

Fellowship

by G.W. North

G.W. North's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of fellowship with God and among believers through the Holy Spirit and sanctification.

Duration: 1:13:22

Scripture: Genesis 1:1

Topics: "Fellowship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the continuous revelation of new things introduced by God as we read through the Bible. The speaker highlights the wonder and fullness of God's attributes and the unfolding acts of power displayed in His creation. The sermon also emphasizes the importance of recognizing the commonness of the glories of Jesus and the uncommonness of being called into fellowship with Him. The speaker urges the audience to focus on the high finance of heaven, which is the redemption of souls through the sacrifice of God's Son, rather than getting caught up in worldly concerns.

Transcript

I'm very thrilled to hear Father saying that you haven't lost a scrap since last conference, and that you're going on together, and that's a marvellous thing. So may the Lord during these days take us on further still, together, into all the fullness of his glory, and love, and wonder, and everything he has for us. Alright then, as we share together, I want you to notice first of all, and I expect you've done this, that as you read through your Bible, you come across new things being introduced by God all the while.

Of course, you're bound to do that, seeing that the Bible starts with God in the beginning and his great creation. And even in the first chapter of Genesis, for instance, you're introduced to successive things that your mind can't really grasp, and the wonder of unfolding acts of power, and the ideas coming in, keep us, I hope, constantly amazed at the fullness of God, his wonderful attributes, and all the lovely things that he does so successively. And as you go right through the Old Testament, for instance, you come to an end of a certain set of terms, and certain things are left behind, as God starts in an altogether new glorious revelation, in new wonderful moves.

Glory of an angel choir, for instance, coming and singing over the plains of Bethlehem, and the Son of God himself being manifest on the earth, and how he lived and ministered, and did all sorts of new things. So glorious, for instance, the people who knew their Bibles in those days were amazed at him. They couldn't fit him in anywhere at all.

They thought he was this or that or the other. Never understood one little bit, really. And Jesus, seemingly quite impervious to all their ideas, moved on definitely in the will and in the mind of his Father, only to live as the life made light amongst men, to attract men unto the new revelation, unto the new truth, unto the new glory that God was going to make known for men.

And all sorts of things happened. And the Gospel stories close with the death and the resurrection and the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not before the Lord himself has insisted on the fact that something else was going to happen, and that they were to tarry in Jerusalem until the precious Holy Ghost himself came, they themselves being baptized in him, and God starting to unfold a new glorious chapter in the history of men.

And, I suppose if we may use the word history about God, in the history of God. Or perhaps you ought to say in his autobiography. I don't quite know how you would say it.

Seeing that he claims authorship for the Word of God. And it's so glorious again as you move on through the Acts of the Apostles and you come into the Epistles, you will find that still again new things are being revealed, new phrases introduced, new words being taken up. The old terminology left behind, because that terminology fitted indeed was adapted to and was expressly used to make manifest those things that God wanted to reveal to men.

Now God has something much more wonderful to make known to every one of us. And for this he has used new phrases, new words. Not, and we must remind ourselves of this at the moment and insist on it very, very powerfully and strongly, that the Kingdom of God is in words.

It is not. The Kingdom of God is in power. It doesn't subsist in words, but it is expressed in words and those words very carefully chosen by God himself so that we should be under no doubt about what he means.

It is about one of these words and the ideas connected with it that I want to talk to you tonight. It isn't a word that's used often in the New Testament and please, some of you have heard me say this before, if you've never heard me say this before, don't think I'm a wonderful Greek scholar. I'm a dunce.

But even dunces have ways of finding out truth if they've got a persistent spirit. Laziness is unbecoming in a Christian anyway. In whatever realm you have to exist and you have to exist in many realms, laziness is abhorred of God.

However, we may decorate our unwillingness to work and call it other names, it's still called sheer laziness by God and that's that who said that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. And I can tell you that in the spiritual realm, if you won't work, you won't eat spiritual food. Let me make this very clear to you.

And you are not to think that there are special men raised up to bring you pre-digested, pre-masticated food and bring it out to you. If they do their duty, they are here to inspire you and are here to imbue you with the love of getting down to it and laboring in the word. Have you ever heard about these elders that labor in the word? Well, the elders labor in the word to make the youngsters grow up into the habit.

