

# Church - Part 6

by Ken Baird

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*The sermon explores the functions of the church, addressing issues of head coverings, the care of widows, and the significance of the resurrection in the gospel.*

**Duration:** 53:18

**Scripture:** Philippians 4:15, 1 Thessalonians 3:2, Hebrews 13:16, 1 Peter 2:9

**Topics:** "Church Witness", "Christian Worship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the Church's witness for Christ. He highlights the truth that the Church is called to show forth the praises of God, who has called believers out of darkness into His marvelous light. The preacher references 1 Peter 2:9 and Acts 1, which both emphasize the Church's role as witnesses for Christ. He also mentions 1 Timothy 3:16, which outlines the order of God's manifestation in the flesh, His movement through the world, and His ascension into glory. The preacher encourages believers to be constantly in the presence of the Lord and to worship and praise Him faithfully.

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## Transcript

Tonight we want to continue with our subject on the studies of the Church, and we have a further question concerning the head covering, which I think we will take up, and then we have another question in Church practice in the early days, which we will take up in the fifth chapter of 1 Timothy. The question I have before me just now, before we get into our subject, is, is it scriptural to wear a veil or a hat, as do many, as do many women today? Is a veil a covering? I don't think we would have to do much research to find out that the covering that is mentioned in the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians is indeed a veil. Now, they didn't wear the hats as we have them today.

They have been called creations. But they didn't have them in those days, and I think that you will find out that they were veils. Now, that might raise a similar question.

Is the hat scriptural? If it was a veil in those days, is the hat now scriptural? I think the important thing is the token of authority, the sign of authority, on the woman's head because of the angel. It's a good question. It's a question as to why.

One, why we have a difference in the head covering. Actually, I think either one, in pleasing the Lord, will indeed be satisfactory. And I say satisfactory to him, not to these individuals.

Now, the 5th chapter of 1 Timothy, please, the 5th chapter of 1 Timothy, for another question, and then we will get into our subject of the evening. I'm going to read the scripture first so we'll have a better background for our question. Verse 3 of the 5th chapter of 1 Timothy, Honor widows that are widows indeed.

But if any widow hath children or nephews, let them first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents for that is good and acceptable before God. Now, she that is a widow indeed and desolate trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

Now, verse 9, let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported out for good work. If she hath brought up children, if she hath lodged strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers also in busy bodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will, therefore, that the younger women marry their children, guide the house, give none occasion for the adversary to speak reproachfully, for some are already turned aside after Satan. If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." This was a problem that arose in the early church.

As a matter of fact, this problem plagued those in the early chapters of the book of Acts. I think I'll just read it to you. In those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, this is Acts 6 and you needn't turn to it.

In those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose the murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Now, you know what steps were taken to answer that criticism. They appointed those deacons, those first deacons of the church, to take care of those Grecian widows, and it's a mark of wonderful diplomacy that every one of the men named had Grecian names.

The disciples said, now this is the way we're going to handle this. You Grecians have said that your widows have been neglected in the daily ministration. Now we're going to set some men over you, seven of them, men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and every one of them have Grecian names.

So now you know that the Grecian widows are going to be well cared for by these brethren. Now, it was a problem in the early church, the problem of the widow. Even today, men outlive the women.

Today there are more widows in the world today than there are widowers, and so this was a problem in those early days. Now, the apostles said, let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, sixty years old. She was not really to be chargeable to the church until she was threescore years old.

Now, the question as we have it here in 1 Timothy 5.12, what is meant by first faith? Is this her first husband? How has she cast him off? If it is the Lord Jesus, how has she cast him off? In verse 11 it assumes that all young widows become wanton against Christ. If this is true of all young widows, how could this be? In the verse it seems to condemn a widow who marries, and yet this is what is expected of

her in verse 14. I think that the first faith here should be read this way.

Having or being guilty, that is, of waxing wanton against Christ, because they have cast off their first faith. Now, it doesn't say that they've cast off faith. It says they've cast off their first faith.

Now, the word first here is the prominent, is the first in order, not in time. It's the important faith. It is the best faith.

