

More and More

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the importance of abiding in Christ to produce fruit and live a life of love and gratitude.

Duration: 1:05:53

Scripture: John 12:1-6, John 12:24, John 12:26, John 15:1-2, John 15:5, John 15:8

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the theme of love and how it was learned by the disciple John. The preacher emphasizes that Jesus is the ultimate teacher of love, but also highlights that Jesus uses people as a means to teach others. The preacher references the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet as an example of how Jesus demonstrated love through actions. The sermon encourages the audience to reflect on how they can learn to love like John did, by allowing Jesus to teach them through people and through their own actions.

Transcript

We are delighted to have our brother. He came to stand and minister to you. He said he thought he was going to have a chair.

I said, would you like one? He said, no, I would prefer to stand. As you see, I can walk. I want to say thank you.

That's why I wanted to come. Although I love to preach, I wanted more to come and say thank you. For everything, prayers and, well, what else, to be together.

I envied all the preachers. I said to my son-in-law, Dave, not so very long ago, I only want to live to preach now. So that's it, and then I suddenly wasn't able to do that.

But you will know all about it. I expect you know more about it than I do, by the things tacked on, and the news gets passed around. But I'm very grateful to you all, as well as to God, who has been set to keep me.

And I hope I look all right. I hope I sound all right. And I hope I should be able to stand all right.

This tent, for instance, is quite a new one to me. Everything else here, perhaps there are some people I've never seen before, as well. And I expect you've all been greeted, and it's not my place to greet you now,

Norman.

And I was thinking as I was driving up in the car, it's about time some of us old ones dropped off, and let the younger ones come. And I understand you've been very blessed throughout this whole week, and that's very cheering to my heart. Praise the Lord.

So, having said thank you to me, to you, for all the goodness you've shown, I understand you were happy to hear I was coming last night. I get the news conveyed back. Couldn't hear you clapping up there where I am, but they told me that's what you did.

And I'm just a man, that's all. It's all by the Lord's grace. Everything is His, isn't it? But I did also want to share with you, as well as just say thank you, because in our readings up there, where I'm staying with the little couple, you know the little couple that I'm staying with, in our morning readings, we went through 1st John.

Now, I don't know whether they did it out of different families. The rest of you who's been here will know that I love John's writings, and I think I'm going to spend some time, not particularly in the epistle, but with our wonderful elder brother. Gone to be with the Lord now.

He left behind such a legacy, and I think you've heard me say something like this before, that I'm not so sure whether in their lives, and in their preaching, and in their church founding, everything, they did more than they have accomplished by their writing. You know, it was a great general who said that the tongue accomplished more than the sword, the pen did. And these men, they wrote the things, and you think of the millions upon millions who've come to Christ through their writing.

But of course, you have to suffer to write. Did you know that? Don't be too swift to write. Callow youth regrets, always.

Thinks it's got something to say when it really has nothing. I've discovered that. And these men, they suffered in order to preach, in order to write.

So, I want to ask you a question. How do you see John learn to be the man he was? That's probably, that's a bit unfair, to touch your mind, make you think, try and trace it to this, or that, or the other. For during our readings, especially one day, I wasn't able to read I came down for holidays, really, I'm only being allowed to preach tonight.

I asked this question, how do you think John learned to love? How do you think he lived? Who taught him love? Oh, I know, the usual answer must be, or it was God, it was Jesus, of course it was Jesus. But you know, Jesus uses other means, he uses people. Take it into your heart, he uses people to teach other people.

And I thought I saw a little bit more deeply, into the scenes of this great man's life. You will know that John has been called the disciple whom Jesus loved. I want to read to you a little from the 15th chapter.

In chapter 15, where Jesus says this, I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. You know, you and I should really, really take this in.

You do know that Jesus is the vine of love. And if you say you're a branch in the vine, and you're not producing fruit, God doesn't believe you, and he'll take you away. Often this is called backsliding, and all

that kind of stuff.