And so then, we go on into this great truth of God and I sat here in this chair and I said to the Lord, well, I'm not quite sure, Lord, whether I spoke about this the last time I was here. Indeed, I'm getting so forgetful in these days that I have asked dear Dot, who more or less acts as a little bit of a secretary for me, to remind me of what I preached on when I go to certain places, but because it's Christmas, we'll have to

forgive her. She hasn't told me what I've ministered here.

She'll have records going back years now, so I don't bother to keep them. Perhaps that's laziness. But it has been said in worldly wisdom that it's no use having a dog and barking yourself.

You may interpret that how you like. It doesn't mean exactly what it says. But the great truth about it is, beloved, that God has laid on my heart afresh the wonder of this great word that's translated fellowship or communion in the New Testament.

Now, we come across it very early in the Scriptures, in the Acts of the Apostles, that is in the New Testament Scriptures, and you'll find it in the end of chapter 2. And I want you to see that it never is used of God until after the descent of the Holy Ghost. It is a word for the church, in other words. And after men and women had been baptized in the Holy Ghost, and the church born, and nobody had life until that took place, not eternal life, in the New Testament, we find that as we come down to the end of chapter 2, in verse 41, they that gladly received Peter's word were baptized.

And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship. And there you have the great first use of this whole idea in the Bible.

The word fellowship does not occur, even in the New Testament, until that place. There is no fellowship outside of Jesus Christ. We shall see it in a moment or two.

And that is why when you read in your Gospels, you will never find that Jesus Christ had fellowship with anybody. You'll find that he called disciples, but they never had fellowship with him, because they refused the act that could make them enter into fellowship. I want to dwell upon that in a moment or two.

They returned their backs upon it. They could only ever be learners, followers, at some distance, some greater, and some quite near to the Lord. They followed, and they worked for him, and they did all sorts of things, but they were not in fellowship with him.

What a tragedy. What a tragedy. Turn with me to 1 Corinthians now.

And in the 1 Corinthians letter, where we've dwelt so many times together, I'm sure, in this room, or if not in this room, some of you in other rooms where I've seen you, 1 Corinthians chapter 1, we're told that God is faithful, verse 9, by whom you were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Now, when Jesus was on the earth, people called him Lord, but they weren't into the fellowship.

They were called with a view to entering into the fellowship, which they did by the baptism in the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost. Immediately, anybody and everybody that responded to the gospel and heard the clear call of God, through the lips of the apostles, or whosoever spoke the word of God in those early days, they came straight into that fellowship by the same baptism in the Holy Ghost. They entered into this glorious life in Jesus Christ.

Amen. Now, this great word that's translated fellowship is a marvellous word, and especially to these Corinthians, Paul had much to say about it. For instance, we have already read that God is faithful, who's called us into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

That's what he says. So, you're not surprised in the next verse, he immediately goes on to this. I've heard that there are divisions among you.

That's right. Now, in fellowship, there are no divisions. Do you understand that? There are no divisions in fellowship, and I'm not using the word fellowship in any specious way, because this place happens to be called Liverpool Fellowship, or whatever else you want to call it.

That doesn't make any difference. The names that men use, it's this great thing that God has in his heart. Fellowship.

And he was so keen on this great truth to the Corinthians, that if you turn to the last chapter of his second epistle, which bounds all writing of Paul to these Corinthians, that is preserved unto us, you find that he finishes up this way, in 2 Corinthians 13, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen. So, he starts by telling the Corinthians that they've been called into the communion or fellowship of Jesus Christ, and he ends by saying that great communion of the Holy Ghost be with you.

Everything has to be in this great truth of communion. Now, the word translated fellowship or communion, you will know, was given to a tune that I believe had its birth in Liverpool. In your book, it's Bookoinonia, or it's better pronounced Kounonia.

Wherever you read the I in the Greek, the emphasis is on the E and not I. Kounonia always. Not that I know much about it, I just tell you from hearing Greeks speak it in Cyprus. It sounds very lovely to hear them say it.

