

# Christ 02 ~ Keswick Conference 1970

by Harold Wildish

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a victorious Christian life through the provision of God by the Holy Spirit and the hope of the coming of the Lord.*

**Duration:** 54:15

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Corinthians 16:19

**Topics:** "Keswick"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the hope that comes from the word of God in times of suffering and weakness. He highlights the consequences of human sin and the inevitability of death. The preacher urges older individuals to view their time in Florida as an opportunity for mission work, rather than just seeking rest and relaxation. He also challenges backsliders to recommit their lives to the Lord and encourages all Christians to start each week with renewed dedication. The sermon references the early Christians' use of the phrase 'Naranatha' as a password and shares stories of their persecution and martyrdom. The preacher emphasizes the importance of sharing the gospel and sowing the seed of God's word, even in the face of opposition. He calls on believers to continue serving the Lord and using their abilities and resources for His glory.

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## Transcript

Now, my dear friends, just before we get down to our Scripture reading and message, I would like to say a word about this week. I know it's not easy for you to get out twice a day, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. But, may I say this, a Keswick week of teaching is of tremendous value if you can follow it all the way through.

You say, well, what is Keswick teaching? Well, Keswick teaching is the teaching of the Word of God on the provision of God by the Holy Spirit for victorious Christian living. I remember at the Midwest Keswick in Chicagoland, right in the middle of one of those great weeks in Moody Church, a dear man that I know and love very much, he was in the audience, and he came up to our, Hello, Wildy, she said. I said, it's good to see you here.

I said, have you been able to get to many of the meetings? No, he said, this is the only one I can get to this week. Busy, you know. And he was gone.

And Keswick week meant nothing to him. It's those that can sit and expose themselves to the teachings of God's Word that receive the blessing. You say, I don't understand Keswick.

Well, I feel this week is a great exercise of heart to try and make you understand what this word, Keswick, means. You know, if you were called into a doctor's office and the doctor said, just a minute, step off, please, and just get on my table, and he begins to examine you all over, that's just a picture of what Monday is usually at Keswick, an examination by the Great Physician, just to see whether your inside spiritual life is really getting on well or not. You see, on Monday there could be a detection of some growth, or some disease, or some hindrance, or some hurt, something that's spoiling.

But, you know, it's useless to expose sin and disease unless there's a remedy, and on Tuesday we always major on the remedy. God has made every provision to keep His children clean in a dirty old world. That's worth remembering.

And on Wednesday they major on the great subject, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, His sovereign Lordship over the believer. And on Thursday they move to the gracious provision of the fullness of the Holy Ghost for every believer, and on Friday they come to the place where a soul stands before the Lord and says, Lord, fill my hands and set them in motion in holy service toward that perishing world around me. And these are the five great days of every Keswick week.

Now, Jamaica, where I come from, has much to thank for Keswick. First Keswick week was held there seventy years ago this coming July. They're having their seventieth anniversary of Keswick week coming July, and dear old Stevie Orford from Calvary Baptist Church, New York, is coming down for that week of ministry.

Then our city of Kingston, the big city, has reached about its tenth Keswick week, and it's been a tremendous blessing down in the big city. And we had this year Dr. Sidlow Baxter, that gracious Bible teacher. And the Montego Bay Keswick, which is the youngest, only three years old, we had in the early days of January at that tourist resort.

And Dr. Stuart, I mean Mr. Stuart Briscoe, these doctors don't flow so easily in the mission field outside your loved land. Mr. Stuart Briscoe was the speaker, God's messenger. We thank God for Keswick in Jamaica and all it's meant for the Church of Jesus Christ there.

It's toned them up. It's been a real blessing and challenge to our dear believers in that island. And I would love, I would love, you know this may be the last time I'll ever speak of this loved Keswick here in St. Petersburg, and if I look into your faces, I would love that some of you this week came to an understanding of what a Keswick week, a Keswick convention, really means.