The first vice president of an organization is first in the standpoint, not that he was the very first vice president of the whole organization, but he is first in the standpoint of importance. Now, even in the church at Ephesus, the apostle John there, writing by the Spirit, the Lord, writing through John the apostle by giving him those messages, said to those Ephesians that they had cast off their first love. That is, they had left their first love.

I'm confusing the verses. They had left their first love. Now, that did not mean that they no longer loved the Lord at all, but that first love, that early love that so characterizes those that are newly saved was lacking.

And it does not mean that there is an absence of faith here. Now, of course, it does not mean that they had cast off either their first husband or the Lord, but the apostle warns here that only elderly widows those three score years and above were to be cared for, were to be charged with their care in regards to the church. Their care was to be charged to the church.

If the widows were younger and could not find a home, the relatives were to take care of them. Now, there is a seeming, in this scripture, a seeming contradiction, but it's not a contradiction really at all. It says in verse 11, but the younger widows refused those that are below three score and ten.

Don't take them, don't make them the charge of the church, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry. Having damnation really is better rendered being guilty because they have cast off their first faith, that early faith that they have. And with all they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, not only idle but tampers also in busy bodies seeking things which they ought not.

And then he goes on to say, I will therefore that the younger women marry, and it's really younger widows. It's translated in some versions as younger widow. Darby leaves the word woman altogether.

I will therefore that the younger, of course inferring widows, marry. Their children guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully, for some are already turned aside after Satan. Now, a younger woman under the age of three score and ten, if she was retired in this fashion, she would not be content to be idle, and in that condition of dependence upon the church, she would soon grow weary.

And perhaps she would learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, since her needs were met, she didn't have to wear, she had no husband or family to care for, and she could easily take on the character of a busy body. She could easily fall into that manner of life, that way of life. Now, after a while, she would not be content to remain in that state, and perhaps she would marry.

And idleness, and these ills that come about through idleness, might characterize her for years to come, because she had developed that way of life in idleness, being supported when she really should have had responsibilities at home. So he says, I will therefore that the younger widows marry. Their children guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Now, some might question, is it their prerogative? Can the Apostle Paul just tell these women, I will therefore that you younger widows marry? I thought that was a man's prerogative to ask them. Well, he thinks it's his prerogative, and he thinks that the idea perhaps is original. But it is not, perhaps, so original as he thinks.

At least, they are to be disposed toward marriage. It's not good for any of us to be idle, because we're going to find something to do. Those younger widows, if supported by the church, would find time on their hands that would not be to a good advantage.

They would develop a way of life that might even continue after marriage, and the Apostle would not have that. Now, I don't know whether we have answered this. I trust that we have answered this, but I don't know.

I trust we have. Certainly, idleness is a dreadful thing, because the devil is sure to find things for idle hands. But it's not a question of casting off their first husband.

It's not a question even of casting off the Lord. But when the natural desires of a younger woman overcome the spiritual, they will marry, not for perhaps the best motive. Perhaps they are thinking of a meal ticket.

I don't know. But the idle habits that they have developed in their idleness will be used, of course, by the devil. Now, tonight, I'd like to consider really the subject of the functions of the church.

Now, we did not cover all the first epistles to Corinthians. I might mention just briefly that the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians contains the gospel that the early church was to preach. The 16th chapter of Corinthians, we might notice the 16th chapter of Corinthians just briefly, gave order as to the collection in the early church.

The 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians is the gospel. It's very, very interesting that in the very early verses, let's notice the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians while we're there. He says, Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory, what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. Now, the gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, it's interesting to notice that the whole of the rest of the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians is given over to the truth of the resurrection, showing how important it really was in the matter of the gospel.

Now, if you will examine the book of Acts and study it with any detail at all, you will see the prominence that was given to the resurrection in the book of Acts. Everything hinges on the resurrection. Read it sometime with the thought of noticing how prominent the resurrection is in the preaching of the early apostles.

And thus it is in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, thank God. He was buried to show that that death was real. Then he rose again the third day, living proof that our sins have been taken away because God raised him from the dead.