And this marvellous thing that God has for us, beloved, this thing that he's made known, he's opened to us a wonderful privilege, and he's called us unto it. And so far as he is concerned, he will never rest until it's accomplished in every one of our lives. What a marvellous thing that is, that I can say, oh Lord, you're going to bring me right into it.

You see, these people got into it immediately when they were baptised in the Holy Ghost. It says they continued in it. It commenced at the time they were baptised in the Spirit, and it went on from there, and it could only continue from that place, and from that time, and from that experience, in anybody's life.

Until a person is baptised in the Holy Spirit, they are outside of the fellowship. Now, I don't mean a group of people on earth that's nominated a fellowship. I don't mean that.

I mean the true people of God. And you cannot get into it except by this mighty work of God, of grace, and of power, that eliminates in us, from us, everything that militates against and prevents that fellowship. Now, there are ever so many meanings to this great thing, this great truth, that's translated fellowship.

It means to have in common, if you like, or to share. But it also bears the truth, and Paul brings this out, and it's this really I want to talk to you about in a moment or two. It bears the idea of the act of making common.

Not just having things in common, but the act, whereby we are brought into this place, of having everything common with God, and common with each other. Hallelujah. I don't know whether you think that this is a sort of a high thing to preach.

A young lady came to me not so long ago, and she put a lot of questions tentatively, and then at the end, it all came out. She said, you know you set the standard very high. And I said, yes, I suppose I do, dear.

And she was trying to say, I wish you wouldn't make it so difficult for me. Now, I want to say this to every heart in this room tonight. No man has any right from God to lower the standard in order to get people to scrape in.

No man. It isn't that the man sets the standard high, it is that God has set it high. And aren't you pleased about that? I am ever so glad that it has this function, that it eliminates anything and everything that's not of itself.

And this is the whole purpose of God. God does throw the net wide, as we are told, in the 13th chapter of the book of Matthew, the Gospel of Matthew, in the great picture of the dragnet that's thrown into the sea. It's thrown ever so wide, it drags through the whole sea of humanity.

But at the end, there goes the eliminatory process. It's the great dragnet of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. But from it, in the end, has to be eliminated the bad.

When we preach the exclusive body of Jesus Christ, the standard is high. Amen. It's absolutely exclusive.

But bless God, it's totally inclusive. And unless a man or a woman comes to the place where they want to be totally in, they may as well not tamper with the Gospel. They may as well not have anything to do with it.

And it's often this, that when first a man or a woman hears the Gospel message, and they make some response, because nobody in his senses wants to go to hell for all eternity, that after he or she begins to hear what it's all about, they say, oh, they're not going through with this. They're then called backsliders. And they're then called all sorts of names.

But the fact is, they've never really fundamentally faced up to God's claims in the Gospel. They want to make claims on God by His Gospel. I don't want to go to heaven when I die.

But it's the great claims of... I don't want to go to hell when I die. I'm sorry. It's the great claims of God that one has to face up to in this tremendous thing.

Don't you see, beloved, what God is after? Do you see this thing that God has offered? He's offered to make everything that is His common to you. And His heaven is about the least thing. That's only about where He lives.

That's the least thing. The greatest thing that He wants to make Himself, His life, His basic states of existence common to you. And His basic states of existence are righteousness, holiness, love, strength, power.

Amen. I've only mentioned just a few. He wants to bring us all into this.

This is His ultimate goodness. This is His greatest grace. Amen.

And so, He opens wide everything. And He's made it so simple that none ought to complain. There's no need for complaint.

There's no excuse. There's the simple entrance into this in such abundance that God does not brook excuses from any man or any woman. He is prepared to take on anybody from anywhere, whatever their states, whatever be their background, and make them exactly what He wants them to be.

And in a stroke, in instantaneous grace, and from that foundation to mold them in their human nature as they yield to Him in unending fellowship into the likeness and the glorious image of His own Son. This then is His proposition. Not only is it there, but it's His gospel.

And He presses it in upon us unendingly. And the Holy Ghost has come for this. And this is that which is meant by the fact that He has come to glorify Jesus Christ.

