

Personal Revival

by Gerhard Du Toit

The sermon emphasizes the importance of hearing God's voice and responding to His call, and explores the role of the Holy Spirit in facilitating spiritual renewal and awakening.

Duration: 51:53

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-4, Genesis 17:1-2, Genesis 18:22-33, Genesis 22:1-14, Matthew 3:11, Matthew 4:1-11, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Personal Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses various topics related to the church and society. He mentions the challenges faced in delivering sermons and the complaints about their length. He emphasizes the need for discipline and punctuality in society. The speaker also references the story of Abraham and Isaac, highlighting the importance of sacrifice and obedience to God. Additionally, he mentions teaching Sunday school classes and studying the Gospel of Matthew, particularly focusing on the subject of temptation.

Transcript

Father, we thank Thee this afternoon for the tremendous blessing for us to sense Thy presence within our midst. We thank Thee that Thou hast promised to us that in Thy presence can we experience fullness of joy, and that at Thy right hand are there pleasures for evermore. And Father, we are so glad this afternoon that we are coming to a God who is able to do far more than that which we can plan or even think of.

And Father, we just want to come to humble ourselves this Saturday afternoon in the presence of our God. And we do want to confess our sins of inadequacy and our sins of trust in thyself. And Father, it's wonderful to know that Thou hast seen Thy Spirit and that Thy Son has died for us on the cross so that we might have life and abundance of life.

And Lord, Thou hast brought us together this day so that we could open our hearts again and listen to the voice of Thy Spirit. And dear Father, we pray that Thou would cover us under Thy precious blood. And we ask that the Holy Spirit will be in control of this afternoon and tonight, and that each and every one of us in this little room will sense the unction and the presence of God in our midst.

Father, we haven't come just to have fellowship one with another or to sit around a table and to share in a meal, but we have come because of the desire in our hearts to hear something of the voice of God. And we acknowledge today that it's the sovereign work of Thy Spirit to take this Thy Word and to minister to us

and to apply to our hearts. And we want to pray that Thou would bring unto us the brokenness of Jesus as we ponder upon Thy Word, for we ask it in Jesus' precious name.

If you study the Old and the New Testaments, it's very significant to see that there are only three references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. You remember twice in the prophecy of Isaiah, Isaiah spoke about the Holy Spirit, and once in the 51st Psalm, the psalmist prayed and said, take not Thy Holy Spirit away from me. But the Hebrew word for Spirit is the word Ruach, and that's a word which is found at a number of places in the Old Testament.

But it's really when we come to the New Testament that we are dealing with the work of the ministry of the Spirit of God. In fact, there are no less than 260 references to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, because we are dealing with the dispensation of the Spirit. But in the Old Testament is it very significant for us to discover that there are a number of emblems of the Spirit of God.

It seems to me that the Bible speaks about the Holy Spirit as wind. Now, when we study these emblems in the Bible, one of the great things about them is the fact that whenever we look on an emblem of the Spirit of God, or a symbol, or a type of the Holy Spirit, that we must always ask ourselves, does the New Testament somehow give us an indication of that which we read about the Spirit of God in the Old Testament? Now, you remember in Ezekiel chapter 37 how the Bible speaks about the value of dry bones, and how God commanded the prophet to prophesy, and it almost seems that in the Spirit of God came upon those bones and life came upon it. And you remember in the very opening verses of the book of Genesis how the Bible says that the Spirit of God was moving upon the waters.

The Hebrew word, it's a very significant word because it almost speaks of an eagle which is looking upon its prey just before it will come down upon it, as the Spirit of God was moving upon the waters. And you remember in the third chapter of John's Gospel, when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, He said to him, the wind blower, as we do not know where the sound is coming from, so is everyone that is born of a spirit. So it seems to me that we can look upon the work and the ministry of the Holy Spirit as wind.

Now the Bible also speaks about the Holy Spirit as fire. You remember at a number of places in the Old Testament, in fact the prophet Zechariah speaks of the spirit of burning, and we read of places where it seems to us that we can somehow connect the work and the ministry of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament with fire. You remember in 1 Kings chapter 18, when Elijah brought that sacrifice to God, there was a moment when the fire of God descended upon the sacrifice.