But it's fruitlessness, apparently. You know, we're not on an easy ride to heaven. You can be saved just before you die.

I know when God works upon us, is in his own will. But if you say you're a Christian, and I said to you, produce your fruit, let me see it. Could you produce it? Well, I'm not an evangelist, you might say.

It doesn't talk about evangelism, it talks about being a branch in the vine. Well, I'm not a pastor that doesn't talk about being a pastor, doesn't talk about gifts of the Spirit, doesn't talk about power from on high, or anything talks about being a branch in Jesus Christ. Obviously partaking of his life, obviously.

He's grown you. Well, are you a natural outgrowth from Jesus Christ? Are you a natural outcome, outcrop, are you? Then you must produce your fruit. Uh, I'm not trying to say what the fruit is, not going to put my finger on any particular thing, but you've got to produce fruit, beloved, to belong to the vine.

It's not just an easy ticket to heaven that God is after. If you were saved just before you died, that's different. But you and I are to bring forth fruit.

Let me go on with it. Every branch in me that there is not fruit. In other words, beloved, he's saying, it's me that's being pruned.

Me, says Jesus. He takes it away from me. My Father will not have unproductive branches, unless I don't understand what he's saying.

But that's what he's saying. Every branch in me, he's going to take away if it doesn't produce fruit. So let me say to you, Christian brother, sister, are you producing fruit? In the end, this is the only proof that you are a member of Jesus Christ.

It's not your singing ability, not your mental capacity to take in fruit, or anything like that. It's just whether you are producing fruit. That's it.

Clever, it doesn't matter about being clever, who said a branch in a vine was clever? No. It only had to fulfill its natural function, that's all. He purges it, this branch, and it may bring forth more fruit.

Now you're clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. No talk about making decisions for Christ here.

No talk about giving your heart to Jesus, giving your life to him. He grows the life, unless I'm misunderstanding the figure. It's from him.

Of course we have to make decisions, but you understand that Jesus was speaking to men that had made their decisions three years before. They could have said, you know, in evangelical language, I've given my heart to Jesus. Yes, I said, he's Jesus, son of God, I'm going to follow him, he's going to have my life, and I'm going to serve him, and then he hears this.

They hear what the Lord Jesus is saying. Now he says, abiding me, you'll excuse me, I'm supposed to have something done to my throat sometimes, abiding me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine.

He's talking about this, I am the whole vine, you are the branches, I am you. That's what he's talking about, and you are me. That's what he's saying.

This is the whole concept of love. This is what it's all about. This is why we have it in our books, beloved, to bring us out of the effort of man, though God be thanked for the efforts of men, and godly of men and women throughout the world.

But this drawing off of self, from a self-effort, of self-achievement, or if you like to put it that way, God's achieved through me, or whatever way you like to say it. He draws us off it. Look, you're just a branch in the vine.

That's what you are. And it would be wonderful if I really got to know you, that I could taste your fruit and say, Jesus, if I could drink of your cup and say, this is Jesus. Not Jesus' blood, he's not talking about the blood here.

He's talking about himself, the sweet, sweet wine, the wonderful taste of it all. Oh, glory be to God. That's what he's talking about, this great vine of love.

Now, I could spend the rest of the evening on that, but as you, as I go down, you will find this. As a man abides not in me, but he is cast forth as a branch and is with it. And men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Check yourself up, check yourself up. I've prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed.

You shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit. And so he goes on, more fruit, much fruit.

That's what God is after in your life. If you live to be as old as I am, and I think I'm young sometimes, beloved, you should produce so much fruit, you can't even remember it. If you look back over your life, you might be able to remember occasions.

You might be able to remember, if you're a preacher man, meetings. You might be able to remember all occasions. But think of the fruit.

I know God's expecting a lot of me. I'm under no illusions about it. I've been breathing his air.

I've been living by his grace. I have had his strength in my body, in my mind. He's expecting a lot of me.

I don't think anything of myself. I'm only a branch. But he's expecting it.

