

# All Nature Groans

by John Follette

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*The sermon explores the groaning of creation due to sin and the call to worship God in spirit and truth, revealing the interconnectedness of all things in His plan.*

**Duration:** 39:01

**Scripture:** Psalm 19:1-4, Matthew 4:4, John 6:63, John 14:26, John 16:13, 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

**Topics:** "Consummation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the groaning of nature and how it relates to our own spiritual groaning. They share a personal story about a bird that they communicate with and how it eventually brings its companion to them. The speaker emphasizes the importance of revelation and how it comes in a three-fold pattern: through nature, the written Word, and the power of the Holy Spirit. They encourage the audience to be attuned to the revelation that the Holy Spirit brings and to embrace the simplicity and profundity of God's teachings.

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## Transcript

...just as I'm talking, and so it might help you to know that. We're going to sing to the Lord, because I want to have a little time given to Him, in worship, and openness of spirit, and adoration. So we're going to sing, Holy, Holy, Holy, 185.

And we're going to sing it to Him, Holy, Holy, Holy. Let's our hearts move out, and get in contact with that atmosphere. Heaven is full of that.

Heaven is just full of that. Heaven is full of that whole atmosphere. But we get so stuck down here in the mud, that we forget that we are to not live here.

He says we are seated together with Christ in the heavenlies. Well then, what's the atmosphere of the heavenlies? It's Holy, Holy, Holy. But we don't live in Holy, Holy, Holy, because we're so earthbound, so used to sense perception and these laws here, that we get down in sand and mud, and say it's brush.

No, seated together with Him in the heavenlies, and in the heavenlies, the whole atmosphere is Holy, Holy, Holy. It's worship, it's adoration. Sing to cherubims forever bowing, saying continually, Holy, Holy.

Well, you have to. He's worthy. That's like God.

So we're adding our little contribution. Poor little sticks that we are. So we stand up before Him this morning and say, Lord, you know how we are.

We would love to worship you as we should, really in spirit and in truth. But this is the best we can offer, and we're singing it from our hearts. Holy, Holy, Holy.

Shall we stand? Holy, Holy, Holy. Holy, Holy, Holy. O God, the Eternal, the Ancient of Days, we come before Thee this morning, desiring to worship Thee, desiring to pour out our hearts to Thee.

Our only approach is through the blood of Thy precious Son. Accept us this morning in the name of Jesus, who has made a way through the heavenlies to Thee, paved it, opened it, made access, and our little trembling hearts come trailing along behind. With our arms lifted to Thee, say, Holy, Holy, Holy.

Redeem our love this morning. Redeem our worship this morning. Redeem what we have to offer.

Our hearts are prostrated before Thee. Our bodies are here, but our spirit, our spirits, Lord, are prostrated before Thee. There's no strength.

Nothing in our natural could give us strength to stand. Our spirits, they are prostrated before Thee, our great and wonderful God. Thy Son has brought us into community, and Thy Holy Son has said we are accepted in Him.

Thy Son has said we can ask in His name. Thy Son, Lord, is our only access to Thee. Therefore we're not afraid.

You take away that horrible birth thing called fear. It's cast out, it's rebuked, it's resisted forever. It's the love of God.

It's shed abroad in our hearts. And it's that love going back again to Thee. We're caught up in that love, Lord.

We have many of our own. But that mighty Torah, that has swept over us, it's swept us up, it's caught us up, it has caught us up in its might and its strength. Like a mighty tide, that eternal love of God.

And we're swept back again to Thy heart. Moving, not under the powers of any energy in us, but carried, swept in, flooded in by the power of the love that teaches more and more how to worship Thee and love Thee as we should. We're so tired of the forms of people, men, that separate us.

They're so clumsy, Lord. They're so awkward. There's no real beauty about them.

Teach us how to love Thee. Teach us how to worship Thee. We invite Thee, Lord, to brood over us today.

We've had such a happy time with these dear hearts. You've put a love in our heart for them. We love them, Lord.

We love them because they're Your children. And Your love is in them. Your interest is in them.

Your whole desire is for them. We thank You for that. And as we come to look into the Word, to listen to what the Spirit has as teaching or correction or encouragement, we come and ask You that the Holy Spirit, who has written the Word, who has revealed the truth, He may interpret that truth to every heart in the language which that heart knows.

Each heart knows its own language. Each heart knows the voice of God when you speak. Therefore, speak to our hearts today.

Be glorified in this little service. Pray to us the bread of life again. Not that we shall be pleased, entertained, delighted, refreshed, but we want it, Lord, to do things in us.

Amen. We embrace it that it may have power in us to transform and reshape and recast and to bring us into the image and the likeness that You so desire. You see us this morning accepted in that beloved, in that wonderful Christ.