You big businessmen down there, you know all about the word convention. A convention is a gathering together of delegates to transact business. But a Christian convention is a gathering together of Christians to transact business with God.

And if God doesn't do business with us, it's, well, it's more just a spiritual picky-nicky, very nice, lovely fellowship. Enjoyed the word, but if we don't do business with God, we've missed the mark. And I do want you to have that in mind.

I purpose taking you into the days of Elijah and Elisha, men of like passions without elves, and what God did for them in the power of the Holy Spirit to make them the men they were in their generation. He can do

for you right now in the 70s in loved America. So try and come, bring friends along with you.

Now, tonight I want to talk about the Lord, especially in connection with his return. This morning it was the person of the risen Lord, but tonight he's coming back. And would you turn to 1 Corinthians 15, and you'll start off with that wonderful mystery, that secret in verse 51.

Do you like secrets? Or you say, yes, I love someone to whisper a secret to me. Well, let me tell you, this is the greatest secret in the world. It's out now.

We are told it was hidden in the great heart of the eternal ones. You'll be surprised when I tell you Adam knew nothing about it, and dear old friend of God, Abraham, knew nothing about it. Dear old Daniel, with all his prophetic visions, knew nothing about the secret.

You read through Ephesians, you will find that it's been hidden, and the secret is only revealed in the fullness of time at the right moment. And this great secret is the Lord's coming for this called-out company, the church. Now, don't think of a denomination, don't think of your loved building, don't think of your Presbyterian church.

Very blessed, but the church in the Bible is always his body. That spiritual company of gathered-out believers, from every tribe, and kindred, and tongue, and nation, who are linked by spiritual life, one with another, and with the risen Lord. And the secret is all about that church.

Let's read it. Verse 51, 1 Corinthians 15. Behold, I show you a mystery, a secret.

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, will you turn a page to the closing verses of this lovely long letter written to the Corinthian church? Chapter 16, verse 19. The churches of Asia salute you.

This letter is going across the ocean. It's going across from Asia Minor to Greece to Corinth. The churches of Asia salute you.

Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord. Lovely couple in the New Testament. If there's any young married couple here tonight, make them your ideal.

They're only mentioned six times in Paul's writings, but he was tremendously fond of them. He thought no end of this young couple. They had sacrificed for the Lord's sake, and for Paul's sake, and for the gospel's sake.

It's rather interesting in the writings that three times it's Aquila and Priscilla, and three times it's Priscilla and Aquila, the ladies put first. I'll leave you to think out why. I think Paul was a real gentleman, and he put ladies first when they should be put first, and he put men first when they should be put first, because never forget that the men are the head.

I know the neck turns the head, but they're the head all right. And Paul loved this couple. He had moved them from place to place in his missionary service, and planted them in new spheres of service, and he loved them very much.

Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord with the church that is in their house. How that puzzles a lot of people. I don't know whether it was in the lounge, or the drawing room, or the garage, or just where they kept their church, but it was in their house.

You know, even in loved America, a lot of people are startled when you tell them that never once in the Bible do you ever find the church in connection with a building, a tabernacle, a cathedral, a chapel. Always the congregation that meets inside. The local church meets, and it doesn't matter really where it meets as long as it's happy, and contented, and there's nice facilities.

It's lovely to have a good building, but in those early pioneer days, many of the churches were born in the homes of believers, and it's true around the mission field today. Some of the finest churches meet in the homes of a man or a woman of God who've thrown open their home for the church to gather. Verse 20, all the brethren greet you, greet ye one another with a holy kiss.

That's the way they did it, a sanctified kiss. Today, we put out our hand and shake. If you go come down South America away, you'll find they'll slip their hands over your shoulder and beat the wind out of you.

If you go down to New Zealand, you'll have to get used to it kissing the Maori people. They're lovely people, but they come up to you and they put their heads down like this, and you put your head down so that your brow touches their brow, and then very slowly you bring your eyes up to look into theirs, and you touch noses. I didn't say rub noses, just touch noses, and that's their kiss.