It's the Father. I'm part of him. That's the thing.

How can I act culturally to that? How can I? God descends. One of the things that you need to see, beloved, is that God is wanting fruit and more fruit of you. It doesn't matter how young.

You say you belong to Christ on each of our levels. He's expecting more, Jesus said so. Oh, but his burden is light, his yoke is heavy.

I'm getting this feeling in my bones these days, besides aches and pains, that the fellowships are settling down. It'll just be church once a Sunday, and not, of course, if the children want to go out, and all this kind

of thing. Do you agree with me, Norman, that that's the backslider's way? Yes, that's right.

Oh, that would be justified. God doesn't expect this, or I say, God doesn't expect it. Why does he grow vines? Why does he grow vines? Oh, do some thinking.

Oh, I believe the branch was never expected to believe anything. The vine grew it. Oh, we need to do some sorting out, don't we, in our ways.

Well, I refer to John. He became the apostle of love. Where do you think he learned the world? He followed Jesus.

He did all sorts of things, but John, in himself, was not one of those men. He was called the son of thunder. He and his brother James, he wanted to call down fire from heaven, burn people up, burn their village down.

You know, the sort of thing they're doing on the battlefield. Going on now, while you're sitting in this room. That's what he wanted to do, simply because he'd got a cockeyed view of what it meant to belong to Jesus.

Yes. He was fighting for Jesus' honor, he felt. Great man.

I don't know, that's what he wanted to do. There's nothing loving about John, but he would have argued, but I say, now Jesus, I hate a woman to be in front of. I want people to respect him.

I want him to have his dues. I'm going to stand up and boom, boom, boom. No, no.

Shall we call down fire? No. For all they knew, there was going to be a branch from that village in the vine. I'll tell you what I feel about John.

You may not go with me, but it's nice sometimes to sit down and think, son of thunder he was. Naturally, apparently an apostle of fire, too. Quite naturally, of course.

What is this thing called apostleship? What has it to do with my natural traits and feelings? What has it to do with my first birth? What has it to do with my parents? Haven't I been born again? Those parents weren't good for me. You say, oh, my mum and dad are Christians. I'm telling you, they weren't any good for you.

They were just natural, ordinary human beings, the same as everybody else. You had a better home, a son. But you had to be changed.

What change? You've got my mum and my father, they're wonderful people, of course they are, but they're not wonderful enough, you see. Not for the things that God is talking about. Not for the things that we're on about.

No, no, beloved. It's a marvellous thing to belong to Jesus, and to know to whom you belong. And if I may put it this way, to what you belong? Speaking in terms of a vine, wouldn't call it who, we'd call it what.

So we go on, and we begin to learn the truth, as we should. Now, I want to share with you, and I've often shared very secretly, I was going to say in this tent, but no, I believe this is a new kind of a tent. Even worse for me, the thing would be in being plastic, it would bounce down instead of go through.

But never mind. I'm not condemning anybody, I'm just telling you, and I'm not making excuses. You will know the wonder of the way the Lord leads his people.

I think that John learned one day when Jesus went to a home in Bethany. Now, you will know that Bethany was called the house of ripe fig. Very wonderful of course, but it wasn't a vine.

There was no vinery there, it was a fig orchard, or whatever you want to call it. Much related to the status quo, the things of nature, things all around. Not of the special vine, but there he went into this village, and you know what happened there.

And the lady of the village named Martha, she invited him into her house from me. And of course, the disciples would have been around, if not actually eating. And they would have been watching their Lord, as they were another time when he went.

But Mary, I'd hope there are lots of Marys in the temple. I don't mean just naturally called Mary, but spiritual Mary. People who, like this precious woman, went and sat at Jesus' feet, and ignored everything else.

Everything? Of course, she never had any children, she was a single lady. And she wasn't turning on the television to find out new menus, and a way to cook. Whether they should have this kind of rice, or that kind of rice, or whatever.