Now again in the New Testament, at a number of places we read about the Holy Spirit as fire. You remember the words of John the Baptist when he was referring to the Lord Jesus, and he looked upon the Lord Jesus and he said, behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, and then he made this statement, he said as he looked upon Jesus he said, the Lord Jesus will baptize us with or in, it's the same Greek word, with or in the Holy Spirit, and with fire. And there on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came, we read about those tongues of fire which came, and it's really significant to see how those tongues of fire came, and distributed themselves, that's what he said, distributed themselves upon each and every one of those disciples.

So there is the Spirit of God as wind, and there is the Spirit of God as fire. But one of the most significant emblems of the Holy Spirit is to look upon the Holy Spirit as water. Now you remember the prophet Isaiah said, God said I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.

We read about, it speaks about the wells of salvation. We read that the Bible speaks about the latter rain, and we see this great reality of the Spirit of God as water. Now twice in the New Testament, in John's Gospel, Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit, and he used the emblem of water.

You remember he said to the woman at the well, the water that I will give unto you shall become a well, or a spring, or a fountain of water, but then in John chapter 7, Jesus stood up, and the Bible says that Jesus said, if any man thirsts, let him come unto me. He that believeth on me, as the scripture said, rivers of living water shall flow from the innermost of his being. That when all Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit.

What I want us to do this afternoon, because we are dealing with the promises of revival. I in my spare time across in Ontario, have an apartment which is attached to a church, an associated gospel church, and I preach quite often for them, because they don't have a minister at the moment, and we in our Sunday morning services, have been going through places of God's visitation. In other words, we are dealing with the promises of revival, and I would suggest that in Ezekiel chapter 47, are we dealing with one of these great passages, where it seems to me that we are dealing with one of God's promises of revival.

And I would like to say this afternoon, my dear friends, that when we study the subject of revivals of religion, is it true for us to say that there is not just only a moment when God in His Spirit breaks into our midst, and we... I have said this twice in my ministry that I have the privilege of finding myself in the midst of one of these outpourings of God's Spirit. I'm not speaking in the sense as some people would look upon revival and say, and looked upon revival in the sense of a crusade, but we, because that only touched a community, or it only touched a local church. We are speaking, my friends, about an invasion from God.

Some wonderful moment when God suddenly by His Spirit would sweep into the midst and in the lives of people. But there are stages, and I would suggest to you this afternoon that it seems to me that those stages could be found in this chapter in the prophecy of Ezekiel. The Bible, first of all, speaks about water to the ankles, which we will focus our attention on later.

Then the Bible speaks about water to the knees. What does that mean? It seems to me that it speaks about the place of prayer and revival. My brother and sister, may I say this to you today.

We can't work the power of the Spirit of God up. We can't stand and scream and do this and do that to try and bring God down in our midst. It's something which is lying within the sovereignty of God.

But there is the responsibility. Water to the knees when the people of God comes to that place where they sense that they start to pray these great prayers of revival. You remember that great prayer which Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple when they built the temple? And there was a great quietness and silence as they were in the process of building the temple.

There was a moment when at the dedication of the temple, the Bible says Solomon knelt in the presence of God. And then he opened his heart and he said, if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my faith and turn from their wicked ways, then God said, will I hear from heaven and I will forgive their sins and I will hear from heaven. And right through the scriptures, my friend, there are these great prayers for revival.

I was preaching on the island of Lewis last year. And as you know, the island of Lewis and the Hebrides were mightily visited by God in the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s. And I stayed with a

minister who's got a vast Church of Scotland in Stornoway.

Well, his mother was one of those who were in the revival during the 1940s when they prayed for the revival. And I had an amazing experience in the evenings. She did not come to the service.

She's a woman in her 80s that actually closed the door of the parsonage. And we walk on our way to the church. He looked at her and he said to her, now you keep the form.

I said to her, well, what do you really mean? Well, he said, they called her one of the battleships. I said, what? He said, she's going to get in touch with God in the place of prayer. And I would like to say to you this, my friends, night after night, as we came back from those services, we sat and he said to me, you know, Charon, he said, my mother could almost tell you what you were preaching about tonight in the service.

