

Beatitudes - Part 2

by Leonard Ravenhill

The Sermon on the Mount is a call to a higher standard of living, a manifestation of the kingdom of God, and a guide for living a holy life.

Duration: 1:14:22

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12, Matthew 5:17-30, Matthew 5:43 - 7:5, Matthew 7:7-27

Topics: "Beatitudes"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of behaving according to the teachings of Jesus. He refers to the previous chapter in the Bible, where Jesus began preaching and calling for repentance. The preacher emphasizes that Jesus knew when to act and when not to act, even though he had the power to solve worldly problems like hunger. The sermon focuses on 'The Sermon on the Mount,' which is considered the greatest sermon ever preached by Jesus. The preacher suggests that if every believer lived according to the principles outlined in this sermon for just one day, it would have a transformative impact on society. The sermon also touches on the concept of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven, highlighting their similarities and the idea that the kingdom of God is both invisible and manifest.

Transcript

Last week, at least, we put together a preliminary run in what we call, again, The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached by the Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, which is called A Sermon on the Mount, which, as we said, isn't really a... I don't think it's a good title. It merely tells you the location. You could say it's a mountain that we've got to climb, if you like, and that would give it a little more qualification for that title.

The version that we studied, at least we looked at, began to look at, is in the fifth chapter of Matthew, and it runs through to the seventh chapter. There are roughly 110 verses in this version, and in the account that Luke gives us, there are only 30 verses. But Luke makes one very real observation, I think, in that sixth chapter.

Where does he begin now? Verse 20. He lifted up his eyes on his disciples. Now, I think that that puts a qualification on this, because, obviously, the Sermon on the Mount is a total impossibility.

You may as well tell a pig to fly from here downtown, as to tell an ungodly man to live the Sermon on the Mount. It's not possible. It's contrary to his nature.

It's contrary to his desires. And so Jesus here is speaking explicitly just to his own disciples. He lifted up his eyes.

There was an old bishop in England many years ago, I think his name was Vaughan, and he said that Jesus was talking to his disciples and the crowd was eavesdropping. You know, they came in on the perimeter and were kind of listening, hoping the wind was blowing it that way, and what was Jesus really saying. But he's speaking specifically to his disciples.

OK. How many books are there in the Old Testament? Thirty-nine. Good.

Give you an A+. Thirty-nine. So Matthew is what? What book is Matthew? Fortieth book.

Forty in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament, is typical of a period of probation. How long was Moses on the Mount? OK. I thought you might say forty years.

Forty days. How long was Israel in the desert? OK. How long was Jesus tempted? How many days between the Resurrection and the Ascension? Forty days.

Forty is typical of a period of testing or trial. Well, how do you tie that in with the fortieth book? For the simple reason the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, was given to the people of Israel and they were being tested by him. He wasn't being tested by them.

They were being tested with what would they do with the Son of God. And you remember that John says, he came unto his own and his own received him not. So, you know, and really the world in which we live right now is being tested by the presence of the Church.

Now, the Church as we know it, I'm sure it doesn't have much trouble with it. It used to be the Church was going that way and the world was going that way. Now they're both going this way so there's no opposition.

I'm convinced that the early Church was a thorn in the side of everybody. Dignitaries, just like Jesus was a thorn. You know, if this hasn't come to you, I guess somewhere in life it will come to you.

You're too young to have known it maybe. Maybe my kid has known it and some of these older men. I mean, I've been older with a lot.

But you know, sometimes you get into a situation and you think, you know what, nobody in the world has ever had what I'm going through. You know, you just feel the walls are going to, the roofs come in and I'm just getting beaten up. Nobody's had it like this.

Well, don't get conceited. That's exactly what happens to every believer sooner or later. You know, it's amazing when you think of the Sermon on the Mount.

As I said last week, if it began with blessed are the pure, we'd back off and say, oh, look, this is a chapter I'm going to skip. It doesn't begin with blessed are the pure. It begins with blessed are the poor.

A little later it moves into blessed are the pure. And then at the end we're saying, and blessed are the persecuted. Do you get persecuted for being pure? Sure you do.

Do you get persecuted? What Jesus says, look, can you endure all this? Blessed are they who are persecuted, misunderstood, tricked around for my sake. Now Moses never said anything for my sake, did he? Joshua never said, do this for my sake. Jesus said, you do it for my sake.

