

# Break Up Your Fallow Ground

by Ian Paisley

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*Ian Paisley's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for spiritual renewal and seeking God through righteousness and prayer.*

**Duration:** 1:06:51

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 11:30, Hosea 10:12, Matthew 6:33, Luke 8:11, 1 Corinthians 3:6, James 4:8

**Topics:** "Repentance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of seeking the Lord in our lives. He highlights the lack of deep meditation on God's Word and the need for born-again preaching. The preacher encourages the audience to sow bountifully in their preaching and evangelism efforts, reminding them that if they sow sparingly, they will reap sparingly. He also discusses the challenges faced by Christians in speaking out against Allah and the Quran, emphasizing the need to awaken to the dark days before Jesus comes again. Overall, the sermon calls for a renewed commitment to seeking the Lord and finding what has been lost.

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## Transcript

I want to turn to Hosea, the book of Hosea, and we're turning to the tenth chapter. We'll just read some verses from this chapter, chapter ten of Hosea, and verse one. Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself.

According to the multitude of his fruit, he hath increased the altars. According to the goodness of his land, they have made goodly images. Their heart is divided, nor shall they be found faltering.

He shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images. For now they shall say, We have no king, because we fear not the Lord. What then should a king do for us? They have spoken words, swearing falsely, and making a covenant.

Thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field. The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Bethheben. For the people thereof shall mould over it, and the priests thereof that rejoiced on it, for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it.

It shall be also carried unto Assyria for a present to King Jerob. Ephraim shall receive shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel. As for Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam upon the water.

The high places also of Eben, the sin of Israel shall be destroyed. The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars, and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us, and to the hills, Fall upon us. O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gebeah.

There they stood, the battle in Gebeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them. It is in my desire that I should chastise them, and the people shall be gathered against them, when they shall find themselves in their two furrows. And Ephraim is as a heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn.

But I passed over upon her fair neck. I will make Ephraim to ride, and Judah shall plough, and Jacob shall break his clotch. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.

Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and reign righteousness upon you. Ye have ploughed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity. Ye have eaten the fruit of lies, because I didst trust in my way in the multitude of thy mighty man.

Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled Beth Arbel in the day of battle. The mother was dashed in pieces upon her children. So shall Bethel do unto you, because of your great wickedness.

In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off. And God will stamp with his own divine approval this reading from his very own infallible book. Let's stand together for a word of prayer before we have the preaching.

Father in heaven, we thank thee for this opportunity to draw near unto thee. We thank thee for the ministers and elders of the churches that are here. And we pray, O God, that this week there may be a searching of our hearts and a doing of heart business before God.

We look out in a world that's full of sin, full of wickedness, full of evil. We can see the rising tide of potpourri on every hand. We can see the curse of ecumenism.

We can see contemporary religion fighting against the true Christ and the true church. And we thank our God of the darkness that's over the land and the gross darkness that covers the people. And we thank our God of this great earthquake and those that are left without home, without clothes, without water, without food, and without hope.

And, O God, we groan within ourselves and cry out to thee and say, How long, O Lord, holy and true? O God, we pray that when they turn individually in this service to thyself, may men have personal dealings with their God today. We pray, our God, you would shut us away from the circumstances of the gathering and shut us in with yourself and speak to our hearts. Lord, we need to hear thy voice.

We need to obey thy voice. We need to have clean hearts and a right spirit and the joy of thy salvation. So we pray that thou wilt do that searching work.

We thank thee for thy presence yesterday and thy blessing upon the preacher and thy blessing upon the holy word of God. Continue to work this week. Let the tide rise.

Let our God the wind blow. Let God deal with us. And may we go away humiliated and broken but blessed of God and desiring to be at our best in what little time is left until Jesus comes again.

So, Lord, be with us now and help us. And to this end, I take the promise, Holy Ghost, the blessed power of Pentecost to fill me to the uttermost. Thank God he undertakes for me.

And the people of God said, Amen. Very pure Amen. The people of God said, Amen.

That's a bit better. Amen. I want to draw your attention to the twelfth verse of this tenth chapter of Hosea.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy. Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord till he come and rain righteousness upon you. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.

Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord till he come and rain righteousness upon you. You will notice that this text starts with righteousness and ends with righteousness. God is a righteous God.

God's work has to be done in righteousness. The saints of God and the ministers of God are to be clothed in righteousness. We don't live in a righteous world.

We live in an unrighteous world. We live in a crooked world, a sinful world. A world, the whole world, we are told by the Apostle John, lieth in wickedness or lieth in the very lap of wickedness, soaked in wickedness.

The wickedness is oozing out of the putrefaction of this old world in which we live. I am afraid many of us have been so taken with that that we are not aware of how dark is the stain, how terrible is the stench, the voice of sin that sends wrecks to heaven and demands the judgment of a thrice holy God. And we are living in a Sodom and Gomorrah generation.

And Sodom and Gomorrahism has been reborn. Sodom has been born again in this earth of ours. And there is no need for me to stand here and put out a catalog of the terrible sins of the day.

We are all aware of them and how those sins have tainted Christians, how those sins have taken their toll on churches, how those sins have taken their toll upon the ministers of God. But in this verse we have a call to sowing time. And this is a time when God's people and God's ministers are called to sow.

The only hope for the world is the Word of God. The only hope for the world is the preaching of the Word of God. The only hope for the world is the sowing of the Word of the living God.

Because nothing else will meet the need. You need not try stumps. You need not try conformity to the world.

You need not try to have some pleasant way to tickle the palates of people's tongues and tickle their ears. It is all in vain. There is only one remedy for this world and it is the Word of the living God.

The Word of God. How it should grip us. How it should control us.

How it should be the thing that moves in our mind and in our heart continually. The blessed man of Sam 1, he was a delighted man. There are not many delighted people today.

There are plenty of vinegar Christians sitting in church pews. And when they look up at the preacher on a Sunday morning, they would scunner you. Scunner is a good North Antrim word.

They would scunner you. There is no pleasantness about them. Why? They are not delighting in God's Word.

You cannot run six days a week with a devil's crowd and then pretend to have the joy of the Lord in your heart on Sunday. It could not be done. Because their delight is in the law of the Lord.

And it is law to be meditative day and night. Of course, there are not many Christians chew the cud today. There are not many meditations upon God's Word.

That is why we do not have the great preaching that we had in days in our past when men meditated on the Word and found things in the book that no one else found and preached them with a born again tongue and a born again message and a born again liberty in their souls. And that is what God wants out of us today, that we might all be born again. And we will be born again in our preaching.

My father used to say to me, if you get a good sermon, son, preach it again. But before you preach it, see that it is born again in your heart. And if we are not preaching messages that are born again, there will be nobody born again through them.

Because born again messages brings about a new birth in the hearts of hearers. So in this verse, we have five things. It is, of course, a message of grace.

Five is the number of grace. And first of all, I would call your attention to the time of sowing. It is time to seek the Lord.

And the word Lord here is in small capitals, which means it is Jehovah. It is time to seek Jehovah. You see, this whole chapter is about idolatry, false gods, false altars, false sacrifices, false religion and the curse of God upon us.

But here in the middle of the chapter, there is a revelation of Jehovah, the one, only, true and living God. And you better remember that we are coming to an age when there is going to be persecution on those that believe that there is only one true God. And there is only one true religion.

And there is only one true church. And there is only one true Bible. And there is going to be trouble in the world.

And that is why we have all these new pieces of legislation that you are not to criticize. You can curse Jesus on the wireless and nobody will say anything about that. You can say things about the Bible on the wireless and nobody will say anything about that.

But if you say anything about Allah, if you say anything about the Quran, then you are going to be in trouble. There is a standard arising today that is depicted in the book of Revelation, the dark days before Jesus comes again. And we need to awaken to that fact.

Now it says here, it is time to seek the Lord. The most important thing a man can do is to seek the Lord. The most important thing a preacher can do is to seek the Lord.

The most important thing a church can do is to seek the Lord. The most important thing that we should engage in is seeking the Lord. Seeking the Lord.

When you seek a thing, you have a good illustration of that in our Lord's parable about the lost coin. And you will find that the woman lit a candle and she took her brush and she searched until she found it. She searched until she found it.