I said, how's that possible? He said, I'll tell you something. She's in touch with God. Do you know what that means? It speaks of the place of prayer.

And then my dear friends, the Bible speaks about not only water to the knees, but water to the loins. What does that mean? It seems to me if you study the Bibles, there is a moment when God in His Spirit start to stir people. They've prayed for revival.

They've cried to God for revival. Now there are those stirrings, mighty moments of conviction as the Spirit of God start to deal with people. Then the moment comes when God in His Spirit will break in.

One of the places in Southern Africa where God poured out His Spirit about 13 years ago amongst the Zulu people, one of the African tribes, the missionaries prayed for three months and they sought the face of God. In fact, they sought and they wept for three months in the presence of God. On the Saturday afternoon, the break came.

The first person who got saved was a black witch doctor. She came to the mission station and she said to them, tell me about Jesus. This German missionary said to her, who told you to come? Because they would never come to the mission station.

She said, that's not what I asked you. Can you tell me, can Jesus set me free? My dear friends, that Saturday afternoon when God broke into that mission station, do you know what happened? They said the Saturday night, those African villagers were so light as these African people would run with their torches from one place to the other. Do you know why? Simply to make restitution.

Five days after that, they phoned. There was a police station. They phoned the mission station.

They said, is it possible for you to stop preaching this message? The missionary said, why? They said, we don't have enough place to put all the things which these African people have stolen. My brother and sister, I want to say to you this Saturday afternoon, one mighty moment of God's visitation will do far more than that which we have tried to do for the last 25 years in our work. May I suggest this? Before we can come to the water to the needs, and the water to the loyalty, and the river to swimming, the Bible speaks about water to the ankles.

Do you know what that means? It means this, my friends. I can't stand on the side of this great river. I can't say I want to be part of this visitation of God unless I come to the place where I step into the river of God.

That brings me to my message this afternoon. Can you remember Abram? That word when he said Jehovah to re or however we would like to pronounce it. Do you know what it means in the Hebrew? It does not only speak about material provision when God said I shall provide.

It does not only speak about personal provision, but my friends, it speaks about the promise of personal revival. I would like to suggest to you today, my brother and sister, maybe as we looked around today, we can't say that we see something of these mighty visitations of God. But can I suggest this to you? It's possible for us as individual Christians to send something of its visitation of God in my heart.

That's what happened to Abram. I would try to suggest three things to you. I think before it was possible for Abram to come to the place where he could say God shall provide every aspect of my need.

But it seems to me that the first 14 verses of Genesis chapter 22 suggests to us that Abram, the servant of God, had to come to three places in his life. It seems to me if you study those verses and if we try to expand them, my dear friends, there were three moments in his life when Abram responded and he said to God, here am I or here am I or I am here. What was in the first place? Well, the first place was when he heard the voice of God.

Can you remember we were reading that the Bible says after these things, God sent Abram and God spoke to Abram. He called him upon his name and Abram responded and he said, here am I Lord. I wonder to this afternoon, my dear friends, can we still hear the voice of God? Are we still at the place where you and I can say, I sense that I am in touch with God? A number of weeks ago in that little church in the Niagara Peninsula, we get about 85 to 100 people or so, there was a lady and her husband.

They are members of this congregation and we've been praying for them. In fact, they are some of my most faithful supporters in this specific church. But I think that God in his spirit was dealing with her about the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the promises of cleansing in the New Testament.

There were certain things which God had to sort out. And one morning, Sunday morning after the morning service, I looked down at the altar after the service and there she was broken, broken, shoving in the presence of God. And I went down and I sat there with her.

I said, Maxine, what's wrong? Ah, she said, I heard something of the voice of God this morning. My friends, you know, it touched my heart when I prayed to her because I sensed that it was not the sermon that Sunday morning. It was not the words which came from my lips, but in between everything else, there was something of this great voice of God.

Can I ask you, my dear brother and sister, we are in the beginning of 1989. I tell you, it's a challenge for us to look into this year and to say, what does God have in store for us in this year? Can you and I sit here this afternoon and say, I sense that I can hear something of the voice of God. I'm always challenged by that great passage in Isaiah chapter 6. You remember the prophet Isaiah, he's called the evangelical prophet for the simple reason that he did not only have a mighty revelation from God, in the sixth chapter, in fact, he saw the Lord Jesus.