How'd you like that? Well, that's New Zealand's way with the Maori people. And now we must read on. The salutation of me, Paul, with my own hand.

Dear old Paul, eyes troubling him, having to dictate his letters, takes the pen and signs it off when the letter's finished. Is it? Is it? No, no, no. Just like some of you, you scribble underneath your signature P.S., and there's a little extra tidbit at the end, you know, don't you? So, Paul got the pen now and begins to write again after he'd signed the letter.

If, if any man loved not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. It's an awfully sad word. It's a Greek word.

It means accursed. It's used a number of times in Paul's writings. It means just this.

If after all I've said about the lovely Lord, and I've pleaded with you Corinthians to let him be Lord of your church life, if, if any man loved not the Lord Jesus Christ, there's no love and no response to his great love, then God cannot begin to bless you. He can do nothing else but judge you. If any man loved not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed, anathema.

And then I want you to do something, if your version hasn't done it, put a big, big period after that verse, will you? You know, I hear people reading this verse, if any man loved not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, maranatha. And really, that's not good enough. It's if any man loved not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, period.

It's the saddest thing Paul ever wrote. Then, all of a sudden, the pen begins to write again, and he puts that lovely word, maranatha, which is not a Greek word at all. Two words lying here side by side, one a Greek word, accursed, and the other an Aramaic word, which, if it was translated, would be our Lord cometh.

Wrapped up in that word, it seems, is the hope of the early church, their watchword, the word of hope that speaks of the blessed hope of the coming back of the Lord. Now, just as a way of explanation, if you would like sometime to turn to Mark's gospel, I don't think you need it. Keep it in your mind, just jot it down, that in Mark's gospel you get a number of the Aramaic words.

For instance, do you remember the story of the little girl coming to death, and the Lord Jesus comes into the house, and he puts out his hand and takes her little hand? She's only 12 years of age, and he says, kalathah, kumai, damsel, I stand to thee arise. Those are Aramaic words. A chapter or two later, the Lord is loosing the string and opening the deaf ears of a deaf mute, and he says to him, ephratah, that is, be opened.

Aramaic words. In our prayer meeting just now, one dear sister kept using the word so sweetly as she spoke to our Father God, Abba, Father. And that little word, Abba, that Jesus used in the garden of Gethsemane under the trees, Abba, Father, is the cry of a little Syrian babe.

It's an Aramaic child's cry, Dad! And even the words on the cross, Eloi, Eloi, are Aramaic words, my God, my God. And our Lord used to speak this language, it seems, as he moved around the Sea of Galilee up in the northern parts of Palestine. And this word that we are looking at now, maranatha, is an Aramaic word, and it seems to have been taken and used by the early Christians as a sort of watchword, for wrapped up in it was their hope.

Our Lord cometh. Now if there's one precious soul here tonight, and I looked into your face, and I said to you, do you love the Lord Jesus? If you couldn't with honorable heart look back into my face and say, I do, I love him. His Calvary love has captured my heart.

No one has ever loved me like that. He died for me, and that love has captured my heart and found a response in my life. Then you're a child of God.

Something has produced that response. It's the work of God's Spirit. It's not natural to a child of Adam.

If Calvary captures your heart and you love him, you're a child of God. But if you don't love him, there's no love for him at all, and you can meet them all around you. God can do nothing but judge that person.

His divine blessings cannot move toward that person. But you say, I do love him. Well, if you love him, then your watchword should be maranatha.

The loved Lord that I've not seen, whom having not seen I love, is coming back, and I'm longing for that day. Now, you know the early Christians used to use this word, I wish, I wish that some of us could read some of those exciting stories of the days when the church went underground. I'm not quite sure whether the church is going underground in America.

Personally, I don't think so myself. But never forget this. Around the world, days are not going to get easier for Christians.

If you fondly think that days are getting easier for Christians, they're not. They're not. And around the world, perhaps there are more martyrs and more of those who are actually laying down their lives or suffering for Jesus Christ than in any age all through the 1900 years of church history.