She was determined that day to find that which is lost. It would be a great thing if we were determined this week to find what we have lost. It would be a great job of work.

The things that we have forfeited in our ministry. The things that we have set aside in our ministry. The things that are all important to a ministry in the Spirit of God.

And so, this first thing is about the time of seeking the Lord. Of course, if you're going to seek the Lord and it's God's time, you should be thankful that God has given you the mental strength to understand His Word. The faculties, the use of our faculties are a wonderful thing.

It's a great thing to have the intelligence to use our faculties for the glory of God and for the truth of God. And God has given us a grasp of our faculties. You can wake up tomorrow morning and your faculties could be gone.

You can wake up tomorrow morning and your day of really thinking clearly and rightly would be finished. But thank God every morning God gives us the time for the use of our faculties. And we need the use of our faculties.

I often go to talk to people who are dying and I am surprised about one thing. And it's an amazing thing. And it is this, that these people are dying until you talk about something that's spiritual.

And then you're amazed, totally amazed about the perfectness of their memory and the perfectness of their mind and the perfectness of their love of the Savior. That's an amazing thing. And I've seen that over and over again.

It would be a good thing, wouldn't it, if we applied more time of our mental ability when we have our faculties to really know and love and understand the Word and really know and love and understanding the Lord. It would be a great thing. We have time because we have time to exercise our mental powers.

We have time because God has given us physical strength. And you can't do the work of God without physical strength. And the Lord can renew our physical strength.

We all have our infirmities. We all are going down the valley. We are all the target of all that that means.

But thank God, God can give us physical power. He renews the youth like the eagles. And God can renew our youthfulness by giving to us that physical strength that we need.

And we should not abuse our physical strength. You see, God's people say that they believe in keeping one day holy. But dear help a minister if he goes off for one day every week.

If your minister shut the door of the manse and said, Nobody received here on Monday, it's my Sabbath. They would be aroused. They would have them at presbytery.

They would say, We can't find them. When people die and people are sick, you can't find them. But my friend, if you don't keep a Sabbath in your life, you can't expect God to honor you.

Every one of us needs that day of rest. It doesn't say in the Bible seven days for the preacher and six days for everybody else. But it says everyone must keep the Sabbath.

And if you have no Sabbath, and if you think that you are a good minister because you are at the beck and call of everybody. And some dear wee woman that wants to fill a form for a pension thinks a minister should be there to fill it for her and direct her thing. That's not what God called you to be.

God called you to have a Sabbath day. We don't have it. There's fellas laughing here today and they don't have it.

But if they made up their mind, I'm going to have a Sabbath day. I'm going to take off. If something happened at this conference today that every minister said we're going to have a Sabbath day.

They spent that day in rest, relaxation. We would have a different type of minister the last six days of the week. We would.

You need your body. It's not any different from anybody else's body. And it needs that.

And I would exhort you. I would exhort you to thank God for the physical ability that God can give us. Also, I'd like you to notice it is time for us to really seek the Lord.

We've got to seek Him. How do we seek God? We seek God with all our heart and with all our mind and with all our strength. We seek Him with all our strength.

We really seek the Lord. Could I ask you a question? How many times do you really seek the Lord? How many times do you really seek the Lord? Really seek Him. This isn't playing about.

It's real heart searching and really seeking the Lord. Seek. It is time to seek the Lord.

Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. Now while that applies primarily to personal salvation, it also applies to salvation from all things.

And we may need to be saved from laziness and sleepiness and worldliness and sinfulness. And now it's the accepted time that we should be. And so this time is a very important factor in how time flies away.

I don't know about you, but I know when I take up the Bible and start to study, I know times the hour has fled away. And what is half an hour with the Bible? It's nothing. You need more than half an hour.

You need hours. No wonder the old man, what did it say of Mr. Luther? Three hours every day he prayed. And he said, if I don't pray for three hours, then I am not a good minister of Jesus Christ.

And many of us pray for three hours. Mr. Spurgeon said there wasn't a twenty minutes in his day that he didn't have part of that twenty minutes to pray. And he says, part of every twenty minutes I have given to God for prayer.

God doesn't want a prayer book prayer. He doesn't want. Mr. Spurgeon said in one of his sermons, God save us from the nasal twang of preachers and from their grunts.

