark world. The prophet spoke about it and it rings down through the centuries. Arise and shine for thy light has come.

The glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people. But a light shall arise upon thee and His glory shall be seen upon thee.

Whenever God reminds us of scriptures like that and the needs of the world and, you know, we're like Philip. What are we going to do about it? How are we going to get enough gospel out to feed the multitudes? And you've got hundreds of missionary programs. Of course, if so be somehow we can evangelize the world before the year 2000.

And the thought is good. But God has a way of doing it and it's not that way that they're doing it today. God forbid that I should, and I'm not criticizing anyone who goes, no matter where he's sent in the face of the earth.

God does send people still. Sends people to other countries. I've gone to Kenya for a short season.

Some have spent a lifetime in Kenya. God blessed them and He does and He's used them. I'm not criticizing that.

I'm just saying the world is worse off today. A thousand times worse off than it was when I was the age of some of these. When I would attend a church there in Vancouver and I'd hear them talk about 2 million people in the earth.

2 billion I mean. And the population climbing. 2 billion or so when I was young.

Most of them not evangelized. And now they're saying there's 5 billion in the world and most of them not evangelized. How blind can we get? Man's way doesn't work.

God has a way whereby He can meet every need that humanity has when He finds this broken bread and this poured out wine. But the secret is bring it to Me. Bring it to Him.

Yourself. Bring it to Him. Place yourself in His hands.

Let Him be the One who poured out wine for the thirsty. Paul says 1 Corinthians 10. I think I'll just read it.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Every time you take communion, it ought to remind us God wants us to be that bread. That's why we partake of it. To remember Him, yes, but Paul says it's also to remind us that we are to be partakers of the blood and partakers of the bread.

Do we become that bread? Do we become that wine poured out? Verse 17 explains it. 1 Corinthians 10. 16 is what I read.

Verse 17. For we being many are one bread. We being many are one bread.

And one body. For we are all partakers of that one bread. He was the living Word.

He plants it in your life and mine that we might become a living Word. Living epistles, known and read of all men, manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone but in the fleshly tables of the heart. We shrink from these things because it seems we're trying to say we're equal with Christ and that's not right.

Not right. We're joined unto Him. That's what He wants us to be.

Joined unto Him. Absorbed into Him. Becoming one with Him.

Not two bodies. The body which Mary bore and that body in which Jesus tabernacled in three, three and a half years. That body is ascended at God's right hand.

Glorified. The man Christ Jesus. He didn't disappear into thin air.

He's the corporal man. The right hand of the Father. And He'll come back the same way He went but not until the living Christ is formed in His people in the earth.

The same Spirit that He sent forth from the Father, from Himself. For the Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son, is the Spirit of Jesus. Don't try and make several spirits.

The Spirit of truth that was in Jesus came as the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of truth abiding in His people. The very same Christ that rules in the throne of glory dwells in your heart and mine by His Holy Spirit to cause and to bring forth in the earth a people like the Lord Jesus by partaking of His life, by partaking of His glory, by learning the kind of obedience He learned, by walking in His way, by being cleansed by that living Word and becoming His habitation in the earth as truly as God inhabited His Son.

And His Son walked this earth as the living expression of the Father. So He will have a people walking this earth being the living expression of the exalted Christ. It is expedient for you that I go away.

If I go not away, the comfort of my depart, I will send Him unto you. He will lead you into all truth. He will not speak out from Himself.

Whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak. Isn't it wonderful the Holy Spirit is so true? He'll only speak that which He hears. And we've all thanked the Lord that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.

All over Christendom, He's the Spirit of truth. He'll only speak out from the heart of God. One day I was reminded forcibly that He, the Holy Spirit, dwells in these tabernacles, in these individual members of the body.

That's where He dwells. And when He speaks, He speaks. And until you and I come to the place where we speak only what the Spirit is speaking, God, shut our mouths if we're not.

We have no right to stand before God's people and speak things out of our own head. Because He, the Holy Spirit, dwells within to hear what the Son is saying, to speak what the Son is saying. That's pretty awesome.

And I know we haven't attained, but God's going to have a people who will come to such a measure of restraint and constraint by the Holy Spirit. For God's priests are liberated to serve in the priesthood, but in their liberation, they're under constraint to do only according to the order of the sanctuary. To be anointed with that holy oil.

To make nothing like it. God warned them, don't make another oil like it. Don't pour it on strangers.

Don't bring in that guy uncircumcised in heart and ears and mind just because he's got a talent or amuse and entertain God's people. Let him go to the cross with his talent. If God sees fit to raise him from the dead, then he'll be a vessel unto honor instead of corrupting God's people.