That's what the apostle John said in his gospel. But you remember, there was a moment in his life in the sixth chapter and the opening verses that the Bible says, and they go, when King Isaiah died, he said, I also saw the Lord. He said, he was high and lifted up and he strains for the temple.

Do you know what was the response? Oh, my friends, he didn't jump to his feet. And he said, yeah, it's Jesus in our midst. He said, suddenly when I saw the Lord, he said, he called, he said, woe to me.

He said, I'm a man of unclean lips and I'm dwelling amongst the people of unclean lips. Can you remember what happened? The moment when he saw God, the vision of God, he had a vision of himself. Do you remember when one of those seraphim came and took a coal from the altar and touched the lips of a prophet? And when he touched the lips of a prophet, there was another vision.

Isaiah responded. He said, also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send and who will go for us? And he responded, he said, listen, Jeremiah sent me. You know what's the most fascinating thing? Those words, whom shall I send and who will go for us? My brother and sister in the Hebrew text, those words is in the present tense.

Do you know what that means? The words from the throne of heaven, whom shall I send and who will go for us? Those words were there through the ages, but he never heard the voice. At the moment when God touched him, suddenly in that moment, he heard the voice. And he said, this is the voice of God.

I wonder this afternoon, if you sit here in this new year's rally meeting, my friends, can we still hear God's voice? The other day I was listening to an interesting program about radio communication. I was driving in my car and I wanted to listen to the news. And this thing came on after the news.

And it was very interesting. They reckon that, I almost couldn't believe this, but they reckon that there are 8 billion, 8 billion radio stations, which is trying to communicate to people. And these frequencies are going up.

And as I was driving in my car, I thought, what a tremendous blessing. All these millions of voices, which is coming to the lives of men and women, between or through them all, there is another voice. And it's the voice of God.

And God would speak to him. God said, Abram, I wonder this afternoon, my brother and sister, if God would call you and me in our name, what is going to be the response? We only did it with the first step. The place where he heard the voice of God.

Sometimes when I was across in South Africa, I was involved in five years in the work of the faith mission there, which is called the Africa Evangelistic Band. And you know, sometimes we have crusades, evangelistic crusades, in what we would call diamond areas. And in those areas, there is an enormous amount of smuggling going on.

And many times we have some of those people who sat in the services, they knew that there was an evangelistic crusade going on. They came to listen to God's word. We saw many of those.

They sat there and they saw in the presence of God. My friends, they would come and see us afterwards. And we start to share with them the gospel.

And we say, now Jesus can save you from your sin. Jesus can set you free. And then we start to deal with the promise of forgiveness and restitution.

And I remember some of those men, they sat there. Actually, there was a pool of tears as they saw in the presence of God. And we say, can you come to Jesus? Oh, no, they say, I can't.

Why, why, why is it? Ah, they say, you know, I'm still in so many diamonds. They said, it means for the rest of my life, I'm going to sit behind bars if I need to come to Christ. Oh, my friends, we didn't speak to them about it.

But it was when the Spirit of God came and as the Spirit of God came, He brought the past in their sight. And they sensed the reality. There is the promise of forgiveness.

Here is the voice of God. But there is a price to pay, a voice to pay. God said, Abram.

He said, hear my Lord. And listen what God said to him. God said, Abram, I want you to go and sacrifice your son.

That's what a voice is saying, my brother and sister. I would like to suggest to you this afternoon, and we're going to deal with this tonight, this place of sacrifice in the spiritual life. I want to say to you, my friends, we don't have a concept of sacrifice until we've come to that place of utter consecration.

You remember Abram and Eve. It was chapter 17 of Genesis, where God said to Abram, walk thou before me and thou shalt be perfect. He did not speak about sinless perfection, but the Hebrew word is the word halak.

You know what it means? God said, I want to walk. I want you to walk with me upright in my presence, Abram. And in our New Testament concept of the word, we could have said, well, that must have been the place Abram was called in Genesis chapter 12, and he started to follow God.