And I thought that was a very good statement. And God doesn't want to have your nasal twang in his ear, nor does he want your grunts. He wants you just to pray and talk to him face to face as a man talketh unto his ram.

That's what he's looking for. Plain, straight talk between the holy God and my unholy, unrighteous soul that needs continual cleansing and conformity to his blessed and to his holy will. And so we have here a cry.

And it's a cry that time to sow is time to seek the Lord. Before you go out to sow, seek the Lord. While you're sowing, seek the Lord.

When the sowing is over and you go home, seek the Lord. Everywhere you go, make sure you're sowing the seed. J.C. Ryle taught a series of gospel tracts.

And they were very good tracts. Plain, old, straight, old-fashioned gospel tracts. He was the first Episcopalian minister, bishop ever dared to do that.

And he used to have a coach that took him down to the station when he was going up to London. And as he drove the coach, he sat at the window and he threw hundreds of these tracts out through the window. And people said to him, that's a waste.

He says, it's no waste. He said, if one of those tracts brings a soul to Christ, it will be well worthwhile. And when he sat in the real retreat, he did the same.

He sat at the window and he opened the window. And then he started to get the letters from people who found the tracts and read the tracts and got seeing it. And he used to say to his friends, if you sow sparingly, you'll reap sparingly.

If you sow bountifully, you will reap bountifully. So if you're not having results, it's because you're not sowing enough. God is so bountiful.

God is so bountiful. As you know, for the past 35 years, I have had police officers with me every day. It's like a continual prison.

You meet them when you come down for your breakfast and you say goodbye to them at supper time. And before they leave you, they say, what time tomorrow? And you know they'll be there tomorrow waiting for you. And if you had a time fixture that you ignored them, you would go mad.

You'd think you were having a life sentence. And it's no wonder that one prominent politician couldn't stick them anymore, so he just struck one of them in the head and then they took them off him because he was a danger. I'll not mention that politician.

He was an official in the U.S. But let me say to you this. I have sought to witness to these men. And I have been greatly at times disappointed because I haven't seen as many of them want for Christ as I'd like to.

But this past week, I was sent for through David to go and visit a man, one of these men, that served with me over 25 years ago. He was a very self-righteous man, a very nice man, a very polite man, and a very gracious man. But he was hard as far as the gospel was concerned.

And then I was invited. And I had the great joy of leading him to a full assurance of faith in Jesus Christ. And it's marvelous his development, how he has developed in witness to others that he has been brought to Christ.

Your bread will return to you after many days. That's what the Bible says. Don't you worry about the reaping.

God will take care of the reaping. One sows, another reaps, but it's God that gives the increase. Another man who drove me for many years sent for me when he was in his last illness.

And he said, you know, he said, sir, I should have come to Christ years ago. Do you think the Lord would take me in? I said, the Lord will take you in now. And thank God that deeper man was taken in before he passed away and witnessed a good confession.

Do not despair, my brother. God will answer your prayers. And God will answer your prayers if you seek the Lord.

It is time to seek the Lord. I trust that today there will be planted a precious seed in your heart that you're going to seek the Lord in this question of sowing. It is time to seek the Lord.

But let's come to the second thing, the task of sowing. Break up the fallow ground. Break up the fallow ground.

But that is not what it says. It says break up your fallow ground. So you start with yourself.

You know, some preachers think that if they give their congregations a good battering on Sunday morning and are far excellent in whipping them and scourging them, then they've done a good job and they'll say they can lump it if they like, but they're going to get it. It's about time, brother, you start it upon yourself. It's time you start it to lambast yourself.

You will see clearer to cast the moat out of your congregation's eyes when you get that plank of wood out of your own eyes. That's what the Lord said. So you better get down to that.

And here it says, break up your fallow ground. What is fallow ground? Fallow ground is ground that has never been worked properly. The Ministry of Agriculture in the old days when people did plow and sow and reap, they gave a subsidy to people who broke up their fallow ground.

And they paid them a sum of money for ground that was plowed that hadn't been plowed for a seven year period. And if you could prove that a field had not been plowed for seven years and you plowed it, you got a subsidy. My, if all of us allowed God to plow our hearts today, what a subsidy it would be to ourselves, to our homes, to our families, to our churches and to the neighborhood in which we live.