God says don't pour this holy oil on this stranger. Don't make anything like it. It's holy and it shall be holy unto you.

God cleansed us so thoroughly that we can receive a greater abundance of that holy oil. God wants to make us to be bread. And that's what the meal offering's about.

I'm not going to go into detail on the meal offering, just to mention a few verses here. Leviticus 2, verse 4. And if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering, which means meal offering, meal offering, a grain offering. I'm not talking about flesh here, but a grain offering.

Make it in the oven. It shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. And he talks about how it can be baked in different ways, in the pan, in the oven, in the frying pan.

I think speaking of different expressions of the trials and sufferings of God's fire that God's people have to go through to make us to be this meal offering. God's out to bring forth bread in the body of Christ for the world in which we live. We can go all over and introduce the communion, and that's well and good.

Paul says because we partake of Him, we are one bread in one body. And the meal offering had to be reduced to fine flour and mingled with holy oil. 1 Corinthians 12 Paul is talking about the body of Christ as the body is one and has many members and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ.

I know there's been a lot of teaching in the body of Christ. My thought here isn't to go over the things that you know particularly, but trusting that the Lord will show us the true depths that are yet to be discovered as we come into union with Christ. And verse 24, and as soon as I read it here a few years ago, I immediately thought of the meal offering where this fine flour was mingled with this tempered together with the holy oil.

God has tempered the body together having given more abundant honor to that part which lacks, that there be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And then that word schism struck out there at me very bold. A word that comes up so often when we lament the schism in the body.

And then I think of the different methods that are being used to try to eradicate the schism. All kinds of different methods. You get here, we have the truth here, so you come here and get under our cover.

You get here under this and we won't have any schism. Or you come under this system we have, this covering, and then you'll be alright. You'll be safe under this covering.

And of course we have the same thing all through this church. We've got the truth, so stay here and you'll be alright. But all of it causes schism after schism after schism.

And God wants to eradicate the schisms in the body of Christ. And he says this, when God tempers the body together giving more abundant honor to those parts which lack, that there be no schism in the body, but that the members will have the same care one for another. You nothing ones, you who say I don't have much, thank the Lord for that.

The time is at hand when God's going to temper the body together and in so doing, he's going to give more abundant honor to those, because you have something that the body needs. And the reason there's schism, there's lack. There's a lack of something.

Some members are not taken care of, because it takes the whole body to take care for the rest of it. There's 200 people in the body of a particular assembly. Each one will have 199 people.

But the very individualistic type of assembly where everybody's doing his own thing, he's got himself to take care of. And hopefully there'll be some kind brother. When God tempers this body together, every need is going to be taken care of.

And then they'll become that living bread that will be able to go out and feed the hungry. Are we willing? We sing it. We used to sing that chorus too.

Will you be poured out as wine upon the altar to me? Will you be broken as bread to feed the hungry? Yes, yes Lord. God sees our commitment. He knows we can't do it in ourselves anyway.

If the commitment is there, God will be faithful to see to it. That we'll become that. Let's go through the process of forming this one bread.

First, there's a seed that's planted in the ground. Wheat, barley. Jesus became that seed.

If we fall in the ground and die, it abideth alone. Had Jesus wanted to, well, I don't like surmising things like that. But he did say that if he just existed for himself, if he just would have gone his own way, he wouldn't have had to die, but he would have been alone.

What an awesome, horrible thought in the mind of Jesus that I came forth from heaven to do the will of the Father. It was too much for me. Father, take me back.

It's nothing. Oh, I mean, it's a foolish thought maybe. God wouldn't stand for it.

Jesus wouldn't have it. The Father promised me to do my will all the way through. Oh, yes, it's wonderful when we do the will of God in ministry.

You feel the anointing. You know, you feel the strength. And you see fruit from it and people are helped.

What about the time when God says lay it all down? What about then? Jesus was just beginning a mighty ministry and suddenly it was cut short because the disciples knew what that meant. He said, Lord, they tried to kill you when you were there. That's why you left.

He didn't run away. He went in the will of God. Got out of it in the will of God.

Now it's the will of God to go back to His death. Are there not 12 hours in a day, He said? He that walketh in the daytime stumbleth not. That was His commentary.

And what's going to happen if you go back to Jerusalem? They're going to arrest you and kill you. Some walking in the light. He wasn't tricked into Calvary.

He went there according to the will of God. God didn't force the cross upon Him. He went there willingly.

He took it. It was a voluntary offering. But He was one with the Father.

He'd learned unity with the Father from His early beginnings. He said, I do always those things that please Me. And He took the position as the Son, a man in our humanity.