There was inconsistencies in his life, places where he failed God. Somehow at chapter 17, when the voice of God came and God said, Abram, walk thou before me and thou shalt be perfect, it seems to us that he consecrated himself. And we would say in New Testament terminology, that was Abram's Pentecost.

That was the place where the Spirit of God did not only indwell him, but where God's Spirit took full control of his life. And it was after chapter 17, chapter 18, he interceded for Sodom. And suddenly, chapter 22, God said, Abram, sacrifice.

And my brother and sister, you know what God said? God said, Abram, go and sacrifice your son. Do you know what that means? That which was most precious to me. I would like to say this to you, because it seems to me that we are dealing with a biblical principle.

My friends, there are things which is, which in the realm of the intellect, uh, we cannot explain it. We can only come to the place where we accept them in simple, naked, childlike faith. Can you imagine the moment when the voice of God came and God said, Abram, I want you to go and sacrifice your son Isaac.

Your son Isaac, wasn't that the son, wasn't that the promises of God, which came to Abram and said, Abram, do you see the stars of the sky at night? Yes, Lord, he said, I can see them. Abram, you my friend, do you see these stars? Abram, listen, your descendants, they are going to be like the stars in the sky. Wasn't it the very same God, one day when Abram was standing almost at the shore and God said, do you see the sand here? Yes, Lord, he said, I can see it.

Ah, God said, Abram, your descendants, they're going to be like this. His wife was 99 years old when God visited her. She laughed, but Abram believed God and Isaac appeared in the sea.

My brother and sister, for years, I'm sure Abram looked at Isaac and said, isn't this wonderful? Here is the son which God has given to me. And suddenly the voice came and God said, listen, I want you to go and sacrifice this son. I've got a friend in Southern Africa, you know, he's involved in business.

And he told me once, he said, you know, Jonathan, he said, I attended a convention and at the convention, God spoke to me about the spirit-filled life. And he said, God met with me, he said there was a price to pay and I had to surrender myself. And I realized that the Holy Spirit will only take that which I'm going to consecrate to God.

Because Calvary can only cover that which you are prepared to uncover. He said, I surrendered myself and the light which I took into God and he said, somehow the Holy Spirit was resident in my life. He said, somehow the Spirit of God became present.

And I experienced that these rivers of living water was let loose. He said that one of the things which happened, I had to say to God, now Lord, for the rest of my life, I'm going to obey Thee and walk in the light. And at my Pentecost, what really happened is that it did not become a goal or a place where I could say, I've arrived, but it became a gateway in which God's Spirit took full control.

And I've taken sides of God, my will has become one with His will and now God is still to work in my life. And then he said, the Monday, he said, as I turned up from the convention, he said, God spoke to me at the convention about something which I took from my place at work about 20 years ago. And he said, the Monday morning, he said, I put this in the car, he said, the Monday morning I went and I went into the manager's office.

And as I walk into his office, I put this thing on the table and I said to him, sir, he said, I've just come to bring this back. He said, I took this about 20 years ago. He said, God met with me the weekend.

He said, I've come to make restitution. So the manager looked at him and he appreciated that with his honesty. And this time he said, he said, you know, I walked back to my office and I sat down and he said, it was about a half an hour or so after I spoke to this man.

And suddenly as I sat there, suddenly the Spirit of God spoke to me again. I challenged him, you know, because, oh, I tell you, people hear hundreds of voices and it's nothing to do with the Holy Spirit. I said, how do you know it was the Spirit of God? He said, the impression which came grew stronger and stronger.

If it's the voice of the devil, my friends, it's like a storm. It constantly goes and it brings turmoil and confusion. God speaks in quietness and it's a persuasion that the word works.

And I was convinced it was the voice of God. You see, you know what he said? He said, God spoke to me about something else which I took. And he said, I honestly couldn't remember until that moment that the Holy Spirit spoke to me.

He said, I was walking in the light as God is in the light and suddenly God showed light upon that alien. And he said, I said to myself, how can I go back to this man? I've just been in his office about half an hour ago. How can I go back to this man and say to him, you know, but there is something else.

And he said, I just went straight. Said, wait, knock on the door. And the man opened the door.

He said, please come here. We sat down. He said, sir, he said, I was here about half an hour ago.