All of our sins were charged to the Lord Jesus as he died on the cross of Calvary. All your sins, all of my sins, were charged to the Lord Jesus. He died for them.

He was buried, and he was wound up in that burial cloth, and myrrh was applied to that burial cloth, which sealed it and made it absolutely airtight. There is no possibility that our Lord Jesus swooned, and that he just simply was unconscious but refined by his disciples as some have inferred. There was absolutely no possibility of such a thing at all.

But the important thing is that God raised him from the dead and exalted him to his own right hand, and he sits there as a conqueror. Now God was satisfied with the work of Christ, and he raises him to his own right hand. If our sins were still upon Christ, he couldn't have gone into heaven with those sins upon him.

That is proof positive that our sins are gone. Thank God for that. And that is seen in the wonders of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus, our hope also.

The fact that he rose again is evidence that we are going to rise again with him in a coming day. Now, in the 16th chapter of 1 Corinthians, now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.

Let there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. The saints over at Corinth and in Achaia were taking up a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem.

Now, the apostle Paul says, don't leave your giving until I come. Lay by you in store on the first day of the week. Now, this gives indication that they met together on the first day of the week.

This corroborates the testimony of Acts chapter 20, that they had a habit of meeting on the first day of the week. Now, he says, I want you to lay by yourselves in store on the first day of the week, so that when I come there will be no gatherings. In other words, the apostle Paul says, I am not coming to Corinth on a fundraising campaign.

You take those collections on the first day of every week. Now, something else that's very important here, tithing is not mentioned. The apostle says to the church in those early days, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him.

That's the measure in which we give, that there be no gatherings when I come. Now, tithing is an Old Testament custom. It was started by Jacob, of course.

It was a kind of a covenant which he made, which I'm not sure that God even ratified, unless you would say that the tithe that was demanded in the law was a ratification of Jacob's custom. But in the New Testament, the tithe is not enforced upon the church. It is simply as God hath prospered him.

Now, we can't go into all the scriptures in 2 Corinthians concerning the blessed privilege of giving, but I would say this. If 10% were demanded by the law, certainly grace is better than law. But there's no hard and fast rule, nothing legal about this.

It's simply as God hath prospered him. They say that R. G. Laternal, who was a very wealthy man, completely reversed the order of the law. Instead of giving one-tenth to the Lord and keeping nine-tenths

for himself, R. G. Laternal gave nine-tenths to the Lord and kept one-tenth for himself.

Now, very obviously, you and I couldn't do that. He was a wealthy man. But I just mention this by way of passing to show the way that God would have us do in this day and age.

This is up to our individual exercises before the Lord, as God hath prospered him. And then it does show us that Paul didn't like these money matters, that there be no gatherings when I come. He was going to give no pep talk whatsoever about those four saints at Jerusalem.

This was their exercise, and they were to lay up on the first day of the week towards that gift that would be given to those four saints. Now, I'm going to pass right over the second epistle to the Corinthians. In the first epistle to the Corinthians, we have more of the practices of the church.

Now, in the second epistle to the Corinthians, we have more of the attitudes of the church. And although it is true that there are church orders, or there is church order observed in 2 Corinthians, and some of it we could do well to study, but since this would take much more time than we feel that we have at our disposal, we will just say that 2 Corinthians has more to do with Christian attitudes, whereas the first epistle has more to do with Christian practices. I feel very futile.

I feel a sense of futility in just mentioning these things by way of passing and giving them so little emphasis. I trust that we will all study these things for ourselves. Now, shall we go to the functions of the church? First of all, the first function of the church is worship.

Shall we turn again, please, to 1 Peter chapter 2. 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 5, Ye also, as lively or living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore, also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Under you, therefore, which believe he is precious, but under them which be disobedient, a stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.

And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of defense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him that called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Now, we have here the holy priesthood in verse 5, and the royal priesthood in verse 9. The holy priesthood has to do with going into the presence of God with spiritual sacrifices, and the royal priesthood has to do with coming out from the presence of God with blessings for others.