And I see no prospect of anything getting easier for the Christians. We shouldn't expect it. The stage is setting before our eyes for the age end.

You and I are seeing things that our parents and grandparents read in the word of God and talked about, but they never saw them come to pass. But we are seeing them come to pass. You cannot honestly read those Jewish prophets without seeing that Israel is gathering back in unbelief in a matter of a month or two will be 22 years old, and she's back in the land of her fathers with a sea of an Arab world around her, inflamed with one purpose to try and push her into the sea, cut her out as cancer, get rid of her.

And the big powers are all in the background. I don't think Russia wants to be involved, but she's longed for warm water ports in the Middle East. She's longed for those center of communications.

She's longed for a grip on those oil resources. And today she's strangely drawn down, almost looks as if God is going to allow hooks to be put in her jaws, and she'll be drawn down to her destiny in the Middle East. Other nations, like your own giant nation, would like to keep out of it.

But, oh dear, there's a sort of drawing something, drawing people to the vortex of world trouble. And little wars may come and little wars may go, but something's aflame in the Middle East today, which these old prophets spoke of, that will lead to Jacob's trouble. A time of great tribulations such as which the world has never seen and will never see again.

A time when there will be distress of nations and perplexity, and men's hearts completely failing them for fear for the things coming on the earth. And today, at the center of the stage, the heart of the stage is setting with Israel back in the land and facing her distress. And as you go out and meet Jews and Gentiles, as you meet Christians red and yellow, black and white in my travels, and I travel a good deal wherever I meet them, I say, what do you think of world happening? And as I look into their faces, I see hope written there.

They say, well, the coming of the Lord draws near. Yes, we don't know the day, we don't know the hour, but everything points to its nearness. But you say, you don't think that Armageddon is near? You don't think that that dreadful age-end tribulation is running near? I can only tell you this, I can see today that strange setting of the stage for the final tremendous acts of human history before Jesus Christ comes, a Son of Man with divine powers, stepping back into the world that rejected Him and gave Him no face but a cross.

And if this is drawing near, and I'm no date-fixer, I never play with dates, how much nearer must the moment be when His promise, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. How much nearer the moment when the Lord shall descend from heaven, and descending from heaven where a shout will receive from the hands of the Holy Spirit the raised dead, the changed believers caught up together to meet Him in the air? Israel will see Him coming in great power and glory. The heavens will be ablaze with the signs of His coming as He steps back into world politics.

His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olin. But that's not the picture here. Paul has given a secret, and the secret has unfolded, and the secret is that He's coming for His own in the air.

And He's not appointed His people to wrought the awful times of wrath, He's coming to save them from it. And perhaps tonight, perhaps next week, perhaps next month, I don't know when, but all I know is it could be tremendously near. The Lord is coming for His own.

And I can't close my voice on this subject. I am so convinced that the Lord's coming is near that I must bring into my message, at least once a week, some precious, loving, comforting, strengthening, warning note about the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord for His blood-bought people. Now, the early Christians believed in it, and they didn't believe that it was a sort of escape hatch from a world that they had almost had enough of.

You know, today you say to someone, would you like the Lord to come? Oh yes, had enough of this weary old world, maroomatisms getting worse, and have many more years to live, I suppose, and the sooner He comes the better. But it wasn't that to the early Christians. To the early Christians, it wasn't an escape hatch from something.

To them, they had entered into the fact that it was a gateway to certain things that they would never see or enter into till He came. And I wonder if you realize this. There are certain things that no Christian from Paul's day, right down to today, my loved father, my grandfather, let's pick out great names, John Wesley, Phinney, great men of God that you talk about and read about.

They can never see these things until the Lord comes, and this great company of blood-bought people are presented to Christ. If they've fallen asleep in Jesus, their bodies are going to be raised, and those resurrection body will clothe those redeemed spirits. If we are alive and walking the streets today, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, you say, I don't believe in this.