That He sets forth Jesus unmistakably, so that nobody can get mixed up between Him and anybody else. He sets Him forth livingly and powerfully and gloriously so that when a man really yields his will, God does everything. When a man yields his will.

Amen. Now then, beloved, let's have a look at this great call of God, shall we, in the Corinthian letter as we saw it in the first letter, of course, in the first chapter. Paul called an apostle, an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God.

I want you to notice the place of the will of God. It's right there in the first verse. According to the will of God.

Paul saw that as absolute. How do you see it? You can't bend God. You can't twist Him round your requests.

You can't twist Him round your desires. You can't twist Him round your aspirations. You can't twist Him round your highfalutin talk or your best prophecies.

The will of God. That's the ultimate. And unless a man has seen that the will of God is as unbending as the cross, and Jesus found the cross unbending and irremovable, and unless a man or a woman comes there and sees that the will of God is on some things and against some things in a man or a woman's life, as unbending as the cross, he'll never get anywhere.

Never flinches from it. Not God. He cannot.

Neither can the blessed Holy Spirit. He cannot do it. Even as Jesus Christ found it impossible to avoid, if I may use that phrase, about this blessed willing Lamb of God who came as a Lamb to finally be the Lamb upon the stake.

He said, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. And the cup was bound up with the cross. And it was impossible.

Impossible. Impossible. We don't hear that God said, No, Jesus! But that's how it worked out.

The will of God. Now, against some things, the will of God is harsh and hard. But in some things, and in most things, it's gloriously sweet.

Once you get over the hard bit, Amen. Once you get past the hard bit, Amen. Do you know whom God slew on the cross? His darling.

When you've let your darling be slain, that's fine. That's your hard bit. The darling that you consecrated and adulated in your own will and desires.

The thing that you've exalted to be the highest thing you want. Your own way. Your own will.

All the time bathing it up and making it look like a fancy fairy upon the top of the Christmas tree by calling it something else. How many people do that? Name it something else or name it God's will and, lo, you can have your own will. So you think.

But God has to bring us to the place where He's slain a man because He's slain His will. And when a man's will has been laid down voluntarily, there's always the voluntary sweet thing about the cross as there is the involuntary harsh thing about the cross. This is the great contradiction one finds in the blessed Lord Jesus.

It's seeming contradiction anyway that He came as the Lamb of God to hang on the cross and then at the last said, Oh Lord, if it be possible, let it pass from there. It's always this. This bitter sweet thing.

This wondrous centrality of what God is moving to in everybody's life. I promise you this. That if you will come in God's only way into the fellowship, you'll have not much trouble after that.

And when I say fellowship, allow me to explain again. I'm not talking about 14 Devonshire Road. Though I'm not excluding you from there.

All right. Let's pass down this chapter. I can see I'm not going to get very far tonight.

But still, we've got several days ahead of us. Bless God. Unto the church, verse 2. The church of God which is at Corinth.

To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus called saints. Amen. Now that's the thing that you and I have got to get hold of.

Did you see what Paul says? He cannot move away from this tremendous position. The church of God which is at Corinth. Now a church then in Paul's statement, and that is God's idea here put into the book, is a company of sanctified ones.

Not just a group of people who are skipping their way to Mount Zion or something. They're a company of sanctified people. The church is a holy people.

Made holy. Again, it's this idea of action. Made holy.

Nobody is naturally holy. Nobody is spontaneously holy outside of Jesus Christ. Nobody is sentimentally holy or fleshly holy.

Nobody. A man or a woman has to be made holy. And he's not a member of the church unless he has been made holy.

You are not first made a member of the church and afterwards made holy. You are made a member of the church by being made holy enough to be a member and then you're kept holy afterwards by a succession of activities in your life by God that should go on so regularly as to be habitual that you won't notice the crises. This is what God is wanting to do in every one of us.

And so much are we made holy that God actually calls us holy ones. Saints. We're not anymore called a lot of forgiven sinners.

You may like to think you are a forgiven sinner. I like to think that about myself but you won't find God saying that. He'll call you the church.