All right. She sat at Jesus' feet. And when Martha didn't like it, because Mary wasn't helping her, she sat at Jesus' feet.

And she took no notice of her sister. Wasn't a very Christian act, was it? All right. So, Martha thought she should complain to Jesus.

Jesus was wrong too. He should have known better. He should have instructed Mary to get up on her feet, and go and do some work.

After all, the Christian life is not all sitting down listening. So, you've done very well this week. It isn't all that, beloved.

It is. And Jesus said, you left her alone. Mary has made a decision.

Now, beloved, I want to say this. Have you ever come to a place of real decision in your heart? What you're going to do for your life? Mary has chosen that better part, and shall not be taken away from her. Now, I think that did something to John.

John himself was not a very talkative man. It was a good job he wasn't, because he talks fire. And there's much talk about, we want the fire.

Probably you've sung that hymn, have you? I'm not commenting on your singing this week. I haven't been in the meetings. Well, that's all, you see.

But this decision, I'm going to sit at Jesus' feet. It's a good thing to prepare a meal. It's a good thing to do this.

It's a good thing to do that. It's a good thing to do that. But it's not the best thing.

And so many people are living on this level. There's nothing wrong about it. I was once preaching in India. I don't know whether any dear ones from there, India. I was up in Himalayas where I was preaching. And I'd been there for some time, and they were talking about the white cows and all this that they worship.

And somebody talked to me about it. I said, yeah, you know, I worship a God that doesn't walk along the street eating cardboard. You see, that's what they do.

They eat anything. They don't feed their gods very well. Here, that's right.

There's nothing like telling the truth. You might get thrown out. I never was.

But still, that's the truth, you see. Yeah. You have to make your decision.

May I say that I made it so many years ago that I've forgotten how long ago it was. I made up my mind, whether in prison or out of prison, and I'd been in prison, I was going to read my book. I was going to read that.

At all costs, I'll put you on bed and so be it. You see, beloved, you have to come to a place, I mean, a branch. I've got a business about it, surely.

It's not just a weak tendril all the time. Amen. To be there where you stand for God, whether you live or whether you die, to stand for the Lord, whether they like it or whether they don't, whether they put you in prison or put you on the throne.

The Queen Mother, bless her heart, is 96 today. You'd be much too interested in your conference. But I was waving flags and shooting cannon, and I don't know what.

But she's a gracious lady. The wonderful thing about it, beloved, is that you've got to come at whatever cost to what people think of you, whether it's your own flesh and blood, where you make your decision for Christ. Mary chose to do that.

What would you think? How would you describe that? I'll tell you what I think about it. You would have described that, surely, as the dawns of love. She just sat at his feet, and sat at his feet.

And she was deaf to Martha, she was deaf to Jesus' physical needs, if you like. He knew that he wasn't concerned about that. She just sat there, to not be taken away from her, Mary.

Now, you'll find that in Luke's gospel, chapter 11. Turn on with me, we're in John's gospel, or turn back with me, really, to chapter 12. And again, Jesus is in Bethany.

It says, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper. Martha served, as usual.

She was at James' to see, even though Jesus, more or less, told her to choose a better part. And Lazarus was one that sat with him at the table. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

Then sent one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him. Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, given to the poor? He would have done for the good social gospel,

as being preached in the name of the real gospel, wouldn't he? He, the social, got to look after the poor. He'd have made a good socialist.

He should go see Mr Blair. And he was a disciple. Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This, she said, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bear what was put therein.

Jesus said, let her alone. Against the dead, my dearies, hath she kept this, and for the poor ye have with you, but me ye have not always. Mary put Jesus first.

Me, you have not always. Mary put Jesus higher. Mary let everything else go.

And you know, part of the trouble of our gospels is this. They don't always contain all the details about all the miracles. You turn it up in another gospel, that same story, you'll find that likewise said they all.

They were all saying it. John was saying it too. John was saying it.

They were a bunch of socialists, calling themselves, mind you, you can be a socialist, I advise you not to be anything, but still if you want to be, we've got to look after the poor. You'd be a nothing like it, that's what I am. Here is the great thing.