Well, all I can tell you is this, I do. And this is my blessed hope. Could go to bed tonight and say, well, perhaps tonight He'll come.

Wake in the morning, new day given, another adventurous, happy day. Perhaps today He'll come. And I tell you, the hope of the coming of the Lord can be a comforting, it can be a purifying, it can be a strengthening hope.

And we should be found as men and women who watch and wait and do business for a soon-coming master. The early Christians, when they went underground in Rome, used to have tremendous meetings downstairs. I tell you, one or two of the writers that I have read thrill me.

You can picture the old fire lamps burning, smoky rather, but that's the only light they had. It's the great big cavern filled with Christians. They gathered for their love feast.

They gathered together for prayer. They gathered together to listen to servants of God, let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the others judge. They gathered together to keep that remembrance supper, this due in remembrance of me, and they're gathering quite possibly after the Jewish Sabbath has come to an end on a Saturday evening at six.

And through the evening they're gathered there on the first day of the week, the Sunday, the Lord's Day. And there are scouts watching the approaches. Soldiers could break in on these meetings, but my new converts could come to these meetings.

And so one of the scouts watching one of the channels sees someone coming, and he goes forward to challenge him. And as he challenges him, the answer comes, Maranatha, brother. And their arms go out one toward another, and they greet each other with a holy kiss, and maybe a new convert is brought into the meeting.

It was the password of the early Christians. And as they met in those catacombs, sometimes a dear elder would rise, and he would say, oh listen, I have sad news. Sister Teresa and our young sister Maria, they've both been taken.

And hands would go up to their faces, and tears would steal down their cheeks as they thought of two of their number taken by the enemy. The next day or two taken out into the arena to face the great test of day, and they would pray for them. And if you could go up to that arena and see those tiered seats filled with the ladies and gentlemen of Rome, and the star turn is a few Christians are going to die.

They've watched the chariot races, they've watched the gladiators, they've watched animals fighting animals, but now they're bringing out those two, a mature Christian woman with a lovely saintly face, and a trembling girl hardly reached her womanhood. And they are led right across to the great big altar, and all they have to do is to take some incense and throw it into the flame, and they can go free. And by that act they deny that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, Savior.

But they won't do it. They remember again and again how they used to scrawl on the catacomb walls the little fish sign, the acrostic reading of the word fish, which was the great confession of faith. Jesus, Christ, Son of God, Savior.

They believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, the one who came into the world to be our Savior. They won't deny him. They refuse.

And they turn away to the center, and the lions are loosed, and the lions come out in the sunshine, circling round, and it's only a matter of a minute or two, and two Christians are going to die. And you see them standing there, looking up to heaven, when all of a sudden, high up on the tiered seats, a man gets up, cupping his hands, he shouts, Marathon! The ladies and gentlemen of Rome don't know what he's talking about. They speak the Latin.

If they're well-educated, the Greek. If they've been in the colonies, they might have learned the Hebrew. But they don't know that Aramaic word.

It means nothing to the thousands there. But somehow, as it comes across the arena, a matron and a maid, two Christians, they somehow find a sparkle to their eye, and their hands go up. Then the lions are screaming, and they're torn to pieces.

And whatever that word meant to them, it was not an escape hatch from something. It was a gateway. Wonder if the second coming of Christ is that to me, to you, a gateway to the great eternal future.

And the school days of faith, the little tiny three score years and ten, and if by reason of strength four score, with a few more thrown in, maybe to some of you, are over. The school days are all over, and we start the great future. I love the words, we shall not all sleep.

You know, for a Christian to die at falling asleep, I repeat myself, were you ever afraid of putting your head upon a pillow and going past to sleep? Or you say, no, it's what you look for night by night. And those of us who don't sleep too well, long for sleep to come. Well, death for the child of God is falling asleep in Jesus.

It just means that the body falls asleep, and the redeemed inner life is absent from the body. And we put the body away in a safe place, dust to dust, ashes to ashes. But a redeemed soul, absent from the body, is present with the Lord, which is far better.