He took the position of one who could do nothing of Him. I can do nothing of myself. But as I hear I judge and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of Him that sent me.

Jesus said He did what was right. Every judgment He made in any area, it was right because He said I'm not seeking my own will or my own glory. He that speaketh out from Himself seeketh His own glory.

You or I, if we stand here and we've got something we want to propound, you're seeking your own glory. He that speaketh of Himself literally out from Himself. But Jesus didn't speak out from Himself.

And the Holy Spirit has come to abide in you that will not speak out from Himself but out from God. It's the same thing. Jesus said, all that the Father hath is Mine.

Therefore said I, He shall take of Mine and show it unto you. Everything that is in God is in Jesus. And Jesus came to the earth to be the living expression of the Father.

Went away to heaven that He might send us Holy Spirit that His body in the earth might become an extension of that body in heaven, living and moving and expressing the life and the glory. Oh, I know we see the impossibility of it. We see the greatness of it and shrink from it because we know we can't attain to it.

God knows it and we better know it too. But as I've been seeking to emphasize, we're talking about new creation. We're talking about the same God coming on the scene to do this thing that He did in the beginning when darkness was upon the face of the deep and the Spirit of God was moving upon the face of the waters.

And God said that let there be light and there was light because God said it when the preparation was made. The day of preparation has been all through the centuries, I know, but as we come to the end time, God is putting the finishing touches on this tremendous work of preparation. The body of the Lord Jesus, not another body, an extension of that body.

He was that body in which God dwelt on earth. Oh, I come on the volume of the book that is written of me. So beautifully did He prepare.

But now He's gone back to heaven to prepare not another body, but other members that will become one with that same body. So that when He was here on earth, He was that body. Now He's the chief

cornerstone of a great temple, of a temple made up of living stones.

Every stone carefully chiseled, shaped by the hand of God. Oh, through fire, through chiseling, through much noise and seemingly a lot of confusion, can you imagine standing there in the fields outside of the temple area? The rumor went around that God's going to build a temple that's exceedingly magnificent. And so there was the goldsmiths out there preparing the golden vessels and the silver, cutting away and hammering together the stones because they had to be a certain size for this temple.

They were out there pouring the brass and the copper for the brazen altar. Out in the mountains of Lebanon cutting the cedar timbers. A lot of activity and a lot of excitement of this temple that was going to be built.

And yet, looking upon it, you'd hear a lot of noise. You wouldn't see too much. Except perhaps somebody says, let's build our own little temple over here.

People would admire. He was a strong man. He was ruling by the wisdom of God in one of the greatest tragedies in the Bible that I know.

And at the end of his life, built temples to the pagan gods. God would remind you and I, no matter if those gifts can pervert you, if you are not given over to Him and the altar of burnt offering. As it was said of someone in the Old Testament, thy wisdom and thy knowledge hath perverted thee.

That's why the emphasis is all through the New Testament to come into the realms of divine love, which is greater than any gift. Gifts can fail. They're precious.

We need them. It's by these tools that the body of Christ is being constructed. And I know I'm not considered to have gifts, you know, but the gifts are if you can heal or perform a miracle.

And I know I couldn't stand here and minister this way without the gifts of the Spirit. I know that. Others, many don't know it.

But I know that it's the gift of God. But I realize that doesn't... I haven't arrived at anything until God overshadows any gifting we have by the presence of His Spirit, by whose presence in our lives Jesus only is seen and glorified. And I say to all ministries everywhere, I don't care, great apostle, prophet, miracle worker, evangelist, pastor, teacher, until you and I are so consecrated to Him that the fruit of the Spirit supersedes the gift and crowds out the gift that the fruit alone is seen and Christ alone is glorified.

We're falling far short of God's intention. Beautiful as it looks now. I don't think there's anything more beautiful than when you drive by an orchard like Yakima Valley there in Washington or the Oakland in springtime with all those beautiful... But a few weeks later the petals drop off and they're there again, seemingly so.

But the orchard owner doesn't worry about it. He'd worry if the petals stayed on. What's wrong here? God doesn't worry when you seem to lose your gift or it doesn't seem to work the way it did in the beginning.

Or if you were in ministry once doing great things for God and now you're out carpentering or plumbing and people are saying, oh, he's backslid. If your heart is right, God's preparing you for something greater than gift and ministry. And that's to be a part of this holy company.

We're going to go forth in the day of the Lord in the day of trouble under the canopy of the glory of the Lord and ministering by the Spirit, doing only what the Father wants them to do, saying only what the Father wants them to say. And if he's exalted, doing what Jesus did, running away from it all. When they saw, they would come and take him by force and make him king.