Break up your fallow ground. Now, it doesn't say, Lord, break up my fallow ground. It's a direct order to you.

There are some things that God doesn't do. And God doesn't break up your fallow ground. You have to break it up.

Now, how do you break up your fallow ground? Number one, by acknowledging that it's fallow ground. By coming to the place of wisdom where you look at yourself and you say, yes, this is fallow ground. It's not bearing fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit is not here. The fruit of soul winning is not here. The fruit of loving the Bible is not here.

The fruit of a love for my brethren is not here. The fruit for a love of my congregation is not here. The fruit of the love of my parish is not here.

And the town in which I live, it's not there. It's fallow ground. You need to acknowledge it.

You'll not have any of it broken up until you face up to it that there's fallow ground in your heart, in your life, in your ministry, in your church. You've got to face it. That's the first thing.

Acknowledge that there's fallow ground. And then lay to your heart the commands of God concerning the state of the heart. You know what we need? A revival of heart religion.

Heart religion. See, so often our religion is a veneer. It's not heart religion.

It starts on the outside and works in. That's false religion. True religion starts on the inside and works out.

That's true religion. And we must have that fallow ground and we must ask the Lord by His grace to help us to face up to how it is fallow. And of course it's got fallow because the plough shear has not entered it.

You see, the word of God is a plough. The word of God is a plough. It goes down and it turns up the soil.

Why does the soil need turned up? Because in turning up the soil, you enable the soil to drink in from the sun and the climate. The ingredients it needs to make it good ground. You know, when you study that parable of sowing the seed, there's nothing said about the seed because the seed's the same.

Whether it falls by the wayside or whether it falls among thorns or it falls on stony ground or it falls in good, the seed is the same. The seed of God's word is the same, hasn't changed. So that's not the worry.

The worry is the ground into which the seed falls. It was the same seed that brought forth a hundredfold as the seed that fell by the wayside. What was wrong? The soil was wrong.

And what's wrong with us? The soil is wrong. That's what's wrong with us. Fallow ground.

It's not prepared. I learned to plow in a place called Six Mile Cross in Franksland. And I remember George Watson taking me up with two horses and he said, I'll run a score down the field for you and you just try and keep to that score and then I'll leave you.

So he put a score down the field with a plow and he says, and I said, what am I supposed to do? He says, you're going to plow. And the best way you plow, you plow. And he says, I've just warned you of something.

When the horses come to the end of the furrow, they'll want to pull out of it. And he said, you keep a firm rein on them because they will make S's in the field instead of a straight thing. And I proved that because a piece of ground I was plowing was in Franksland up above the railway line, Mr. Greer will know it well, out to Carrickmore Road, and you could see it from the bottom road.

And when the people looked up, all they saw was S's. Thought I was doing a sort of code work. Break up the fallow ground.

God needs to keep a tight rein on us. God needs to teach us the discipline of having the fallow ground broken up. And when I turned over that soil, all I saw was creepy crawling things running for shelter.

Yes. Worms and all sorts of centipedes with a hundred legs of them dashing away. When God turns out your heart, you'll be amazed how rotten your heart is.

You'll be amazed about how appalling it is. You'll be amazed about the creepy crawling things of hell and Satan that's in your heart. There's nothing nice about a heart that's deceitful above all things.

I'm desperately wicked. Did you ever study that verse? It's the heart of man is deceitful above all things. Above all things.

It's the climax of evil. The heart of man. I was reading in my lesson this morning coming down to this service in the book of Genesis about the imagination of man's heart as only evil continues.

Imagination of man's heart. The heart has to have itself broken up. And then the sunshine and the snow and the rain has to go through the process.

And then after it's plowed, you have to break the clods. And in those days, when I plowed, then you had to gather the stones. Not many farmers gather stones of land today, but in the old days you gathered the stones and what a work that was.

And then you got the hollow or the disc plough, which had discs on it. And these discs, steel discs, went round and cut up the sods. Cut them up until that ground was as good as any ground that was going to be made into a tennis court or a golf course.