You've got no time to waste on anything else but devoting your whole person, and time, and effort on Jesus. All of it. That's what he wants, all.

John was there, and half the saying, with the more, and more, and come to the poor, and all this. Do you think that those men had a proper concept of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you? But they were apocryphals, as though we want to revere the name. Especially chosen people.

Do you think, I'm not criticizing, I'm asking you to think this is what I do when I read the Bible. Poor, I doubt whether socialism will ever do anything for the poor. I doubt whether it will.

Any auditorium, if I may allude to politics. The thing is this, beloved, the best thing you can do for the poor is lavish your all on Jesus Christ. That's the best thing you can do for the poor, that's the best thing you can do for the rich.

And if you've got any sense, it's the only thing you can do with yourself. Lavish all upon Jesus. Mary did.

I want you to notice something of it. That woman never said a word when he came. First time, she said nothing.

She just sat at his feet, touched with her mouth wide open, her heart staring out of her eyes, listening to what Jesus had said. When did you do that? When did you do that? When? And how long did you do it? She never said anything. She was too busy drinking in.

She was too busy listening, concentrating her all on Jesus, and then beyond her powers of concentration herself, she poured out her most precious, precious gifts upon him. John watched. First she sat at his feet.

Then she anointed his feet. She had her head at his feet. And I guess he said, what did he say? I think I know what he learned.

I think I can put my finger upon it. In a few days more, turn over your page with me. In John 14, it's good to have it written in the book of 13, I mean, where they were having that marvellous feast.

And it says, right at the beginning of the chapter, he loved, he loved, he loved, that's your word, you want to get out a big pencil and a line there, he loved. Not he said, don't take notice of all he said, but all he said was because he loved. And then he got to a place where he didn't say a thing.

Oh, he got down, got up, whatever you want to say, and he took a basin of water, and he filled it, he took a towel, he didn't say anything, except to Peter, where he just had to say something, lest Peter would have jumped out of it altogether, and probably finished up a kind of Judas. If he hadn't listened to Jesus, and given the right answer, not that anybody had ever taught him to say it, but this is what he did. He loved them.

All right. The place was full of love, absolutely full, to feel it within the atmosphere, and all around, love. Oh, I would have loved to have been there.

I would have loved to have been in that place, though there was ignorance there, though there was hostility there, though there was a liar there, though there was a Judas there, a devil waiting to pass. Jesus' love overcame it all, all, all. He even washed the devil's feet.

Well, the devil man, I killed. There is more about it, and I'll tell you what I think about it. John loved it.

Verse 23, same chapter. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. That's how he learned love.

He learned it through Mary. Well, Jesus taught it, of course he did, of course he did, but he used his figures. He used the figure of the barrens.

He used the figure of all kinds, but it was Mary. She never said a word. She gave her everything.

She never said a word. She didn't even ask Jesus' permission. She just did it.

She didn't say, Lord, can I anoint your feet? Can I do this? Can I do that? She never said a word. She waited and got on with it. She loved it.

Love seems to know when nobody else knows. Love seems to understand when nobody understands. Love enters in, it breaks through what you might call protocol.

Everything, it's in the air, it's down the street, it's there. John's fear came to the place where he lay his head on Jesus' breast, and loved, and loved, and loved. Check this out when you get to heaven.

If you can find me in the crowd, come and tell me. But I think that that's how John learned love, through a fellow human creature. See what you can be, darling.

If God can say, behold the lilies of the field, and you can learn something from their purity, and their marvelous grit, and the way they spring up where nothing else would be, where no eye would see, and perhaps only feet would tread and crush them. If he can say, behold, so and so, and he could say, so and so, so and so, you know. That's how he teaches.

Let me make a confession, that's how I've learned so much. Of what I know, or think I know, I've learned through fellow human beings. Haven't you learned hatred through men and women? Haven't you learned roguery? Haven't you learned filth from men and women? Haven't you? Not still learning it, I trust.