Christian, when you get this, you can write the word far better over the loveliest experience and thing that you ever had in this life. There isn't a thing you could mention, and God in his tender mercy has given us thousands of things richly to enjoy in our lovely old world. But you can write far better over the choices done.

Far better. When they die and leave us, and you know they're leaving us one by one, I was so looking forward to meet some very dear old Canadian friends here at Keswick. Don't think there's any harm in mentioning their names.

Mr. and Mrs. Dixon from London, Ontario, Canada. They've been here many times before. They've been with us in Jamaica.

We are close to them, and I was looking forward to meet them here. And then I hear that he's taken, just quietly taken in the midst of a normal day's work. Of course, he's left the widow behind, and her heart is stricken.

Naturally, they're the ones that suffer, but absent from the body, present with the Lord. One more atonement. I wonder if we believe this.

Look, when you lose a loved one, if that loved one's a Christian, one less atonement, the charms circle broken, a dear face missed day by day from its accustomed place, but cleansed and saved and perfected by grace. One more in heaven. He's a bachelor.

One less atonement, chill as the earth-born mist, the thought would rise and wrap our footsteps round and dim our eyes, but the bright sunbeam darted from the sky. One more in heaven. One more at home.

This is not home, where cramped in earthly mold, our sight of Christ is dim, our love is cold, but there, where face to face we shall behold, is home and heaven. Do you believe this? The tragedy of today is that millions of Americans don't. They don't believe in heaven.

Their mothers did, their grannies did, their great-grands did, but not today, in our materialistic, scientific age today. If they're honest, they say, well, I've got a life to live, and when it's finished, well, that's the end of it. They're going to die like a dog, but they're not.

They're creatures for each other, and I'm glad I can say that if I drop dead on this platform, I'm going straight to heaven, to do with the old body whatever you like. This is a fact. Say, how do you know? Jesus told, right here in his word, all with blessed hope that all true believers, all, A-double-L, will be taken home.

I love that word, all. We shall not all sleep. We shall not all fall asleep.

Millions of Christians have died, the great number already in heaven, redeemed spirits waiting his coming and the resurrection of the bodies of those believers. On earth, the few that are alive and remain, perhaps if he came this week, you and I would be one of them, but all changed, changed. You know, you'll forgive me, my sister, I know you will.

If you don't, I can't help it. You'll be worth looking at when Jesus comes, sister, and as for you, brethren, my word, when I see you skipping the hills of glory in the likeness of your savior, your lord, you'll be worth looking at, and so will this poor old wild fellow. Change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

I'm so glad we are going to be changed. I think I told you the story how I got into serious trouble one day in a meeting. I was talking about the body, how God made it, how God could make it the temple of the Holy Spirit, how one day God was going to change it, and I was talking about the body, the precious body, this body in which the kingdom of my soul lives.

And like a silly preacher, we preachers are awful foolish sometimes, we say things we shouldn't. It came slipping out, you know. I said, now listen, if you've got an rheumatism in your knees or your ankles, you make the most of it while you've got it, for you'll never have a twinge of it through the never-ending ages of a never-ending eternity.

Make the most of it. Silly thing to say, it just slipped out, you know. And the meeting was hardly over when the trouble brewed.

A dear old saint of God came down the middle aisle leaning on her stick with a very determined look on her face, and she came right up to me and she said, young man, and my head went down. She said, young man, I want to ask you something. Have you ever had any rheumatism in your knees and your ankles? And I said, no ma'am.

She said, I thought not, I thought not. I had some sense of me jolly well right. She said, I thought not? She said, that's poor comfort for an old saint of God who's riddled with it.

Well, all I could do was to apologize, and I said, I'm so sorry if I've hurt your feelings. Do forgive me. And then she started to cackle.

Now, you don't know what a cackle is in St. Petersburg. You don't use that word. It's a high-pitched sort of laugh, a cackle.