We want to be like the one in whom we live. Speak to us thyself. Hide me away, Lord.

I just don't want to talk this morning. I want You to talk. You know it's hard to come and speak.

I don't like it. But You can speak. Don't let me say a word, Lord.

You say the word. You preach. You do the teaching.

You bring the message. Let me sit back, listening to it, too. My heart is so hungry, too.

You break the bread. For Jesus' sake, amen. I hardly know what the Lord wants.

He's laid a few thoughts on my heart. And I would be very happy to share them with you. But I noticed here these poems and things that are being passed out.

I didn't do this. Our dear sister, Sandell, had these all done and everything else. I had nothing to do with this.

But she thought she would like them. And so she's made these copies, and I want you to share them, too. But I think I'd like to read some of them to you, just while we're in the mood of it.

That you can get the spirit of it. I can't read them all because it would take me all morning, and I never would get through them. And I don't want to do that.

But there's some of these that might help you, if you know the atmosphere in which I happen to be moving, when the Lord gave me these things. I don't write. I've published a book of verse.

I write. I'm a poet. And that's all right.

But I don't sit down and say, I'll write a poem. You can't do that. The things of God are born.

They are birthed. They are born of the spirit. They're not composed and made.

That's artificial. Now, I know technically the rules of rhyme, reasoning, meter, accent. I know that.

And you can put them together. But I feel they're so mechanical. I have read poetry that all I could feel were the step ladders and pulleys and all the gadgets put together to make it.

Have you ever read poetry like that? I have. It's never breathed a bit of life into me. But it is actually correct.

Grammatically correct. Truly correct. But all I could feel was the mechanics of it, the machinery of it, the meter of it.

Ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta. Ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta. Now, what's this? Ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta, ta-ta.

Of course. And, you know, and some people write with that. And it annoys me.

I take the thing down. I said, there's too much ta-ta in there. But I don't feel God.

I don't feel the spirit. I would rather read a most broken poem out of somebody's heart. They send to me sometimes for criticism and help.

Some people who want to do writing and they know I do. They say, will you let me come? Will you help? And I said, all right, come on. And so I have worked all along that line.

I'm working 17 fields at once. So the poem is something that's born of the spirit because we've gone through some episode or some experience that has registered and we want it released. I want to read you this in formal ways.

Now, how this happened to come was because I had been so used to the technical aspect of the revelation of God. He has to come to us as revealed in the Word. I believe that absolutely, that God has come to me so many times outside of the Word.

And I don't think that's a heretical view. I guarantee you, no. Well, why? Because all creation, this whole phenomenon of creation about us, is God's first, earliest, primitive revelation.

That whole creation is a revelation. But it is inarticulate. That is, it doesn't sound forth in the vocabulary or style of expression with which we are familiar.

But it is still God. The heavens declare the glory of God. In Hebrew, those words mean to preach and to teach.

Well, how many open their ears to hear? No, they see it. Don't you hear? We should see, but we should hear. And all creation is a first, elementary, of course primitive, revelation.

That's why Paul in Romans says, The invisible things of God, the eternal, are made known to us throughout. The tangible, seeable, material things which he has created. It's an old philosophic way of fashion.

The unknown is only known through the medium of the known. That's a law. You know the unknown through a medium of that which you know, because you have to have that as a medium.

Can you see now, when Jesus preaches some of the most profound things, he uses all the material with which they are most commonly interested in. He takes them up and glorifies them, because that is the instrument through which he will project spirit and life and teaching. You don't find him giving a theological definition of the thing he knew better.

Who would want a God who would do that? People say, I wish I had a Bible that had all... You wouldn't want a Bible like that. You've got plenty of textbooks and libraries full of commentaries, so I'm sick of them. Why not contact God once? But we have to think all of our things after somebody else.

How many ever have an original thought? I give you a headache once in a while if you have one. No, we have to think continually these thoughts of others. We rethink various of them.

Anyone's original is too painful. It's right. It's so much easier to come by way of the other.

And so, I knew that. I said, that's right, Lord. The revelations so many times are brought down in definition form or in a tangible way that we think is... Of course, it has to be orthodox and religious.

But God told me a long time ago, I've always been a hound for truth. It's killed me, but I'm still holding on to it. It's wrecked me, but I still love it.

It's perfectly ruined me as a creature. And a normal natural creation has absolutely ruined it. But I wouldn't trade it.

I wouldn't trade it. I would not trade it. I would not trade it.

Why? Because of the subtle, strange, mystical, spiritual reality which I have discovered at the expense of the explosion of all the rest of it. The more you can get rid of it, the more you can lose, the more you can gain. That's Jesus' philosophy.