That's all she did. John turned from the man, breathing out, threatening and slaughtered in a collider way than Saul did. He was going to call down fire and destroy the place.

He was more respectful, he was following Jesus. Saul was a confessed enemy of Christ. And I, ah bless the Lord, I'm so glad of this book.

I see John with his head on Jesus' breast, and it's not just an isolated thing. He remarks about it twice. He, a mortal man, could put his head on the breast of God, made it manifest in the flesh, and John felt it was for him to do what he did.

And if a woman could anoint his feet, and Judas could sell him for 30 pieces of silver, he only wanted to go up and lay his head on Jesus' breast and say, say, what did he say? Nothing. Are you there? Are you there where you don't say anything? Where you don't gavel and gavel away in prayer, oft-repeated, seemingly never answered? Are you just there where you're at home and everything's all right? Are you there just where you should be friends to one of God's children? You're on this earth, and the worries don't exist anymore, and the tribes have picked out the present circumstances or future things that are bound to come. You rest on his breast.

That is what it's all about. And would you agree with me that the branch does nothing else but rest in the vine? Would you agree with me? I don't hear branches to trees in that lovely garden where we'd be staying, making any noise at all, save the flash of the wind through the leaves occasionally. I don't hear the complaints.

I don't hear the grumbles. I don't hear anything. That's what Jesus said, look at the lilies of the field, men, look at the lilies of the field, whether you're talking about your father, love, you see these birds, see these things, what's the worry? Have you got any worries then? No, I haven't.

No. Have you? I'll tell you how to get rid of them. I won't say come and see me, I mustn't take on too much.

But here's the thing, beloved, though you see there the salvation rests in Christ, what's the praise, Lord, the best praise a branch can give is to produce fruit, isn't it? Oh, beloved, beloved. You know, what's the time? Are you going to preach tonight, Lord? Let me have a good innings, I'll be dead tired tomorrow, but it doesn't matter, for us I'll have a living tiredness or something. I want to die for the Lord, that's right.

Be terrible for you if I drop down in this pulpit, be wonderful for me. I'm not going to, I've made up my mind. I hope the Lord has made it up for me.

You know, I could go on all night on this theme, and I want you to know how thrilled I am that these other dear brethren of mine have stepped in. Thank you for everybody that's done so much during this week that I ordinarily would have done. But, aren't they wonderful? You've had great meetings, haven't you? Praise God.

What God can do, you'll get to the pace one of these days in your life when you feel you dare miss a meeting, because you're going to miss something that's very important. I've had times when I've had to go to drag people up on their knees to go home. Wouldn't stay away from the meeting, not that, lining up

outside the door waiting for you to open, wanting to get in.

That's the spirit of God when he's molding the rest of dreamland called Christian. Here is the great and marvelous truth. Jesus is divine.

He's saying you have no say in it. I agree with you. It's between me and my Father.

And we've got brains, we've got a will, we can do this, we can do the other, we can do everything else. Can I ever so give you the breath even to think, I am utterly dependent upon the Lord. Utterly.

And so are each one of you sitting in your seats. Utterly dependent. You're utterly dependent upon him putting thought into your heart.

You're utterly dependent upon him reaching your inner ear. You are utterly dependent. Oh, that's Calvin.

Call it what you like. He's got no monopoly of truth. The whole, the whole thing, beloved, is to understand what God is doing.

Say, God, I'm here. Yes, he said, but can you see the lily of the field there? Oh, I've got a degree. In what? Well, Boston, we've got some botanists here.

The whole thing, beloved. Oh, friend, if I never preach to you again, this is the reality. This is the reality.

And you know, if you go to Jesus Christ, this is what he'll say to you. If you listen with your poor, poor ears and heart, he'll say, if you're a branch, you're a branch in me, let me tell you that you've got to bring forth more fruit. He said it.

That's what he said. He starts off with saying, if you don't bring forth any, you'll be out. Now you're there because you're bringing forth some.