And then it was ready for the seed. Only then it was ready. There are some people who sow on fallow ground.

And they might as well sow by the wayside or sow among thorns. In fact, there's another reference in the Old Testament to fallow ground. It's the only reference there is.

There's only two in the Bible as far as I know. Of course, don't never trust a crudence concordance. For Mr. Cruden, he wasn't too wise in the head.

And not only that, but he missed out at least 40 references. The best concordance is by a man called Walker. Walker's Comprehensive Concordance.

That's the best one. And it has more than 40,000 more references than old Cruden has in his. But I'm only saying that by the way.

Chapter 4 of Jeremiah. Break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns. Jeremiah 4 and verse 3. Sow not among thorns.

That's what we've been doing. Sowing among thorns. Break up your fallow ground.

And then comes the sowing. And George Watson said to me, very wisely, I don't care who does the sowing when I care who does the breaking up and preparing the sowing. And he was a very wise man.

For the preparation of the sowing. And some people don't want to sow, but they don't want to do any preparation. And you can't do it.

And God is saying, break up your fallow ground. Now this is to do with our own heart. But it's also to do with the heart of others.

We have to work upon our people that their fallow ground might be broken up. And you'll never scold a person into praying, so quit scolding. And you'll never hammer a person into doing things for the Lord.

The best way is for you to show an example. And if you show an example, a praying preacher will have a praying congregation. A paying preacher.

A man that tithes his money, he will have tithers in his congregation. A lover of souls in the minister will make his people love the souls of men. A missionary vision in the minister will make his people have a missionary vision.

It will be reflective. And you'll only lift your congregation as high spiritually as you are yourself. If you think you're going to produce a race of giants and you're only a dwarf, God help you, you'll soon be disillusioned.

I want to say today it is important that we apply ourselves to that. Break up the fallow ground. Now you can look back, can't you, into the Old Testament and see men whose fallow ground was broken up.

God did a hard work in their lives. God did a hard work in their souls. God did a hard work among their people.

And my, what an event it was to the people. We see it in the New Testament. We see it in church history.

We see it in the great Reformation times. In the days of great revival. What was it? It was a breaking up of the fallow ground.

That's what it was. There was no difference between the gospel seed in the darkest day of church history and in the brightest day of revival in church history. The seed was the same.

It's to do with the ground. We've got a ground. We've got a soil problem.

We've got to face up to that. Break up the fallow ground. Now if you look thirdly, you'll find that we have the test of soil.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness and reap in mercy. This whole business of a work of grace in our heart can be tested by two things. The manifestation of righteousness and the reaping in mercy.

Now what is it to sow to ourselves? We understand sowing in the field. But how do we sow to our self-righteousness? We sow to our self-righteousness by the applying of God's righteousness to the ground of our heart that we have broken. And we've broken the fallow ground and we sow to ourselves righteousness.

But the very seed that we're going to sow to others, we sow it in our soul hearts. And if that seed bears love for souls in your heart, it'll bear love for souls in your people's heart. If that seed causes you to say goodbye to the world and separate you and make you a non-conformist to all the things of the world, it will do the same among your people.

It is the same seed that works the same way. And Christians have something in common. And what do they have in common? The results of the seed produces the same thing in all their lives.

We're born again. We have a common birth because the seed was sown. We are sanctified.

We have a common sanctification because the seed is sown. We have an urge to pray because the seed has been sown. It's all now to do with the seed.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness. I wonder how many of us can say, when I come to the Bible, I take the Bible as the seed-sowing time for me. Are we appropriating the seed of God's Word so that that Word has a living power within us? Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die and abideth alone, but if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Now, of course, that is a story depicting our Savior. He was the corn of wheat that fell into the ground and died. But it also has to do with the Word of God.

Every characteristic of Christ is true to His Book and His Word because both the inspired Word and the incarnate Word are the same. And if you want to know what the incarnate Word is like, read the inspired Word. There's no other place where you'll get a true picture of Christ than in His own most precious Word.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness. And that is why every man of God should be studying his Bible. There are all sorts of books today telling people how to study their Bible.

But people are not studying their Bible. I went into a bookshop the other day. Well, it was a few years ago in Greenville, South Carolina.