And she started to cackle. She just stood there laughing in this high-pitched way, and then she looked up into my face and she said, but young man, you're right, you know. You're right.

I shall never have a twinge of it through the never-ending ages of eternity, so I'm going to make the most of it while I've got it. Good night. And she turned around and went down the aisle cackling away to herself, and I haven't seen her since.

But I'm going to see her in the morning, you know. And the next time I see her skipping the hills of glory in the likeness of the risen, glorified man, the Son of God, who for nineteen hundred years, listen, has never slumbered or slept, the one who slept in Peter's boat in the storm, has never felt weariness in his legs, who was weary at Syche as well, the one who's the risen, glorified man, living in the power of an endless life, he's going to bring many sons to glory. And we, as brothers and sisters in the great family, this is our future.

It's the hope of the sorrowing as one by one our loved ones are taken. It's the hope of the suffering in the hour of weakness and frailty and the awful result of human sin that's hit our race and brings us to death, a dying race of men. But isn't it wonderful to think that when we meet him, one well done from his lips can make it all worthwhile.

Oh, I want to speak to some of you older ones. I do. You're down here for the sunshine.

You're down here for rest. Quite right. Splendid.

But I wonder if you've ever looked upon Florida as a mission field. I wonder. Do you know this? If Jesus comes tonight, you'll never have a chance, never have a chance to give out a good gospel tract by the American Bible Society or some other great society beautifully produced, never have a chance to give it out around the shuffle ball or out there on the bridges where the old codgers are trying to catch the fish.

You'll never have a chance. Why? Everybody loves Jesus up there. On the hills of glory, you won't give out tracts.

You'll never put a person in a car and bring them along to a meeting and bring them under the sound of the word of God up there. Everybody loves him up there. You'll never pick up a phone and ring a phone and say, look, I would like to talk to you about some great things.

No, everybody loves him up there. It's only down here that they spat in his face. It's only down here that they nailed him to a cross.

It's only down here that they trample underfoot his blood. It's only down here they despised him and rejected him. And this is the battleground where the kingdom of darkness is matched with the kingdom of God, dear son.

And God put his spirit in your heart to make you warriors in the fight, to make you men and women to ripe old age who will be adventurers, to be channels of blessing. Do you realize that some of you have had 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, even more years of Christian experience to fit you to be the instrument in God's hands that you can be today that you could never have been when you were a kid of 20, or 15, or a young fellow of 30? You've had the experience of life. You know as well as I do, and I know as well as you do, that you get a kid, one of these literature crusade kids, bless their dear little hearts, get them down here speaking to all these old people of the old people.

Look, what do you know about life? Who are you talking to me? But when a gray-haired saint of God like you goes with a burning compassion in your heart, and you say, listen, I want to talk to you about the things that are eternal, and however you approach them, whatever you say, whatever you give to them, you seek to sow the incorruptible seed of the word of God. It is not in vain. Some of us ought to be winning our biggest harvests in the evening of life, not retiring from the battlefield, but saying, Lord, look at me.

Have a good look at me, Lord. Could you use this mind? Could you use these eyes? Could you use these lips? Could you use this heart? Could you use this will? Could you use these fingers? Could you use these feet? Could you use what I've got? In my own strength I can do nothing, but Lord, you are big enough to do what I cannot do, and you can do in me and through me by the Holy Spirit everything that you plan to do. Oh, what a revolution would take place in Christian circles if you and I really dealt with the Lord like that.

And frankly, I don't know any truth that can revolutionize our Christian lives like the second coming of Christ. I saw an old father of mine who died at 87 years of age. Right up to the close of his life, his key word was, perhaps today, perhaps today, a father and mother who touched people on the street where they lived, a father who touched his colleagues in business, a mother who touched people over the garden wall on washing day and over a cup of tea.