Now if you get under, as I say, if you kind of feel it under the weather, surely the thing is to say to yourself, well, wait a minute, the holiest man that this world has ever known. There have been some holy men. The spirit of holiness was in Moses, the word of God said.

I'm sure the spirit of holiness was on the apostle Paul. But the holiest man that ever lived obviously was Jesus. Well, what did this world give him? A crown of thorns.

It's an idiotic world, you know. Because if you do wrong, they'll put you in jail. And you know what? If you do right, they'll put you in jail too.

If you murder a man, they'll put you in jail. But if you murder them for the government, they'll give you a medal. But it's still murder as far as I'm concerned.

You see, this Sermon on the Mount distinguishes itself above all of the sermons, I think, very much like the sun. You don't see too much of it today. But yesterday, the day before, the sun was brilliant all day and you couldn't look up at the sun, but you could go and look at the stars tonight.

Well, think of the difference of, if you like, the candle power between the star and that of the sun. And this sermon is so superior to anything. It's superior to any philosophy.

You don't find Buddha or Confucius saying the things that Jesus said. Now, isn't it amazing he gathered together his disciples? There weren't many of them. I don't know why he only had 12 disciples.

If anybody could have managed 1,200, Jesus could surely. But he managed 12. Later he says to the 12, You're going to sit down with me in my kingdom.

You're going to have thrones. But the Book of Revelation says there are 420 elders. Well, who are the other 12? I think the other 12 are possibly the 12 patriarchs.

And yet you think of all the time that Jesus took to try and get these men, I nearly said women, but these men into shape. He not only teaches them by word exhortation, but he teaches them by the most powerful thing of all. He teaches them by example.

That's a great thing about parenthood. You know, you can turn your kids over and beat them if you must expect them sometime to do anything. But they learn most by example.

They absorb, they see. They hear with their eyes as well as with their ears. And they have this paragon of virtue and holiness in front of them all the time, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And you remember that Peter, when Jesus appeared to Peter one day, he says, he shrunk back and he said, Depart from me because I'm a sinful man of God. Okay, he's talking about the kingdom. We said last week this is the manifesto of the kingdom.

It's not just an outline. It's not just statements that they have to believe. It's something they have to behave.

Now, if you go back into the previous chapter, chapter 4, and verse 17, it says, From that time Jesus began to preach and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Now, before this, he's done some great things. He fed the five thousand.

If he got on, he could have abolished hunger forever, couldn't he? He could have satisfied the whole world. But Jesus knew where to stop. He knew when to do things and when not to do things.

A man came to him a bit later and says, Look, just before you preach your next sermon, I want you to get my brother on one side and talk to him about dividing our inheritance. Well, he could have established inheritance laws for the rest of time. Jesus says, No, no, I'm keeping off that thing.

You know, this church involvement now in the modern majority, I think it's an alibi. The preachers can't produce what they should produce, so they're getting really lost and tied up in this. It's just like people say about the Sermon on the Mount.

Well, after all, it's a social gospel. It's not a social gospel. It's not talking about the gospel being worked out in just helping the poor.

I can remember when the Salvation Army was a hellfire, blood and fire bunch of people night. They used to pray. Every Salvation Army group is called a corps, C-O-R-P-S.

A friend of mine used to say, Mum, I preached to the Salvation Army corps last week. Well, it's not corps. Some of it's like a corps now.

But it was a corps. And it was an unwritten law that they had a prayer meeting every Saturday night from 10 o'clock until they felt the spirit moved off. And they used to pray and sweat.

Really, really moved. And gradually they got drawn more and more and more into the social life until a young lady startled me a few months ago when I'd been preaching and she said, Oh, is the Salvation Army a religious organization? She said, All I know, I see them at Christmas begging pennies, begging money at the door of, you know, Dillard's or somewhere. And if there's a fire, they come up with blankets and other things.

I didn't know. And she was a university girl, bright girl. And she said, I did not know it was a religious organization.

Why? Because they got lost in good works. And that, of course, brings the praise of men. But this is not what we're after.

Jesus is talking about here, about having the praise of our Heavenly Father. Of being well-pleasing in His sight. I reminded you last week, you can take 1 Corinthians 13 and in the Sleepy Elizabethan English the word used there is the word charity.