I want more. You say, is he a hard, hard taskmaster? How can a vine, how can a branch in a vine, say to the vine, you're a hard taskmaster? It's what it's for. It's why you're saved.

You think it's to get you to heaven. Well, it is, of course. It's to get you into Christ first.

I know it. To belong to him. When you become a Christian, it's the great takeover of your life.

That's what God intends it to be. Hallelujah. Then it's going to be, when you're really in the vine, there'll be natural growth, natural development, no strain, nothing of that.

He wants more from your life. More. You say, yes, more.

Well, I'm a woman, I've got a job. It takes a father. I've got a big family to keep.

I've got all this. He knows all that. He knows all that, but he's still wanting more fruit.

The family actually, dear sister, is a wonderful place to bring forth fruit. Wonderful place. If you're going to have ten children, let them be ten saints by the time they've all grown up.

That's what it's about. It's all about that. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. More fruit, John. More fruit.

Turn with me now to the last chapter, John. I think perhaps I'd better stop after this. My throat's beginning to tell me it's hurting.

In the end of the book, chapter 21, you all know this story. I preached on it, I guess. Norman has, on this platform, well, it may not be this platform, it's a very nice one, by the way.

It really is, and I know that it was done because people wanted to make it nice for me. I know they had others in mind, and I'm so grateful. I really am.

But as you go down this 21st chapter, you know the story. They were out on the lake, these apostles, fishing. Fishing, by the way.

And they hadn't caught one, not one person right. Although Jesus blessed my efforts, no, he won't look if you're in his will. If you're not in his will, he will not.

Because that's the Christian. What's wrong with the Christian? This Christian works. He will not bless you in that and bring results if it isn't his will for you.

Do you know why there's so little work, real work done for God? Because there's such a lot of other work that isn't for God at all. That's why. They're getting engaged in that, instead of in the work of Jesus Christ.

I'm going to ask God to bless it. You can pray till you're black in the face. You've got to be in his will.

Cast your net on the right side of the ship. That's all. That's all he says.

Cast your net on the right side of the ship. There's only a difference between being out of God's will and being in God's will. But notice this.

As you go down, they see the stranger on the shore. Seven of them in that boat. All have some kind of experience with the Lord.

All apostles. But who do you think recognised the figure on the shore? John. He says, it's the Lord.

Do you see why love does? Do you see? All he has is good eyesight. Love does give you good eyesight. You can really see.

You say, well what's the difference between one side of a boat and the other? God's will. Hmm. That's all.

And you labour till you drop and have nothing, if you're not in his will. And when they got into the will of the Lord, they caught so many fish. Oh, it's so wonderful.

Spend their break. Serve them right. Yes, serve them right.

They shouldn't have been out there fishing in the first place. Jesus was extra gracious to them to give them a catch. That was very, very wonderful.

But this is the point, beloved, that you and I want to see. I want you to see with me anyway. When they dined, you will read the story when you get home.

When they dined, verse 15, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonah, Lovest thou thee more than this? He says, I'm sure you know it, Lord, I know it's that I love thee. Hmm. But you see what Jesus'

question was? It said, do you love me more? My Father wants more.

Do you love me more? More. Write it down, just before big letters. Have it up in your room.

More. I want more. No, he's not an Egyptian taskmaster.

But he's only wanting the result of being in the true condition, a true position. That's what he's wanting. Shall I go to bed tired? Well, so does everybody else.

It's a wonderful truth, beloved. Do you love me more? Let me ask you a question. Do you love him more tonight than you did last year? Does he feel it? And because he feels loved, he spends a lot of time with you, and does wonderful things for you, because he feels loved.

He didn't feel loved in Nazareth when he was on earth. He should have felt loved at Nazareth. He should have felt at home there.

But they tried to murder him at Nazareth where he was born. He went to Bethany. Instead of his old home, for the last week of his life, he went to Bethany.