If you would have, get rid of. Isn't that his philosophy? It's mine too. I just fall right along with him.

I love him as a teacher. I think he's magnificent because he is so simple and yet so profound. And so he says, our earliest revelation, absolutely inarticulate, but sounding and declaring and preaching with all the might that it has, if our ears could be attuned or even awakened or aroused to a consciousness.

Some of us have known this, perhaps you have too, and I hope you have. How many of you know it says, all nature groans and travels in pain. Have you ever been, you have to get it when you're awfully alone, been awfully alone in the midst of some strange setting like that and feel identified with it because you are part of the cosmic conception of living? I have it in one place, a part of the cosmic whole, conscious of that, and yet a spiritual vibration all the while going on in there which amounts to a groan.

It's a groan. It's a groan. Have you ever apologized? I've had to.

I have apologized to the poor animals who are wild and savage and ugly and don't know why or how or what's all about. I've watched them in a zoo, a poor tiger passing about like that. What made him do that? Man's sin.

Creation was not guilty, and Romans tells us so. It was not for anything that nature has done, but it's a cursed thing that man has done, has reflected in all nature. God didn't make them wild animals, but for the judgment, because of this sin and failure of man, all nature is under that judgment, waiting and throbbing, even the animal creation, perverted, ugly, wild.

I've apologized. I've said, oh, you poor, wonderful creature, still bearing the marks of God's sense of beauty. How many know some of them are beautiful? Beautiful.

And yet inside they don't know what it's all about. They're wild. Who made them wild? I did.

My sin. The sin of man. The sin of man.

Do you get me? Yes. I can't condemn them. Sometimes I think when we sense that, the love of God can help.

I've told this before, but it's true to me. I like all that, all those natural things. Did I tell them about my pet chipmunk the other night? Our sister here has two darling children, and they don't know I'm funny and bald-headed and ugly-looking and big nose and a mouth full of teeth going like that.

They don't know that at all. They don't seem to know a thing about it. They crawl up on my lap and love me, don't they, dear? They just crawl up and they just love me.

And I thought, Lord, don't ever let them see who I am. Because one person has told me since I've been out on the coast about change, that I've changed. Well, she says, you know, Mr. Fletch, you never were a handsome man, were you? Of course, Lord, I don't know how I look.

Heavens, don't I shave every morning? It's a man, I say. Who knows anything better than I do? So you see, those things are so silly to me. Who worries about a bald-headed? Nothing worries me in this world more than a bald-headed.

Oh, I go to heaven with bells on. Because I don't think about it anymore. The palms of my hands.

Why should we? Because we live so in the body life, body conscious. Half of our life is governed by it, which is very silly. And so I was telling this little girl the other night about a chipmunk I have at home.

A little wild chipmunk. But I don't have any animals. I can't have them because I travel.

And I can't leave them. I love a dog. I want a cat.

I love them all. But I can't have them. I can't have anything.

From a wife to a dog, I can't have anything. He just trips me. He says, no.

No. No. Children, I have a thousand.

No. No. But I live under no.

But I'm happy under no. And here was this dear little chipmunk. He was scared of me.

He was afraid of me. I had a stone patio out from my back kitchen door. I had a stone patio.

And I know a stone wall. It was 150 years old. Ben laid that, fully 150 years ago, laid that old-fashioned stone wall like we had in the east.

And this little fellow lives in it, you know. And he used to come out. I wish I could hold him.

And so he would come. And I said, Lord, I'd like that. I think he's so nice.

And so I began to talk to him. And I sat down. And every day he would come up there.

So one day I headed out with him. Now I said, listen, dear. You're afraid of me, aren't you? He said, yes.

He said, you're afraid of me. But God didn't want to make you that way, to be afraid of me. Because I'm one of God's little children.

I'm just one of his creatures. One of his creation. And I love what he's made.

He made you. But man has put this fear in you through his sin. Not your fault.

Me, me, me. And I preached to him, talked to him. And I said, look here.

I want you to love me, too. And I'll love you. Now, is this on tape? You see why I don't like it.

And they said, why are you there? So I just talked to him. And I don't want you to have this fear. We're just going to banish it.

And we're going to be happy together. And he'd come every morning, sit there and listen to me talk. And I preached to him.

Sort of a Saint Francis. How do you like Saint Francis? You better. You better.

So every day, I came down. Finally, I thought, he likes corn. I'm going to feed him.

So I said, I have something nice for you today. He didn't seem too savvy. So he blinked and blinked.

And I got down on the stone patio and put my hand down like that. I said, I want you to come have it. I want to share it with you.

Now, I won't hurt you. I won't squeeze you. I won't scare you.

I won't do anything like that. That would be terrible. Well, it took several days, but you know, I got it.