Charity suffereth long. All the new versions have changed charity into love. You can take love out and you can put carnality there and read it backwards way.

Carnality doesn't suffer long. Carnality is kind. Carnality warms itself.

Carnality stretches the very opposite, the antithesis of what we're talking about here. And then you can rub all the words out and put the name of Jesus there. Jesus suffereth long and is kind.

Jesus envieth not. Jesus vaunted not himself. Jesus was not puffed up.

He didn't behave himself unseemly. He was never provoked. He was always slow to expose.

Jesus was always eager to believe in the best. Put them all out. Then put yourself in there.

I suffer long, I'm kind. I'm never rude, I'm never resentful. When the children are climbing the wall, I'm never irritated.

Let's skip that one. And, you know, when you put yourself, that's what... 1 Corinthians 13 is the most beautiful poem ever written and what is it? It's a full-length portrait of Jesus Christ. Nowadays you don't see full-length portraits anymore, do you? Nearly everybody's shot off by the shoulders.

Every portrait you see in the old days, that was new when I was a child. You always got a picture full-length and so, boy, daddy used to see your trousers were creased and your shoes were shining and you stood at attention, you know. Now that's gone.

Well, 1 Corinthians is a full-length portrait of the Lord Jesus. It's a full-length portrait of a sanctified believer. Switch that back and say the Sermon on the Mount is a full-length portrait of Jesus Christ.

It's a full-length portrait of a true believer. I said last week, I say again, that if every true believer, every professed believer in the country lived the Sermon on the Mount just one day, if everybody in the country believed it, behaved it 24 hours for one day, we'd turn the country upside down. You see, one thing that got Jesus into trouble was that they thought he exalted himself above Moses.

Moses said unto you. I say unto you. Now here, again, Jesus has been manifesting his power in this fourth chapter and then he suddenly stretches.

Matthew deals with the kingdom more than any other of the four evangelists, the other three evangelists. I think the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven, and I don't see any difference in them, except one is that there is an invisible kingdom. The kingdom of God is within you and there is an ultimate kingdom, a manifest kingdom, a state.

Personally, I think the millennial period will be a state of the kingdom of God. Jesus is going to rule with the rod of iron, but the eternal kingdom. Come ye, blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you.

Now, he's worked, he's done the works of the kingdom, if you like, in the miraculous things that he's done, but there is an entrance into the kingdom. Now, verse 17 of chapter 4, from that time Jesus began to preach. From what time? After he's done all these miracles? John has been cast into prison? John says, run and ask him, art thou he that should come, or look we for another? And people say, you know what? I think his faith has collapsed.

Oh, mercy. Isn't it easy for little squirty preachers, two by four preachers, to start sitting in judgment over the greatest man that ever lived, Jesus said? I don't think his faith collapsed in prison. I think he was trying to draw out of Jesus what Jesus lately admitted, that he was a son of God.

But he wanted to hear it confirmed by Jesus himself. Sure, he heard a voice from heaven. I think he would have been satisfied if Jesus says, well look, I'm the son of God come with power.

He didn't get that gratification, as far as I know. But I don't think that John's faith wavered. Man alive.

He'd have wavered a long while before they brought him out to chop his head off. I get so many young preachers that write to me or call me and say, Brother Rayneal, I've been reading a book of yours or somebody else's and I've got really stirred up and I haven't eaten for a week and God's really called me, and he's called me to be a John the Baptist. And I just say very sweetly, well, that means you're ready to die in six months.

Pardon? Well, he said, you want to be John the Baptist? That's all he lived. Six months preaching. Do you want to preach six months? John lived for 30 years and preached six months.

Now guys want to go to Bible school six months and live for 30 years preaching. And it doesn't work out. But it says that Jesus, from that time, Jesus began to preach.

Or if you go back to verse 14, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet. All right. If you read carefully through Matthew, you'll find that that word fulfilled is mentioned 15 times and that's more than it's mentioned in any other of the Gospels.

Jesus has come to fulfill the law and the prophets. Again, he has controversy. He has adversity.

He's up against the scribes. The scribes were very learned. As we would say in our language, to be a scribe, you had to go through so much study and then graduate and be accepted as a scribe.