And I asked a man to show me his Bible. And he had Bibles for everyone. The housewife's Bible.

I said to my wife, I should have bought that for you, dear. The housewife's Bible. The busy man's Bible.

The preacher's Bible. The Bible for children. The children's Bible.

The teenage Bible. The businessman's Bible. And so on, all these Bibles.

And there were all ways that you could study the Bible. But none of these Bibles are being studied. We have a whole squad of people who are filled with the blind.

The Word of God. Starved. The way to study the Bible is simple.

It is to read it. To read it. That's the way you do it.

It is reading that opens the Word of God. Reading. And of course, it's not reading quickly.

It's reading quietly, slowly, and receiving the Word. Receiving the Word. Oh, that we might learn that.

That we might learn what it is to have that righteousness sown in our heart. And to have that mercy being weeped in our soul. If you're weeping mercy in your own spiritual life.

You'll long that others out there in the hillsides, out of Christ, will have that mercy. The same thing as you're enjoying. You'll want to share it with them.

And I long for a day when people will really and truly give themselves to the Word of God. And I'm very glad that in our church at the moment we have a group of young people. You know, children's meetings are tremendous things.

But we need to follow up the children that we lead to Christ. And we have recently started a little circle for those young children who in the Sunday school and in our children meeting come to Christ. And you know it's the best class we have in the church.

Young people who love their Bible. Young out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. And the things these young people say about the Bible are staggering.

Absolutely staggering. They would bamboozle the doctors of divinity that are in the church. Bamboozle them.

Just tiny mites. But they've started to read the Bible. And a mother said to me the other day, you know, my little boy said, Mr. Paisley, he reads his Bible through every year.

Mommy, could I have a yearly Bible? She said, you can. So she bought him a yearly Bible. And she sent me word that every day he spends his time.

Goes up to his bedroom, sits down, and he reads the whole part of the Bible through the day. It's only a young child. Oh, if we can get that into the hearts of our children.

We will be putting men and women out. The boys and girls of today are the men and women of tomorrow. And I believe that we should be evangelizing the men and women of tomorrow.

We should be saving the men and women of tomorrow today. Their children. We should, after we lead them to the Lord, we shouldn't leave them.

We should train them up in the way that they should go. Because there are very few homes of real, true Christian influence. Very few.

Even the homes of God's people. I don't know how many homes we have in our church that really have a proper family altar. I don't know.

It grieves my soul that we have families that never all call upon the Lord. And they never have a family altar when the whole family needs God sometime every day to call unitedly on the Lord. Oh, we need to recover that.

It's something that's worth recovering. And it's something we would need to recover. Leap in mercy.

How merciful God is to his people. He's a God of all comfort. A God of all mercy.

I'm glad he doesn't deal with us after our sins. Or he doesn't reward us according to our iniquities. But his mercy is far above the heavens.

The mercy of God. May the Lord teach us the test of soul. We have also in this verse the triumph of sowing.

And the triumph of sowing is found in those words, Till he come. Who is the he? The he is the Lord. It is time to seek the Lord till he come.

The advent of God is of course the test, the triumph of sowing. I was reading in the book of James. And James is a great book.

Well worthy of careful study. And we read about the ears of the Lord of Sabbath. The ears of the Lord of Sabbath.

The Lord is over the harvest field. James 5 and verse 4. Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields. Which is of you kept back by fraud crying.

And the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of the Sabbath. There is a reward for those that sow and those that reap. And it enters into God's ear.

And God comes till he come. Till he come. What a great thing.

That the Lord that we have sought comes to us in answer to prayer. To make our sowing triumphant. There is nothing that encourages you to win souls brethren like winning souls.

There is nothing more encouraging. To meet a person you have led to the Lord years later. And to see them going on with the Lord.

I was in the hospital recently. And there was a lady coming down the ward in crutches. And when she came opposite to me she grabbed me.

Now she didn't grab me to attack me. But she had to hold on to me so that she could stand up without her crutch. And she says I want to talk to you.

I said what do you want to talk to me about? She said many, many years ago you led me to Christ. And she said when I saw you coming into the ward my heart bubbled over. And she said I just wanted to tell you.