He departed from them and went away alone. Jesus knew how to deal with exaltation. He didn't take it as God honoring him.

He said, they're not honoring God in that. I'm going to run from it. The petals fall off and are trampled in the mud.

And you look at that orchard, if you're a child maybe or a totally ignorant person, and say, what? That was so beautiful. Oh, I just wish there was no beauty there. But the man who owns the orchard said, it's fine.

Everything's fine. I'll continue to let my... Because I'm not going to pick those petals and peddle them around. But out of that, I'm looking for fruit.

You say, well, he's got fruit. He's winning souls. He's evangelizing.

That's not fruit. What is fruit? God alone. Let him judge whether it's fruit.

But if you and I know a little bit about fruit, you know what delights the heart of God. That's love. Sacrificial love.

Love that lays down his life for the brother who's in need. Patience, which you and I more or less despise. I've had enough of patience.

I want to see some action now. Well, you haven't learned patience yet if you talk to God like that. You want to see some action.

Well, if you follow... God's been waiting patiently for six thousand years for this thing that he's beginning to do in the earth. His long patience, we're told, as he bears with the vessels of wrath. Because even as he's bearing with the vessels of wrath, what if God, willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction.

God is suffering because of the evil that's rampant in the earth. And he's enduring the workers of iniquity with much long suffering. Why does he wait? The next verse tells us why.

Why? That he might show forth the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy which he has before prepared unto glory. He's waiting for those vessels of mercy. So, don't wonder then if you find persecution, suffering, rejection, hatred, misunderstanding, whatever, coming your way.

If you can receive it as from the Lord. God is working in you the character of a vessel of mercy, Jack. He wants vessels of mercy in the earth.

So, he lets the workers of evil do everything imaginable. He tolerates it with much long suffering that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy whom he has before prepared unto glory. Even us whom he has also called not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles.

Preparing this body that's going to be a body. Manifesting everything that was in Jesus. Maybe we don't like that thought because it sounds as if we're talking about being equal with him.

It's far from that. It's one that adjoined to him. This is that bride you take to be your bride and they become one.

Not equal. I mean, God joins together opposites often. Difference.

Equal, yes. As far as as far as the character of Christ is concerned. God wants to reproduce his character in men and women, children alike.

But God has an order and in the order there's the man, the head of the woman, Christ the head of God. And so, do we resent us men, do we resent the fact that we are to be members of the bride of Christ always in subjection? That's God's order. We love it.

And we don't want it any other way because we went our own way once and it wasn't profitable. It leads to bondage. But to come into union with him, to be his holy church, his holy bride, his garden, there's many ways of talking about it.

What can be more delightful than to know that I'm not my own, I belong to another. Will we not find true rest when we can truly come to that I'm not mine, yours. I'm your responsibility.

You're not your own. You were bought for the price, the precious blood of Jesus. So let's get the picture then from another standpoint.

Here's the wheat field. The seed had to go down into the ground and die. Like we mentioned, the rain comes down to nurture that seed that it might bring forth.

Seeds for sowing or bread for eating. We need both. The seed isn't crushed.

Seed corn is planted in the earth until it disintegrates. But bread corn is bruised, crushed. And so the wheat field grows and it can rejoice each stalk of grain standing beside its neighbor.

Isn't this wonderful, this precious unity in the body of Christ? And you can see them waving around in the assembly while they're singing about this. I think of those wheat fields. Isn't it wonderful to be one? They're not really one.

They're very individualistic until harvest time. And then comes the combine and splashes that thing to bits. Devours it.

Churns it. Spews out the chaff. Are we in our ignorance going to say, oh, what a mess they're making of that field? If you know these things, when the day comes when the body of Christ is in the combine, and you see it being threshed about on all sides, don't get concerned.

God won't let one grain fall to the ground. But He's going to get rid of all the chaff. And chaff, like we mentioned I think the other night, was once growing from the root.

Some of those wheat fields I've seen maybe at least three foot high. All of it green. All of it with life in it, but not in harvest time.

God begins to dry it up. He just wants the fruit. That's all He wants.

And so in harvest time, the wheat is separated from the chaff. First of all, I didn't mention the tares taken away from the wheat. The evil thinks, but here's the good field.

And in the good field, the chaff has to be removed from the grain. And so now you've got that precious grain. You haven't got bread yet.

Bread corn is bruised. You say, I've gone through a lot of things. When's it all going to stop? Are you wondering when it's going to stop? Or have you had a little respite and you think it's all over? No, there's much work for God to do yet.