That was not true of the Pharisees. The Pharisees were a bunch of zealous laymen. And Jesus has opposition from both of them.

They didn't receive him gladly. They didn't say, Oh, Isaiah 35 is fulfilled before our eyes. They quoted scripture when it was convenient.

Don't people in the world do that? They quoted scripture when it's convenient. And they forget other scriptures that hurt them. Now, Jesus, again, he's established the fact that he is a son of God in many ways, but now he's turning to a different ministry.

From that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, I repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Well, this is the manifesto of the kingdom. These are the laws of the kingdom.

If you're going to have a kingdom, you must have a king. If you have a king, you have laws. That's pretty logical.

And I think it was Finney who said that the law of the kingdom of Jesus Christ is the, it's a tongue twister, really, it's the royal rule of love. The royal rule of patience and love. After all, we don't have a map.

If we had a map, you could see, on the old maps, you've got the eastern hemisphere and the western hemisphere, two hemispheres. There are only two kingdoms in this world. There's a kingdom of Satan, which is a kingdom of darkness, and a kingdom of light.

You don't crisscross from one to the other. He has translated this, isn't it? Colossians says, out of the kingdom of darkness, or out of darkness, into the kingdom of his dear son. Or as it says in Ephesians 6, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, the principalities and powers, the kingdoms of another world.

Now, there's an entrance into the kingdom. What is the entrance into the kingdom? Well, the entrance into the kingdom is you must be born again. You know, the whole world, ever since Adam transgressed, I guess, the world has longed, it has an ideal, an idealism in its mind.

It's made up its mind, look, you can put the world straight if you do this. Okay. 1912, before World War I, we have a bunch of people called Fabian Socialists in England.

Their philosophy simply was this, we'll pull down the hills of wealth, we'll fill in the valleys of poverty, we'll make the crooked places straight, we don't need the Bible, we don't need Christ, we don't need the church, we can put this world right. H.G. Wells was the big self-anointed and self-appointed prophet of that group. And he says, we don't need the Bible and Jesus Christ.

We can make, establish a new world order. Now, he's not talking in any sense about righteousness and repentance, and because of that, he says, this is how we'll do it. We'll do it by intellectual and biological processes.

You see? And because he's a materialist, a humanist, he says also, he says, I believe in the adequacy of materialism. There's enough stuff in the world, all we have to do is get it and put it together. The adequacy of materialism, listen to this, 1912, the inevitability of progress, the inevitability of progress, he has us going up like that, and we've been going down ever since the World War I, which was 1914.

So it's the adequacy of materialism, the inevitability of progress, and the sufficiency of man. All you got to do is knock your head. After all, Shakespeare could have had an IBM machine.

He could have had a computer. All the stuff was there, why didn't somebody put it together? I believe that if the world lasts another hundred years, it would have been a shocking mess without revival, but I don't think it can do that, but if it did, I believe we'd look back to these days in which we're living as the Dark Ages. Man does not get more gentle as he gets wiser, he gets more diabolical.

He makes the earth into hell. This is the first time in the history of mankind where we can roast a whole city, barbeque it, in 60 seconds. We did it in Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.

Just barbeque a whole city. That's education. That's the inevitability of progress.

All man does is make hell. Now, that's all in the kingdom of darkness. The scripture says, such is the twisted heart of man, such are his affections corrupted, such is his will twisted, that they prefer darkness to light.

Well, can you think of a better example of insanity? I went into my office for something last night, thought, oh, I won't bother to put the light on, I know where everything is. Well, I made it to the door because there's a little light, I can see a little bit of light. Coming back, it was pitch black.

Well, I know where everything is. My goodness, my sofa wasn't there, I'm sure it was further over when this afternoon, and then I walked over, oh, money! Something hit me in the ribs. Oh, boy, I should have had a light.

And yet people do that. We're stumbling and staggering in the darkness. We know there are things out of control, but man will not, as Jesus said, he will not come to me that he might have life.

The kingdom of darkness. We had a nice lawn in front of our house, and we, you know, summer, I think it was one Wednesday afternoon in England, but anyhow, in summer, I'd go out on the lawn, my sister would come out with a book, and I'd pick up a rock, you know, because I knew under that rock there were bugs and slugs and everything, and I didn't want her sitting on the lawn, I wanted to stretch out of it, and I'd pick that rock up and say, ah, don't, don't, and they'd say, come on, you sit down here, but as soon as I picked that rock up, every little creeping horrid thing, it shot off, it couldn't bear the light. Put the rock back, they shelter in the darkness.