So he came off the wall. He would come to me. And I got so he's eating out of my hands now.

Isn't that sweet? He eats out of my hands. I go, and sometimes he likes to come. He's come as many as seven times a day.

Rascal. He thought, well, this thing works all right. So he came to me sometimes.

And when I won't come out, he gets up on the stone, my kitchen window, where I wash my dishes. I have a sink and window that looks out over this old orchard business. He'll come sit here and he'll go.

And I said, yes, I hear you. But I fed you twice. So I have to go out and feed him four, five, six times a day.

He knows the technique. He knows the business. So one day, one day I was talking to him.

And I said, you're always all alone, can't we? Now, this seems strange, but it was God. I said, don't you have any little wife and nature? Oh, we're jumping around here so, so, so alone, like I am. I said, I'm an old bachelor, too.

Do you know what he did? The next day he brought his wife up. He actually did, and I'll tell you one worse than that. He brought his little companion up, and she cavorted all around down the hall.

And they didn't do the twist, but they performed, you know, and had a beautiful time. And I complimented him. I said, she's wonderful.

I said, she's beautiful. I'm glad you have her. It's fun to talk to actors.

You wouldn't dare to, would you? We don't. So I said, that's beautiful. Do you know what he did? They went back and got their baby and brought it up to me.

A little, tiny thing, as big as that, and a little tail on it, and its little hands quivered just like that. It could hardly hold on the wall, and it coaxed along, so it came. I said, thank you for this family gathering.

It's good to see you. And I said, you aren't afraid of me, are you? And he's not a bit afraid of me at all. So he took his wife home and the baby, and I don't know, maybe the baby's grown up now.

But he, he, how many think that's a queer, strange thing? Don't you think it's nice to have? Yes. Well, you see, what do you do for entertainment? Well, I have a lot of funny things for my entertainment. They're just treating a jet.

So now we'll come back. All nature, even these little creatures, they're all groaning. They're, they're waiting.

They're waiting their deliverance. They're, they're groaning. All nature groans, and we feel, we feel that groaning in our spirit.

We're conscious of it in our spirit. And how many have groaned with it sometimes? You hear sometimes your, your spirit has groaned right along with it. And that's why sometimes.

Well, we'll go on with that revelation, but it's too long. It's the approach that he makes. The approach of the revelation through inarticulate nature, all about us.

Then through the word, and then through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is a revelation. How many of the Holy Spirit? Revelation is, in that sense, in a threefold pattern.

Get your threes and your sevens, dear. They're wonderful. Revelation moves in a, in a, in a triangle arrangement.

All nature, written word, a little closer, a little more intelligent. He will dwell in you and take of these things of Christ and show them unto you. How many get revelation? Well, that, that's the revelation.

That's the revelation now that the Holy Spirit will bring. Well, I, I was, I noticed that. And I was conscious that God was showing me things as I walk around.

I see them everywhere. I see them everywhere. They don't holler and say, Lord God.

They don't do that. Leave that for funny folks to do. But they're sounding, they're singing.

And so I wrote this one about informal ways in which God will reach me. Not the ordinary way of the word of God and the sermon, but the informal. Informal.

They, they have no category. They have no arrangement. They are informal.

God comes to me in such informal ways. Not always does he wear a priestly robe with trappings of ecclesiastic art. I do not always find him in a creed so tight in definition and in form.

There is no place for his creative life. How many see the dead letter of the word right away? How many get your dead letter of the word? That's the dead letter of the word. A creed so tight that you can't find God.

The nicely chosen words which seek to tell the mystery and wonder of his name. All that. We have it in school and college.

The definition, the analysis to explain who God is. You just get tied up in the arrangement of this thought over this one. And the nicely chosen words which seek to tell the mystery and wonder of his name distract me.

And I lose the one I seek in mazes of sheer rhetoric and words. How many of you have lost him already? You've lost him. Where did you lose him? In the sheer clutter of an analysis.

Beautiful butterfly. We want to know all about it so we pick him all apart. Microscope, get everything, how many legs and how many wings and the dust on the wings.

And where's your butterfly? He's lost, sacrificed to our poor little sense of wondering what makes him click. There are a lot of things we don't need to know. This cursed cosmic curiosity.

Why? How? None of your business. Leave him alone. I'm not a scientist.

I don't have to pull his wings off. I like to see him sail off from me on his wings. These definitions distract me and I lose the one I seek in mazes of sheer rhetoric and words.

How wonderful that he should seek to come to me not in some worn out creed and church's lore, nor at a certain altar fixed by man, nor in the patterns that I make myself. He suddenly appears along the way in subtle breath of apple blossom's fair, in shining swords of grass which push their way through unresponsive clouds.

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