In other words, it's worship and witness. Worship to God and witness to men. Those are the two great functions of the church.

Then there is a function within the church. It's upward first, outward next, and then inward in regard to the government of the church. It's care for itself.

So, the church has really three main functions. Worship to God, witness to men, and care within the church itself. Now, I think there are other verses that we should bring to bear on this.

Now, if we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God, what are those spiritual sacrifices? Well, I think probably the first one that comes to mind is Hebrews chapter 13. Hebrews chapter 13, verse 10, we have an altar for of they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. Now, verse 15, by him, therefore, let us

offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.

That is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. Now, here is the sacrifice that it speaks of, praise to God continually. That is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

But to do good and to communicate, forget not. Now, this communication that he's speaking of is exactly the same as in the 16th chapter of 1 Corinthians, that is, giving to others, communicating with them as regards their needs, giving to them, sharing what we have with others. Now, that is also spoken of as a sacrifice, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Now, let's notice in this regard Philippians chapter 4. The Philippians have sent a gift to the Apostle Paul by the hand of Epaphroditus, and he says in the fourth chapter, verse 18, But I have all and abound. I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

I should have read back a little farther to get the connection. Verse 15, Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but to you only. This is the communication that he's referring to there in Hebrews chapter 13.

For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity, not because I desire a gift, but I desire a fruit that may abound to your account. And then he speaks of having received that gift, and he refers to it as an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. Now we have two of those gifts which we offer up to God by way of worship.

One is praise to his name. The other is in our giving. The very money that we give is an offering to God.

These are the things that we give to him. Now, the subject of worship is really not so well understood in the world today. What does the word mean? The Greek word worship means to pawn as a dog to its master.

In other words, God has chosen this touching way of showing what our proper attitude is toward him. God would have us pawn at his feet and worship him even as a dog does to his master. It has been literally stated that the word worship means to dog upon.

To give to the Lord the same attention that a dog gives to his master down here. That is the word that is chosen in the New Testament to express the thought of worship. Now, you would think that perhaps another word would be found, wouldn't you? But that's the word.

That's the word in the Greek that has been, we translate worship in the English. To pawn as a dog before its master. Worshiping its master.

One begins to realize that perhaps there is something to that saying, the more I see a dog, the less I think of men. You know, a dog, a faithful dog is a wonderful, wonderful animal. The dog has been considered and been called man's best friend.

I don't have quite that much attraction for a dog, but I suppose that if I were engaged in certain occupations, if I were a farmer and a rancher, and out in the loneliness of where an animal like that would

be such good company to me, perhaps I would really realize more of what you can reap by owning a dog. But now, the Lord would have us have that same attitude toward him. That we might worship him.

That we might rest in his presence and be not content to go elsewhere. We had a dog. He was a blooded animal.

He was a cocker spaniel, a red cocker spaniel. My wife got much more attached to him than I did, because he was so much company to her when I went away. And he was not content to let my wife out of his presence.

If she were washing dishes, he would go out in the kitchen and he would lie down. He was just contented to be where she was. If she would go upstairs to make the bed, why, up the stairs he would go.

And he would lie down up there. He just wanted to be in her presence. He just wanted to be near her.

He was her constant companion. And he was actually accompanying her, and it was his faithfulness to her that caused his own death. He ran across the street in joy to meet her and was struck by a car.

Now, wouldn't it be wonderful if you and I could never be content to be really out of the presence of the Lord? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we in worship could just look to him in adoration at all times? God wants us to praise him. He wants us to be occupied with him. And this, I believe, is the first function of the church.

To offer up spiritual sacrifices. The holy priesthood. The church of God is a priesthood.

Every believer is a priest. This is in contradiction to great religious systems today, but the scripture does teach the priesthood of all believers. We are all priests.

We are a kingdom of priests, according to the first chapter of Revelation. And priests must have something to offer. And we offer to God our praise and our worship.

Now, worship is misunderstood in Christendom today. Frequently we see signs on church bulletins come and worship with us. And every kind of meeting is called a worship meeting.