He said, I brought this thing back, which I took 20 years. He said, but as I went back and I sat behind my desk, he said, God spoke to me about something else. He said, I had to come and put this right.

He said, now listen, sir, I don't know what's going to happen. He said, but I could be here another four or five times today. He said, but I'm just obeying God.

Do you know what the manager said? He broke down and went. He said, why are you doing this to me? My brother and sister, I can, we only did it with the first stage in entering into the water, in entering into this great brother of God, the voice of God, which is coming. I could have seen people when we get down to the sound exposition of the Word of God.

My brother and sister, between this and that, this great voice of God is coming to people. And you've seen how this voice is searching the hearts and the lives of people. Do you know what God said? Have you ever asked yourselves, what would it cost us here in this Vancouver area to see the mighty workings of God? Oh, my friends, it's no use for us to go and sit in a little corner and say, well, you know, this and this and this and this.

We're not going to get anywhere like that. But is it possible to open up and say, God, what is it going to cost to pray for revival? God said, sacrifice. Sacrifice your only son.

Oh, my friends, he said, the way this is all coming, we're dealing with the subject of revival. And listen, my brother and sister, there are no shortcuts to the breaking of God. No shortcuts.

God said, sacrifice that which is most precious. Do you remember Mary, Martha, Nazareth? Remember John chapter 12? When she came, she broke the ointment. Remember what the Bible says? When Jesus came, Bethany was behind the Mount of Olives.

That's the place where Jesus spent many a night in prayer. He had his quiet time there. And I could see Jesus morning after morning coming into this little cottage where these two sisters and the brother.

And do you know what happened? The ointment was always there. And every time when Jesus walked in, it spoke to me. And there was a day that Mary said, I'm going to break the ointment.

My brother and sister, I want to suggest to you today that you and I want to see something of this great blessing of God. Do you know what needs to happen? God needs to break us. Ah, there is a hardness around my life.

You know, Watchmanee, I have great respect for the writings of Watchmanee. I must confess, when it comes to what we would call the area of the flesh, it's the Greek word, that's in the life of the believer. Because of his background, he was a Chinese, and the meditation, he gets all mixed up in some of those areas.

If you read, for instance, those volumes, the spiritual man. But you know, he's got a great concept of this breaking of God. And he speaks about God breaking the outer man, and God breaking the inner man.

My friends, what happened here? God was breaking a breath. Breaking it. It was the voice which came, my friend.

May I ask you this afternoon, when last have you heard that voice? When last have you heard that challenge coming? When last did you find yourself there in your study, or there at the chair where you kneel to pray, and you sense these great searchings of the Spirit. These great moments of being broken in the presence of God. Secondly, there was a moment we dealt with the first place where Abraham said, you know why? Listen to this.

There was a moment that Abraham, he heard the voice, and he started to obey the voice. And he got his servants, and he took Isaac, and he took the fire and the wood, and he took all the things because he was in the process of obeying God. There was a moment that they were walking up to this mountain.

And as they were walking up to this mountain, the place of which God had told him of, Abraham never would have thought, Abraham never realized. I'm sure after Jesus died on the cross, and Abraham realized what happened, then he could have understood why that happened in Genesis chapter 22. Why is it they reckon it's the very same place where Jesus was crucified? Do you know what happened? As they were walking up to this great mountain, suddenly there was another voice.

It was the voice of Isaac, his son. And do you know what that little voice said? He said, my father. And when he said, my father, there was a response.

You know what he said? He said, Jeremiah, my son, you've heard the voice of God. And God said to him, Abraham, go and sacrifice your son. And when God spoke to him, he said, Jeremiah, my Lord.

And he was in the process of obeying. But here came the voice of the son. My father, he said, Jeremiah, my son.

I wonder what that speaks to us about my brother and sister. I'll tell you what. It speaks to us of facing the reality of the price.

You see, there are many of us when we deal with the subject of revival and we look upon the promises of God, we hear the voice of God. We know that it's God who is speaking to us. We know that it's the blessing of God which can come to our hearts and to our life.

But have we ever come to the place where we face Isaac and we sit, we hear the voice that the little, little, little, that Isaac said, my father. And we have to respond and to say, Jeremiah, my son. I'm reading at the moment the life story while I go to the treasure of the church where I'm helping out.