And I said that's good but you're walking in crutches. She said I'm going to throw them away some day. Getting better.

I said that's good. You know we were singing He that wineth souls is wise. There is a reward today in our ministry when we see souls won to Christ.

There is a reward. But what will the reward be when we get to the other side? And these people who would have been lost in hell we have seen redeemed and brought to Christ. And we will stand in the glory.

Here am I and the children that thou hast given me. Brethren a soulless ministry is a ministry that's not worth having. But you don't need to have a soulless ministry.

You can have a ministry of millions of souls. Yes and I mean that. God can use you mightily.

And we will never know some of the things that we thought in our ministry were not successful. When we get to the other side we'll find that we're more successful than those that we reckon by our own measurement successful. Brethren till he come.

I want the Lord to come to the river Elul. I want the Lord to come into my home. I want the Lord to come into my heart.

I want the Lord to come into my brethren and sisters hearts. Till he come. The advent of the Lord.

My when the Lord comes everything is different. When the Lord takes over everything is different. When the Lord takes his place and we have crowned him Lord of all.

Till he come. Don't delay your coming Lord Jesus. Give us this great revival that we long for.

Send us the power of thy spirit. Let the wilderness blossom like the rose. Let's see great days of God's right hand.

That's why we're here today. And that's what we've come to pray about. And call to God about.

And then finally. Till he come and reign righteousness upon you. Reigning of righteousness.

The man called Elijah. You remember him well. He had two burdens on his heart.

The first burden was a burden for fire. And he prayed a very short prayer. He could pray it in about two minutes.

And the fire came immediately. Burned the sacrifice of the other. And then he wanted rain from heaven.

But he didn't get the rain in two minutes. And he got down having climbed up a bit higher up the hill. And he put his head between his knees.

And he cried to God for rain. And he said to Gehazi his servant. You have to go up that mountain seven times.

And see. Look right over the coast. There's a great river of water.

The whole Mediterranean Sea is there. I don't want it there. I want it here.

So I want you to see that great mass of water being shifted by the power of God. From where it is now over here. The land is parched.

It's a wilderness. There's death and calamity in every step you take now. Three and a half years of drought.

And I want it all changed. And I'm going to pray. And he prayed.

And Gehazi came back and said there's nothing. Not even a cloud. He says there's nothing.

And Elijah said you go up the hill again. And up the hill he went. And he looked again.

And he looked everywhere. There wasn't a cloud. He came back down and he says Elijah there's nothing.

And Elijah looked up with tears in his eyes. And the sweat of great conviction on his brow. And he said I'm praying Gehazi and there's going to be rain today.

It must come. You read in the book of James he prayed in his prayer. Sometimes you pray but you don't pray in your prayer.

But he was praying in his prayer that water would come. He came down the sixth time and he said Elijah there's nothing. He says go up again.

He says I'm tired walking up and down this hill. He says I'd rather be with you sitting here. He says I'm not sitting here.

I'm praying. Get you up that hill you lazy dog. And get up quickly and come down and tell me.

And he went up. And he knew what he did. He saw a cloud like a man's hand.

I've stood on the top of Carmel. I have seen a cloud like a man's hand. The day I was there was a very warm day.

We could have done with some rain. And I climbed to the top and I looked out. I saw a little cloud just like a man's hand.

You still come there. That cloud formation uniquely confirming what the Bible says. A little hand.

A little hand. And he came down and he said Elijah there's a little hand. He says that's enough.

Get you down you old a-hand. And tell him if he doesn't get into that chariot and whip up his horses he'll never get there. He'll never see Jezebel again.

Which would be a good job if he never did see her. And he went down. And then Elijah went down and he tucked his skirts of his long robe into the leather and girdle.

And he ran before the chariot. And he outran the chariot. The man that brought the water down.

Till he come and rain righteousness upon them. The rain is there. The reservoir is there.

The water is there. Still there's more to follow. Brethren we would do well if we could be Elijah's.

And call the water of God's water strength down upon us. Refreshing a dry parts land where no water is. And reviving God's work.

And giving us God's blessing. May God bless these remarks to our heart. And make them practical to our souls.

We're going to sing another hymn. It's 733.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14487.mp3>

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