Saints. Sons of God. This is the way God talks about you.

He doesn't say all the forgiven sinners in Corinth. He doesn't say that. And you won't find it in any one of the letters that God wrote.

And I say God wrote, whether it be by Paul or whether it be by James or whether it be by Peter or John or Jude or anyone. The saints called the holy ones. Praise God.

Sanctified, made holy and called holy. Praise God. That's what God says.

And that's the church. And if you haven't been made holy, you're not in the church. And if you're in the church, you're there because you've been made holy and you're now called a holy one.

Oh, glory be to God. Why? I wonder if you can switch your mind back now into the Old Testament and think about the great prophecy of Daniel. Hmm? And do you remember when he was interpreting one of the dreams to one of those great kings Kings who lived in dreamland.

Yes, that's right. Yeah, that's right. And God had to smash them because of it.

You remember? He smashed Nebuchadnezzar because he lived in dreamland. I don't mean he was having dreams all day long. He lived in the fantasy that he was the sort of great sovereign of the universe.

Dreamland. Who was very down to earth. He fought wars.

He did all sorts of things. But he was in a fantasy world. Too many people are living there.

God smashed him. Amen. And when Daniel gave the great interpretation of the tree stump and so on and so on, he said, there came a holy one and a watcher.

And he's talking about an angel. He calls them holy ones. He calls you holy one.

Now see the realm into which you've been lifted. You've been lifted into a realm that's utterly unworldly. And what a tremendous thing that is to be there.

I have to tone my voice down. This I shan't be able to last all through. Well, God wants us to see this very, very clearly, beloved.

That we are called saints. By God. I'm going to ask you a question now.

Could you put your hand on your chest and say, in all reality, I'm a saint. I'm not asking you whether you're getting mixed up in sort of wild ideas about sainthood. I'm asking you whether you can put your hand on your chest on the terms upon which I've been speaking and say, I'm a saint.

Say it with bated breath. Say it in absolute reality. And say it as though you were looking into the eyes of God and not mine.

I'm a saint. You're not making any big claims. Now, that's the position.

And this, then, is the common ground upon which we've all been called. That's why he says, lower down in this great chapter, verse 26, you see your calling? What, do you? Well, he'd written it to them. You see your calling? I write none other things to you, he said, at one period, than that you read and acknowledge.

That's what he said. I hope you're ever so familiar with these letters. If not, give yourself time during the next week or so to read these letters through and through till you know them.

Please don't familiarize yourself with other things like Chrysler shutting down or the Concorde may not fly over New York or something like that. What does that matter? Don't worry about the financial index or something like that. Get down to this, beloved.

We're talking high finance now in terms of a word that comes in the end of verse 30. Redemption. We're talking the finance of heaven.

God bargaining for souls through the soul of His Son. God moving out in one great glorious act by which He intended to bring people into this great fellowship and communion with Himself. And nothing else matters much.

So the Lord draws our attention down to this tremendous truth. Oh, bless God for this. Verse 9 again, Then God is faithful by whom you were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isn't it a marvelous thing, beloved, that God wants us to have fellowship on the levels upon which Jesus Christ knows, understands, and enjoys fellowship? You're called unto this. The fellowship of His Son. And if I ask Jesus and say, Jesus, Lord, with whom do you have fellowship? He'll say, Father and the Heavenly Host.

And you? Well, you've been called unto the fellowship. Saint of God. You've been called, not only to that, but in the power of the Word that God uses here.

And here perhaps you'll think that though the Gospel doesn't consist in knowledge of Greek words, it's very lovely to know what God is really saying. You've been called unto the act of making common. Now, what was the great act of making common? Hallelujah.

Praise God. And unless you come into the act, you won't be into the fellowship. Do you understand that? Here it is.

When Paul is led by the power of the Spirit to move mightily against divisiveness or schism in the body of Christ, he says this. Is Christ divided? Verse 13. Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

And I baptized also the household of Stephanus. Besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. But unto us which are saved and sanctified, if I use his word, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.

I'll bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the scribe with the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

But we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block. Jesus could say, we know what it's going to do if we preach it. And unto the Greeks foolishness.

But unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Amen. And so you've been called to the act of making common.

For was it not on the cross in that great act there of redemption, salvation, whatever great word you want to use in connection with it, and it's worth all the words you could ever say, then was it not in that act that God Himself made Himself common with men? Did He not take the common man's sin? Did He not take sin that's common to us all? Did He not take our basic, depraved, twisted, perverted human natures there? Didn't He take on Himself everybody? Didn't He take everybody's load of sin and world of guilt and shame? Did He not make Himself so common that you could use this great word *kynonia*, *kynonia*, whichever way you say it, in its worst sense, when it's used in its commonest sense, did He not become the most common of the common? Did He not take the worst adultery of the worst adulteresses in the world? Did He not take the worst perversions of the most twisted, psychotic, sadistic man or woman that ever lived? Didn't He take the dregs of hell and of humanity on Himself? Didn't He become the most common? And if you like, the worst of all in becoming the greatest of all of any other man has it ever been written that God made Him sin? Nobody has ever been made sin? Nobody. Nobody was ever great enough, good enough. Nobody.

There was no man. Yet, that's what happened to Him, hung between two thieves, out where the lepers live. And where the thieves rage, where death stalks, where the unwanted are, out there, the precincts of hell, stepping stone to a lost eternity, to die on a cross.

That's where He went. Bless Him. Bless Him.

That was the great act of making common. And until a man is prepared to come to the great act of God in his life, until he's prepared to take this greatest act of God in his life, then he'll never be in the fellowship. It's the act of making common, says God.

Blessed be His name. I want to worship and adore Him. No wonder He says in verse 26, let's have a look at it.

You see your calling, brethren? How that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen.

Yea, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are. Amen. Yea, ye noble, ye mighty, ye wise.

The cross slays you all. Hallelujah. There's no wisdom that can make sense of the cross except God's wisdom.

Men aren't prone to it. Neither is any man born with it till he be born from above. And then he has but faint glimpses and sees everything through a glass darkly.

What a glorious thing it is then to come to this. God will level them. It doesn't matter how noble be a man's birth.

How wise be his understandings of things and his knowledgeable quotes. It doesn't matter. Not God.

Men count wisdom by gathering together the wise sayings that men have said like Plato and Aristotle and I don't know thing and they make it all abide in words. And that's why it says in the same epistle the kingdom of God is not in words. It isn't in words.

That's why. No, I won't say the next thing. It will take me on to another subject.

Another time. God wants us. God wants us to move here on this great foundation of everlasting truth, beloved.

Amen. The might of the mighty ones. God's made all.

Hallelujah. There's nothing here, beloved. This is the act of making common.

Might. How can people speak of might? Where does Samson stand here? Where does Whittle stand who invented the jet engine? Where do they all stand? Where's this man who's discovered atomic fissure? Whatever there's name these Cambridge scientists of several decades ago. Where are they now? This great might? Where's the mighty dollar? Where is it? The 30 pieces of silver.

He went to the cross. The 30 pieces of silver. It doesn't make sense.

But God, beloved. Oh, God. He's brought it all down here.

Everything's got to come down here. Hallelujah. I'm so glad that the cross is the great leveler.

Aren't you? But lest we should think we've got something that we could sort of take it out of these noble and mighty because there aren't any noble, mighty or wise people here, are there? If there are, stand up, please. I apologise to you. But you might think you come in the category in chapter 6, though.

For in the 6th chapter we read these words that go like this. Verse 9. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God? Hallelujah. It doesn't matter what class you come from.

It doesn't matter whether you've been wise or a fool. It doesn't matter whether you've been mighty or weak, beloved. Nothing there at all.

You come to the act that makes everybody come. And whether you come from the dregs of humanity and you were born in the gutters of Bethnal Green and lived there or whether you were born in Buckingham Palace, make any difference. The cross.

You come to this act of God and until God acts thus in your life, you cannot be in the fellowship. He'll give you a thousand forgivenesses en route if you seek them. He'll give you touches and healings and

inspirings and drawings and liftings and He'll do everything but until you come to that place where the cross is all powerful in your life to destroy everything that's antichrist in you, you'll never be in the fellowship.