And he's been greatly blessed by it. But I've looked at it recently again. The life story of a man with the name of Charles Branson Finney.

Most remarkable story. I sometimes feel that there is a danger because experience without exposition is disastrous. And when God, there are certain people and God has visited them mightily with his spirit.

But we must never look for the experiences of other people because you're going to limit God in that which he wants to do. And there are the Finneys and the Moody's and the Whitfields and the Westies. But I was reading this and I was greatly blessed because it was the life story.

There are many books about Finney. But it was the life story which Finney wrote himself, which is quite different from some of the other biographies of this man. But as I was reading it and 24 hours after his experience of conversion, he was a lawyer and he got saved in a wonderful way.

But 24 hours after his experience of conversion, he locked himself up and he studied and he was so shy that he took paper and he put it in the keyhole of the door because he didn't want people to hear him praying. And he made a fire and he got on his knees at the fire and suddenly, the heavens opened and God swept into his life in such a way that Finney almost had to ask God to take it away, to stop this mighty fire. He got up.

It was the morning and he went to sit at the breakfast table and the lady asked him to ask the blessing. And he started to pray and there was a young man there who came on the conviction of sin and he ran up into his room. He never came out.

He came out the next morning and started to confess. Just by the prayer. The great CA Spurgeon.

Spurgeon was a great textual preacher and if you read the sermons of Spurgeon, you'd see that he always took all the main points of his message from the text. But Spurgeon was asked to do an evangelistic crusade at Crystal Palace in London. They built this massive place and Spurgeon, they gave Spurgeon or they made one of the sounding boards which they gave to the great D. L. Moody.

And it's a type of a quick pulpit that as you speak into it, your voice carries out. And Spurgeon went to test this at Crystal Palace and on the roof of this place which they were working on, they would sit up until working. And they asked him to be a bit quiet when Spurgeon was testing it.

And Spurgeon quoted a little verse. And this was the verse. He said, Behold the Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world.

And the voice of Spurgeon carried it. And that carpet had come under mighty conviction and still into view. And God said, Do you know my friends where the Bible starts? When you and I come to that place where we draw a circle around ourselves and say, God, if you're going to send a reminder, send it in the circle.

That's where it started. I preach in the church where God brought out His Spirit on the island of Louis, Barnes, Southerny, Duncan Campbell preached. They all went out southerning the Spirit of God, swept him.

The whole congregation came back. And as I looked over some of those elders who sat in front of the pulpit there, do you know what happened? As I looked over those men, I could sense that some of them were saved and then went on. Do you know what he said? It was a mighty invasion.

My father, Jeremiah my son, do you know what he said? He said, My father, we've got the fire here and we've got the wood and we've got the knife and we've got everything, everything. But my father, where is the lamb? Ever come to that place? That's when he faced the reality my father. And Abraham realized, Isaac was the lamb.

Isaac was the lamb. Do you know what happened? He spoke a word in faith. He said, My son, God Himself shall provide the lamb.

You know, I've always drawn him, my son in the Sunday school classes there at the church, we are going through Matthew's Gospel. And it's tremendous. I always see the Sunday school class.

It's almost my most important service on a Sunday because there you've got the heart of the congregation. We've been going through Matthew's Gospel and for four Sundays in December, I dealt with the subject of

temptation, the source of temptation, the process of temptation, the Greek words and the stanzas of temptation, confession, the life of Christ. But last Sunday morning, I started touching the Sermon on the Mount.

And we dealt with the little word, blessed are the poor in spirit. Now it's an amazing word. It's a word, we only deal with it in the Greek text.

It's a word that in the spiritual meaning of that word, in its application, it speaks of this great promise of revival. You know what it means? It means being utterly cast upon by God. Now forgive me for saying this is my defense and I don't want you to misunderstand me, but we are seeing some dreadful scandal and I won't be surprised if we're going to see more.

You know why? God said, I will give my glory to no man. And preaching which comes through a crucified personality is redemptive preaching. It brings life.