Because then He takes that grain and He puts it in mills and grinds it. And here, at least so far, we retain our identity. But when He pulverizes us and grinds us together, now I know there's different pictures of the body of Christ.

And I know throughout eternity, I'm going to be me and you're going to be you. And we're individuals at least. I don't know if that's the proper word, individualistic.

We're going to know one another and talk to one another and all that. But there's another sense in the body in which we're pulverized together till we lose bread. So that they will no longer be, oh, what's happened to Apostle Stone or Prophet Stone? Oh, he's just one with us now.

He doesn't come out and sit on the platform and do his bit and then run out the back door and get away before he's mobbed by them. And I'm not blaming the Prophet for that. He has to get away because the people will be crowding around this person a mighty gift of healing.

She's fearful even to appear in the congregation, but she's got a gift that God gave her. And this miracle worker, he's not being sought anymore. God has a way of doing it and He's going to temper the body together, giving more abundant honor to those parts which lack, that there be no schism in the body, but that the members will have the same care one for another.

That's God's way of tempering. So Jesus, well, can He get this fine flour? But who wants to eat flour? So they take this holy oil, the priests take this holy oil and mingle it with... thoroughly mingle together so that you can't find the flour, you can't find a grain of wheat, you can't see the flour because it's mingled with holy oil. We haven't seen much of the anointing yet, but that will come as the sufferings continue, as we're ground in the mills of God, as we're mingled with the holy oil.

Not yet, we're not finished yet. Then that dough, who wants to eat dough? It's put in the oven. The loaf, it's put in the oven.

It comes out as bread. So Jesus took the loaves and the fishes because the work's not done yet. I don't know all the implications of this, but I know God has a great work to do in this yet until... He's done a great work in China along that line through much persecution.

Don't think it can't come here because I think they hate God more in this country. And it's hatred that is going to cause this body of Christ that is going to be filled with love. We get along pretty good now because we're not too much like Christ to trouble people.

Maybe a little. He troubled them a little. But when we're walking in the anointing in the canopy, under the canopy of the Lord Jesus, Christ emanating from our lives, it's going to stir up the hatred of those who hate

God.

One, as we're going there in the field together, oh, a certain sense of unity when the wheat's gathered in the garner. And a certain sense of unity when it's crushed in the mortars and we got fine. There's still greater unity when the oil is poured in and it's mingled into dough and into the ovens and out it comes this bread.

But still, there's a work to do. Jesus said, Bring the loaf to me. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes.

I think five speaks of the body of Christ. Two seems to speak of the body of Christ more and five of the ministry. But mingled together in his hand and broken.

Given to the disciples. Every time he gave to the disciples this precious bread, there was just this much left. And he kept giving and giving and giving from the five loaves and the two fishes till every need was satisfied on the mountain.

And he can do the same in this nation, this whole world when he gets that handful. Five loaves and the two fishes, this body that he's preparing and the ministry that's faithful unto him and crushes them in his hand and breaks it and delivers to the people. It keeps on multiplying and re-multiplying till every need is met.

The secret is let God finish the work. It's not our work, it's his. And when we come to trouble, tribulation, trial, though evil manner used and God's long suffering towards the workers of iniquity because he's preparing vessels of glory whom he has ordained unto glory, vessels of mercy.

That's what this world needs is vessels of mercy. And God's preparing it in your suffering. Give us grace, Lord, to know it.

Help us understand, Lord, any difficult situations that arise now that we're going through or in the days to come. Help us to think of these things, to let these words sink down in our ears that you are going to have a body. Glorious, yes, but like the body of Jesus eventually crucified and torn because only then can we become living bread to the famishing masses of humanity.

Keep our hearts right towards you, Lord. Keep our hearts centered upon you. Today, if you hear his voice, harden not your heart as in the provocation and the day of temptation in the wilderness where your fathers tempted me and proved me.

You saw my works forty years long, saith God. I was grieved with this generation as for, Lord, we know you're raising up a generation who are going in all the way not by their strength but by their weakness, not because of their riches in spiritual things, but because of their poverty, not because of their wisdom, but because they're fools for Christ's sake. Bring us to nothing, Lord, that you might be all and in all.

Let your blessing be upon this people. Let the words stay with them, Lord. I know they won't remember the words as such, but God, as it has gone forth, let it linger with them to produce in them that those ingredients of the living bread.

We ask it in Jesus' name. I'm thankful to the Lord for sending us here. I know God is going to bind us together in the sufferings of His fires with the holy oil.

And by the work of His Spirit, let us keep looking unto Him. He is faithful.

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