You know you won't. You feel outside. You feel cold.

You say you love Grandfather. You see who's gone. And this, that and the other.

Well, you'll read your story in the Apostles and Disciples before Calvary. You won't read it afterwards. You won't read it after the Acts of the Apostles.

Not your story. They were in the fellowship. That's why.

Pre-fellowship, that's your story. Ups, downs, breakdowns, running out, running away, following for a while, getting cold and I don't know what. May God forgive us for this substitute, ersatz if I may use a German word, synthetic Christianity.

God forgive us. There was a cross raised by God and a man upon it and he stepped onto that cross for you and until you step there, then there's no way through. God brings everything to naught at the cross and this is why.

Let's go back to chapter 1. See, I must soon stop talking. I mean, if somebody can't get a lift, it might be a long walk for you. In the end of this first chapter, beloved, this is what it says.

That in verse 29, no flesh, I'm going to put, I'm going to change the word should. Please forgive me if you think I'm playing around with a Bible, which I'm not doing. No flesh may glory in his presence.

And of course, because they may not, they should not. That's why. For speaking from the may not, it's quite impossible.

So you shouldn't. No flesh may glory in his presence, so you shouldn't, you Corinthians, and neither should you, you Liverpoolians, or wherever you come from. No matter where you come from, who you are, no flesh may glory in his presence, but, bless God for this, but, of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, this is the reason for it, that according as it's written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord, who is made unto me wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

Hallelujah! You see, people are too mighty, too noble, too strong, too wise, too fleshy, too this, too that, the other, to let God make Jesus Christ something to them. They've got it all. Blessed are the poor in spirit.

They're the only ones that see God. You're not poor in spirit if you're not there. It's because you're too strong in spirit, pursuing your own will, way, desires.

This, that, and the other, are blaming God, because you're not what God wants you to be. God isn't seeking to place any blame on you tonight. He only wants us to understand truth.

He says, here, look, I even place the blame on my son. The blame for what you're doing. I want you to be blameless.

So he put all the blame on Jesus. If you can tell me greater grace and love than that, I'd like you to tell me. There is no excuse for any sin, defection, deflection.

None. Oh, there's forgiveness, but not excuse. Hallelujah.

God wants to make Jesus Christ to us tonight, all he wants us to be. And what more genuine offer could there be to any man? Jesus Christ is in the hands of God his Father tonight, and by the blessed spirit, he can be made to you exactly what your need is now, and more than what you understand your need to be, for our understanding is woefully short of all that God sees and knows. But he loves us, and he doesn't look with an idea of laying on the scourge.

He doesn't look with the thought of punishment. Why should he punish when it hurts him to punish? Why should he punish when every stroke of punishment reminds him of the time when he had to slay his own son? He loves, he calls. He's made his son everything to us.

We've been called into this fellowship, this great act of making everything common, all glory be to God. Oh, beloved, you cannot make sin and holiness meet in yourself. Sin and holiness met at the cross.

Strange companions for a Roman gibbet, but they did. Everlasting life and everlasting death met at the cross. Everlasting forgiveness and everlasting damnation met at the cross.

Nowhere else they cannot meet in you. One, you must have one or the other. One must go.

Sin or holiness, damnation or utter forgiveness. They part there. They meet there.

They part there. This is the wonder of it all. This is the glory and the excellence of our God.

This is where love and hate meet. You say you live in a love-hate relationship because you're jammed up on psychological terminology with your husband or with your wife or with your children or with your community or I don't know what. They met at the cross.

They can't meet in you. One or the other. Amen and amen.

We glorify God who raised the Lord Jesus up from the dead. And that's how He'll raise you up when you're prepared to come there. This is the blessed epistle that talks about the resurrection.

In the 15th chapter you know. Every man in his own order, in the order of God, the first man that had to go there was Jesus Christ. And every man afterwards had to go there.

That belongs to Christ. You've got to go in your own order. And it's your order and it's an order from God.

You're under commandment. You can't disarrange divine order. You can't upset the cosmos, the beauty and the glory of God's arrangements.