And you know why he went to Bethany? He's loved. Fred, you love him. Oh, I don't know what I say.

You love him. I don't see why you shouldn't. But here's the point.

Make certain of this, where you are sitting this night, that if he, you really love the Lord, you'll have no more trouble than that. He'll make his home there. He'll make his home.

Listen, he came from the bosom of the Father. John talks about this in his gospels. He came from the Father's bosom.

And he came from the Father's bosom into a world of hatreds, and get all sentimental about angels, and stars, and camels, and wise men who were so ignorant they didn't even know where to go to look for him. That's right. You read the story.

You know, our wife, do you mind me mentioning her? Her favorite carol was just a strange one. It wasn't Silent Night, or anything like that. It wasn't Away in a Hot Danger.

Oh, it wasn't that. What do you think it was? Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for you. That was her favorite carol.

She loved it. He won't come as a baby, see. He'll come as a blessed one that conquered all your enemies, all of them, without exception.

He even conquered what you're calling your last enemy, death. And he rose triumphant about that. There isn't one enemy that he hasn't conquered.

Come to my heart, Lord Jesus, come to my heart. You've got to mean this. I want more, I want more.

Let me ask you a question. Do you see God, who made this universe, made you, invented you anyway, although you directly came from your parents, you see, do you think he doesn't want all of you? Do you think he doesn't? Do you think he's supposed to die, do you think he doesn't care? Do you think so? Friend, the next move is up to you. That's why you're on the earth.

Let him come in. He says you love him more. Oh yeah, you know I love you.

Look, Peter, Peter, don't try and put me off. Peter, I love you. I just want you.

I love you, Peter. What can you say more than that? Well, you know, anything better than anybody could say to you, but I love you. What better could you hear? I'll give you a million pounds if you're quick up with that.

Perhaps you even got this vague thing called a lottery, big fool that you are. You can have the love of God, you'll be richer than all the world. Richer.

You'll be full of love. I don't know, sometimes I feel so full of love, I don't know what to say. I sit and I think, and I, I'm forced to do a lot of it these days, but, but that is it.

You'll love everything, and you'll love everything, and you won't go batty about the friends of the earth stuff, and environmental stuff. No, you won't have any need of the environment if the Lord comes. Give him your time and money and all that kind of thing.

The poor calf being shipped to you, and nobody wants him. And I worry about this dear woman. Well, I'm supposed to get national service for her.

She's all right, she committed suicide. She did it about these stupid people called bishops. I'll put a cathedral for her.

I'm in revolt against that. It's not right. It's an unclean thing.

It's out of hell. Nobody wants a calf to suffer, of course. Beloved, do her, your age, not till Jesus comes.

Do you understand that? And throw all your books away, any of you young people who've got caught up in it. Get it out. I give you a command from God.

Get yourself rid of it. Don't try and bring it into the church of Jesus Christ. You and I, beloved, are here to preach and stand for one thing.

It's the gospel of God. That's what it's about. And all the rest is an imitation.

Rather like the preacher in Ireland. He was talking, preaching in Ireland. He said, the only rock is Jesus Christ, and every other rock is a shamrock.

That's right. That's not original with me. Beloved, it's true.

And I want to say, your path is a love, utter and wonderful love. When you give him yourself, all of you. You can get taste of his love, you can get taste of this and taste of that and taste of the other.

But you know, when I got the first taste of ice cream, I wanted to live on it. Especially in hot weather. Don't you understand? I don't believe so much that these preachers talked and said, let's have it in their lives.

Let's have evidence of it. Let's get full of the Holy Ghost. Let's love.

Let's really love. Let's love so that we spend ourselves in love. Give ourselves in love.

Let's do that. Let's stop everything. The devil's copy of it.

Thou may God and normal promises. I took a little longer, Norma, because you said you weren't going to preach. That's right.

I love you. I've loved coming to this place. Over a year.

If the Lord gives me another ten, I promise you I'll come again. Don't care. Let's praise the Lord together, shall we?

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