Well, actually, a worship meeting is occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ. If you were to ask me the best example of a worship meeting, I would say the remembrance of him. When we gather around those emblems that speak to us of his precious body and of his outpoured blood, that death which he died for you and for me.

If there is a meeting of the church that really is a worship meeting, that is it. For our hearts go out in occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ because of all that he did for you and for me. Now, to hear about the Lord Jesus is interesting indeed and important.

But it may not call for worship at all. It may be entirely informative, and God would have us bowing at his feet in adoration, occupied with him, bringing to him thankful hearts, bringing to him hearts full of praise and worship for what he has done for us through his dear son. We have that privilege, and God wants the worship of our hearts.

Then there are other ways in which we can show that we worship him. We can give ourselves to the Lord. We can present our bodies a living sacrifice to the Lord.

We can give our time. We've already mentioned our money. I think it would be so much better if we would offer our money to the Lord in worship, in worth-ship or recognition of his worth.

I think that the word worship is rather described by the phrase worth-ship. In our worship, we show how worthy our Lord Jesus really is. The book of Revelation has much worship in it.

Worthy is the Lamb. It's the recognition of the worth of God. It's occupation with him, with himself, and thankfulness to him for what he is in himself.

We praise God for what he's done. We worship God for what he is, and thank God he is what he is. Now, another function of the church is to show forth his praises.

It was mentioned there in the ninth verse of the second chapter of 1 Peter, that we should show forth his praises. Show forth the praises of him that has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Do we praise the Lord before men? Do we witness to the Lord before men? And really, that's all that the Lord has asked you and me, and that's all he's asked the church to do, is to be a witness of him.

Let's turn to Acts chapter 1, please. Acts chapter 1 and verse 6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and under the uttermost part of the earth.

When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. Now he says, ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, that's where they were at the moment, and in all Judea, and in an ever-widening circle, Samaria, and under the uttermost part of the earth. They were not simply to be witnesses to the truth of God, although, of course, the church is the custodian of the truth.

The edict of the church is not truth, is not the... how shall I say that? Truth is not the edict of the church, I believe is a better way of saying it, but the church is the vehicle of the truth. Let's notice in this connection 1 Timothy chapter 3, and then we will consider also Acts chapter 1 with it. 1 Timothy chapter 3, verse 14, These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly.

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy, grace is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Now, we read here that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, a pillar of truth. The ground or the base of the pillar holds it up, and the church is to tell out the truth. What truth? Well, verse 16 gives us the truth that the church is to witness to, and without controversy, grace is the mystery of godliness.

God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. This is the truth to which the church is to witness. Now, this is exactly the same as Acts chapter 1. He shall be witnesses unto me.

And this is to what the church is to witness to, Christ. Notice the order there in 1 Timothy 3.16. God was manifest in the flesh. We have God coming down from heaven and becoming a man, and then he moves

through this world, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

That's the order that we have. He comes down, he moves through this world, and he goes up into glory. And he's there tonight, a prince and a savior, sitting on the right hand of the throne of God.

Now, that's the truth that we're to witness to. Christ has been in this world. He came down from heaven.

He was God. But he became a man. Why did he become a man? So he could die.

As God, he couldn't die for you and me, but as man he could. And remember this, the wages of sin is death. The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

If your sins are paid for, and my sins are paid for, somebody has to die for them, either a substitute or me. But Christ did die for my sins on the cross of Calvary. God assumed the responsibility for them, and the person of his son, who became that wonderful man, born a man so that he could die and pay the price of my sins and yours.

He moved through this world. He showed that he was the son of God and all that he did and said, and particularly by the fact that he rose again from the dead. And now he was received up in the glory.

Christ came down. He moved through this world. He went up in the glory, and we like those at his ascension are still gazing up in the glory.

Well, maybe I shouldn't say that because actually the angels rather set their minds at rest. They said, don't stand here. Why stand ye gazing here as if you'd never see this one again? He's given you work to do, and so he has given us work to do.

Thank God he's coming from that throne again, and the great hope of the church is that Christ will come back again to reclaim or to claim his bride from this world. That is the hope of the church. We could have easily given that a night on this subject, but we shall not.