Right to the end, God used, a father and mother who perhaps bore their best fruit in their old age. Oh, dear Christians, dear Christians, wouldn't it be wonderful if you and I woke every morning and we whispered,

perhaps today faith will give way to sight, perhaps today I'll see him and be with him, perhaps today the great eternal future will unfold and begin, and the school days down here will be over. Why not take the little word, baron Arthur, as your watchword? You know, one of my great delights in this day is to see my dear old friend, Roy Gustafson, here, bless him, he does me good every time I look into his face because we've been in battles together, haven't we, Roy? And to see him here cheers me, but you know, one day I was with him at Maranatha Conference grounds, he doesn't remember this, perhaps, and he told me a story on Maranatha Conference grounds which I've never forgotten.

He was urging those dear people up there in the summer to say, Maranatha, why not when you meet, instead of saying, hi guy, how is it? Say, Maranatha, brother, and use it as a watchword, one with another. Next morning he was leaving breakfast, and rather his room to go to breakfast, and he saw two dear old saints of God coming down the path, and one of them looked at the other and he heard her say, here's that man who told us to say that word, what was it? And the other one said, oh I remember it, I'll deal with him. And so they approached Mr. Gustafson and she said, morning Mr. Gustafson, marijuana.

Well, don't get the wrong word, don't get the wrong word, it's Maranatha. Maranatha, the blessed, cheering, strengthening, comforting hope that soon our faith will get way to sight. Listen, if you're not sure of your foundation, I earnestly say this to you, don't sleep tonight without being sure.

You say, well how could I find out? There's a loved one very near to you on these grounds who would show you the way, and if you would stay in this beautiful building at the close and come and take your seat there, I would lead you to Christ if there's one spark of desire in your heart to know Jesus as your own personal Savior. No need for you to go home without Christ, without the blessed assurance of salvation. If you're a backslider, a drifter, taking things easy and doing nothing for the Lord, and a sense of shame is sweeping your heart, you've got to give an account to him.

In the closing prayer, bow and look into his face and say, Lord, take this life afresh. And I couldn't do better at the beginning of the week, not waiting till Friday night, to say to every Christian here, start the week in glad consecration, yielding your body afresh. It's your reasonable service.

And say, Lord, lead me out into this week victoriously, watching, waiting, doing business for a soon-coming master. Will you do that? I'm closing this meeting in prayer. We're not going to sing again, but I want you to spend the moment, one moment, alone with the Lord.

Just now, please. Lord Jesus, we look out upon a world in which we can see many of the things that thou didst speak of on the Mount of Olives, when thou hast asked the question, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming at the end of the age? As we see today the distress of nations, we see the multiplying signs politically, socially, religiously. We know that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and it is the only solution to world problems.

With this great fact before us, we pray that we who know and love thee may gladly yield our lives afresh to thee, and say, Lord Jesus, teach me that perhaps the hours, or the days, or the weeks, or the months are few, and I've got to look into thy face and give an account to thee for them. And may we in glad consecration yield ourselves afresh to thee just now. May we take the attitude, as much as in me is, I am ready, Lord, to be at thy disposal.

Oh, let thy love pour through our hearts toward others. Give to us increasingly the wisdom and fullness of power of thy Spirit, that we might be clean, flowing channels of blessing. If there's one soul, Lord, here

without Christ and without salvation, young or old, we surround them by our prayers.

If there's anyone with them who could counsel them, may they be counseled tonight. If there's anyone who would like to stay for a talk, give them the courage to come down, to shake the speaker's hand, and take a seat, and how we would love to show them the simple glorious plan of how they can get right with God. And as the day draws to a close, may we go to our fellowship, our singing, our rest happy in thee.

Bless all the families represented here, our loved ones, our children and their children, the wide families, thou knowest our hearts yearning for them, that they might be united in Christ and ready for the coming. We pray for our home churches, that thou would bless them, and oh, grant, Lord, if it can please thee, that through this week we may know a deepening gracious sense of the Holy Spirit's working in all our hearts. We give thee our evening thanks, our praise, our worship.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our Father, the fellowship, the holy indwelling communion of the Holy Spirit, abide with us all, now and ever. Amen.

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