You can't do that. It's a beautiful arrangement. One should go to the cross to deal with the hate and the sin and the filth and the perversions and the rottenness and the sadism and the psychotic nuances and neuroses.

One should go there and deal with it. That everybody else should come there and find it's being got rid of by God and go through clean, pure, sweet, new, wonderful, acceptable, into the fellowship of God. That's it.

That's the divine order. No pain for you save the pain to your pride. That's all.

No pain to you save having to admit that you've been wrong all the time. That's a painful business. No pain to you except that you stop blaming God and blame yourself and stop blaming the devil and blame yourself.

Go through. The devil can't interfere with any man or woman that goes this way. Didn't Jesus Christ take all the devilry? Didn't He take the devil and all his cohorts, principalities, powers, big ones, little ones, nobody, some ones.

He took them all on at the cross. Come this way. They can't get through here.

They can't touch any man that goes through here. Behold, I have set before you an open door. No man can shut it.

Nor can any devil. This is God's way. Amen.

And this is what, by the blessed baptism in the Holy Ghost, every soul comes to us who has never been baptized in the Holy Ghost. For the cross now in its power and eternal effect is hidden away yet revealed in the Holy Ghost. And you must be baptized in Him in order to reach it.

Hallelujah. This will set you free from this nagger and that niggler. This will set you free from this pursuant, this and the other.

This will set you totally free as though you had angels' wings to fly above them all. And they dragged their feet down in the mud of the Red Sea. God wants you to know what He's presented to you.

This great act of making everything common. Oh, God, that you could speak of the glories of my Savior and say they're common. They're common things here, my son.

You're in the heavens. They're common here. More common than tea in China.

Or Jones's in Wales. Or Smith's in London. You understand? You do understand, don't you? You've been called unto the fellowship.

God's called you to the uncommon to make it common in your life. Out of all the unreal into the real. Through the real cross.

Leaving the wooden cross to Jesus. And this is where you come. Are you ready? And you won't make one more complaint.

No more. He doesn't complain who's in the resurrection. Why should He? What's He complaining of? Hallelujah.

Will you be simple? Will you be simple? Will you come here and know that not many wise? That's how I got in. Not many noble. That's how I got in.

Not many mighty. That's how I got in. Yeah.

Amen. I'm one of God's fools. Yeah, well, foolish things.

Let me say it that way. Perhaps that sounds a bit better. That's right.

I was a foolish thing. He's chosen the foolish things. Verse 27.

You foolish thing. But you're a saint, brother. Glory to God.

Get up and jump with me, brother. Praise God. Amen.

Hallelujah. Amen. Praise God.

See, look here. And listen. If you let God deal with you, listen.

You've got to be a foolish thing. A weak thing. A base thing.

A despised thing. A nothing. That's what that verse says.

Nothing. So, that's where you've got to come to. You've got to cease to exist in your former life utterly.

Dead, that is. Brought to the cross. Nothing.

They set him at naught. You read that in your gospels. That's where he came to in the end.

Nothing. For you. And you've got to come there.

Nothing. Not even a murmur. Not a complaint.

Nothing. Nothing. None.

He makes saints from nothing. You have to go out of existence. Then he'll remake you.

Now you know why you've never been remade, don't you? You've never been prepared to go out of existence, have you? Have we no rights? No. None at all. All wrongs.

Blessed God, he's blotted them out. Hallelujah. Praise God.

Hallelujah. I haven't finished, but I'm going to stop. Oh, make God open this door.

Won't you come, beloved? Won't you come here? Until we come here, we seek this, we seek that. We seek advices. We seek help.

We seek something else. We do everything else. And God's advice is written upon the pages of the books.

If I'm also confused, I get, you're worse than confused. You're confounded. You can't even gather your thoughts or wits together.

Cease. Let one great stroke of God come upon you and die out of me. So that'll be the, that'll be the end of it.

That'll be the beginning of everything. Hallelujah. Glory.

This is how God speaks. This is how God moves. Glory.

Are you ready? You cannot force your way on God. Neither will he force his way on you, but he does enforce that if you want to be what he wants you to be, you must come here.

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