He's coming back from heaven, but this is the truth to which the church witnesses. She is the pillar and the ground of truth, and then, of course, in verse 16 of 1 Timothy 3, we have the truth to which she is to witness. Now, it should not be hard to talk about Christ.

It should not be hard for you and me to talk about Christ. Now, it is hard for me to tell people that they're going to hell. It's hard for me to tell people that they're sinners, and it's true.

It's hard for me to be hard on people, but you know, we have to, we always have to relate these things to our Lord Jesus Christ, for our witness is unto him. Yes, you are sinners, but Christ is the savior of sinners. Yes, you're under judgment, but he bore your judgment for you.

Yes, you have to face death, but he faced death for you that you might only sleep. All of these truths are related to our Lord Jesus Christ, and our witness is to him. Now, in that first chapter of Peter, I'd like to have you see this once again.

First Peter chapter 2, verse 9. The functions of the witness of the church. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into marvelous light. Think of the simplicity of this verse.

What is my witness for Christ? That I should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Just talk about him, that's all. Show forth his praises.

Nobody has got a right, a right to be angry with you when you tell them, oh, the Lord has done so much for me. They probably will get angry with him if you tell them, now you're a sinner, and if you don't get saved, you'll go to hell. That's what's going to happen to you.

You better do something right about it. They're going to get very, very mixed about that. They'll just probably stand right up in sight, and they'll probably say something to the effect, well listen, I'm just as good as you are.

And don't think that just because you're going to heaven that that means that you're so good. And you'll really get them. You'll really get their dander up.

But you know, as royal priests, we can show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Can anybody find fault with you saying, oh, the Lord loved me so much that he died on the trough of Calvary to take my sins away? I love him because he first loved me. I don't know what I'd do without the Lord.

How can they get angry with you if you talk like that? Can they say anything about that? They talk about what brings them pleasure. Can't you talk about what brings you pleasure? Or sometimes you may be led of the Spirit of God to give it a little more application. Like I did once.

I think I'll have to tell you. I was driving along the roads in Kansas, and I picked up a hitchhiker. Some of you have heard me tell this story before.

But suffer a preacher to tell his stories more than once. And I picked up this hitchhiker, and it was a beautiful day in the spring. And we got to talking about the countryside and the beauties of the country around us.

And I said, to think that the one who created all these beauties died on a cross for me. This fellow kind of looked at me out of the corner of his eye. He said, who picked me up this time? But then I turned to him and I said, but of course he didn't love you, and he didn't die for you on the cross.

Well, well, well, he says, that's what you think. And I said, now isn't that strange? I told you that God didn't love you and that Christ didn't die for you, and you just didn't like that at all. Just brought you right out of your seat.

Now if I had, if I, I said you grab for it. I tried to take it away from you, and you grabbed for it. I think I'll try to take it away from a lot of people a little more often to see if they won't grab for it too.

Suppose that I told you tonight that you're on the road to hell, and there's absolutely no hope for you, and that God doesn't love you, and he doesn't want you in his heaven, and there's absolutely no hope for you. Would you let me get by with that? Would you? Well, I hope you wouldn't. I'd hope you, you would say something like this.

My Bible tells me that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I wish that you would accept a challenge like that. Did he die for you? Did he? Thank God he died for me.

I'm, I'm so glad that I can show forth the praises of him. I think we make the matter of witnessing a little too hard. If you'll, if you'll pardon me for a personal opinion, after all it is my opinion, I've got a right to express it.

I, I think sometimes that we make the matter of witnessing a little bit too hard. Can't we show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light? Haven't we got a right to do that? And you know, I think if we did, it might be more effective if we did try to give it personal application. Let the spirit of God give us personal application.

Now this is just a thought. Now we haven't really touched on the government of the church, and our time is up. And I don't know when we'll get to touch on it, but perhaps in the will of the Lord we'll find some time to mention the, the government of the church.

And it is, it is a wonderful subject and it's a subject which we should consider, but may the Lord help us to consider it in his own good time.

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