The open congregations took it and they said, this is not the voice of my minister or the wisdom of my minister, but this is the voice of God. You know, I want to say this and I want to close to this because my time is gone. You know what's happening? I believe in every meeting or in every crusade or in every conference wherever we preach, there is a moment in the course of our sermon and in our walks of God that we come to this place where we say, Lord, the table has been spread.

Everything is ready. Everything is there. But what we now need is the divine presence of God.

That hasn't come, my dear brother and sister, when people walk out, they say, oh, that was good. It was fine to be there. I won't walk out of that little meeting and say, I want to get a lonely father.

I want to humble myself in his presence. I want to seek his face. God.

You know, we are blessed in a fractured society as God's people. And if we are not, if there is not consistency with us, my friends, we can't expect God to use us. Possibly.

And we can't take people further spiritually than that we are ourselves. Once we come to that place and we say, God, and you know what? It's real. I look back over the last 10 years since the Lord has called me and I tell you, I can honestly say to you, I can't testify of hundreds and thousands or thousands of people who found Jesus in my ministry.

I can't say that. I can say one thing. Those who have come, two here, five there, 10 there or so, I'm confident from what I know is that the majority of them, I would almost go to the side of the cross there, 98% of them today are following God.

I tell you what it was. It was like, I know Jesus Christ. And I look at the work of the faith mission.

Many of you here support the work of the faith mission. I'm sure many of you have wondered what happened when you, Janice, and I learned about Kathy and Janice and the vastness of British Columbia. And I often said, where are the men? Sometimes I speak to students at theological colleges.

I was down at their college here some time ago. There were 1,800 students. Start to tell them about our work.

And there's great interest when you tell them what can happen, the vision. But when they come personally for interviews and you start to share the prize, my friends, they disappear in a mess. Of course, we can't offer them a lot.

There's lots with tears and sacrifice and broken. Absolutely. And we are living in a society today.

This is my thing. We are living in a society today. I'm dealing with the church.

I tell you, you know, I have such problems to get the people there in time for the services. And they start to complain to me that I preach too long. And when I started, I said, you send the offering paper out and you put your watch on the offering paper.

You know why I preach too long? For a simple reason, because you all come late. I said, you come in time and I promise you to close in time. And when they get placed, they don't worry about that.

But we're living in an undisciplined society. And when it comes to the price to pay, I tell you the back of the head. I say, God shall provide.

Can I just say this in closing? The night I sit upon the altar, sacrifice was there, everything. And it was on the point of slaying his own son. When another voice came and the voice said, Abram, Abram.

The first man who was called twice on his name by God. Abram, Abram, slain not thy son, thy only son. You know what he said? God said, no, I know.

My brother and sister, you know what Galatians said? Abram was prepared to kill his son because he believed in the resurrection. Romans said, for this he believed that God would have raised him from the dead. But when the voice came and the voice said, Abram, Abram.

You know what he said? Same word. Hear my Lord. You know, it seems to me the Hebrews saying, he said, I'm still near Lord.

I haven't gone away yet. It's costing me something. It's pretty hard.

I'm still here. And God said, now I know, now I know. And he called the place God shall provide.

That's where the Bible starts, I think. That's when we enter into this great revival. That's when the burden comes to us to pray the pledge for revival and receive the mighty blessings.

Let's bow. Our Father, we thank Thee this afternoon for Thy precious word, which Thou hast given unto us. We thank Thee that it's Thy word.

And Lord, we do confess today that whenever we ponder upon Thy word, that we feel so insignificant and we sense our own inadequacy. And yet we know that Thou art the God who is able to visit us with this great promise of revival. And Father, we don't know what it's going to cost when this great searchlight of God is going to fall upon our lives.

But we pray this Saturday afternoon that Thou would help us and that Thou would make us willing to be make willing. And Lord, whatever the price is going to be, if it's God who's going to break us and melt us and crush us in the right sense in Thy presence and bring brokenness and purity and unction, then we pray, Lord, that the Holy Spirit will have His way in our lives, in my life, and in each and every one of our

lives. And Father, we don't know when Thou art going to come.

Maybe 1989 is the year when it will be our last opportunity. But we want to say to Thee this afternoon that when the Master will come, we want to walk in step and in place with God. Help us, Lord, we pray for Jesus' sake.

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