Nighttime is when most burglaries are happening, it used to be, but it's fashionable to burglarize any time now, but it used to be burglaries were done in the night, people go to discos in the night, they sin in the night, they love the night, they're children of darkness and they love it, and the horrible thing is they don't want light, they don't want light, but there's an entrance into the kingdom, what's the entrance into the kingdom? Well, Jesus says the entrance into the kingdom is being born again, the entrance into being born again is repent, he puts it right down there, from that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and repentance isn't an emotional upset, repentance is something intellectual and volitional, it's something I turn right round and determined by the grace of God to go the other way, repentance leads us into salvation, it is not salvation, but it's a necessary priority to salvation, we don't find people repenting very much these days, I had a couple of preachers came in to see me yesterday, and I guess they stayed two hours and asked me, what's the great need, we go to churches and people come forward and we go back six months after, and there's no change in the church, and the pastor's in despair, what's happened, what should we do?

I said, well, do you really want to know the truth, yeah, well, well, first of all, go and preach about sin, and then when they get despairing about sin, preach repentance, and then when you get past repentance, preach adoption, and when you get to adoption or forgiveness, and adoption, and justification, tell me, because today, the average person doesn't know a thing about those things, it's just that I'm saying, did you repent?

Yeah, I just, Lord, I'm sorry, but that's not repentance, you hear much about the gifts of the spirit today, you don't hear too much about the fruits of the spirit, you hear less about Romans 6, having your fruit unto holiness, and we hear less still about bringing forth fruit, meat for repentance, I was in the company of some celebrities not too long ago, and they asked me about a certain thing, and I stressed this, and I saw one man go like this, and I knew, I knew his history, I knew, for instance, he's living with his third wife, he's a Christian, he's living with his third wife, and I'm not saying that he was saved when he gave up the others, there's something gnawing at him, every time I brought something like that up, there was something pulling at him all the time, you see, the world doesn't believe that lots of people have been saved, why? because they don't try and put straight what they twisted further back in their lives, they won't go back and pay their bills that they owe, where to bring forth fruit, meat for repentance, that in itself will not bring justification or salvation, but it's a step toward it, now, the kingdom of heaven again is invisible, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God is within you, and it's not only within us, it's going to be ultimate as well, now, Jesus begins, let me say again, we've been brought out of darkness into his marvelous light, well, what's the fruit of that repentance and knowing God? you know, when people quote John 17, they always go to the, slip over the first few verses, he's got 26 verses, the first part, in the first five verses, I guess, Jesus prays for himself, in the second part, he prays for his disciples, in the third part, he prays for the world, what does he pray in the second part, second verse, he prays for his, third verse, he prays for his disciples, what is real salvation? that they may know thee, the only true God, that they

may know God, that's the fruit of repentance, that's the fruit of salvation, that we know who is the true God, because there are so many false gods, and we need to stress the true God, do you remember the psalmist says, thy word is truth, do you know, Buddha said, he was looking for, just before he died, he said, I'm searching for truth, it's a bit late, Jesus starts by saying, I am the way, the truth, Jesus says, when the spirit of truth is come, you see, in part of the work of conviction of the spirit is to face men, and when with truth, they've been living in error, they've been deceived, we don't see people much these days anymore, writhing as they used to do in days like under Wesley, or even in my day, back there in England or in Ireland, when old W.P.

Nicholson was preaching, men would sit there and you'd see the sweat run off the end of the nose, and off the end of the chin when he was preaching, there would be such conviction, they'd sit back and laugh, he usually kicked meetings off with jokes, because he got such a big percentage of wicked people, and he knew if he began to stand up and sing, you're the lover of my soul, they'd get up and walk out, so he kind of conditioned the audience, but I'll tell you what, before he finished preaching, those men who were relaxed and happy, were sitting up, somebody said, I've seen them sit up like this, and then sit up like this, and then sit up like this, holding on to their seat as though they were going to drop into hell, and I've seen them shredding the hymn books till the hymn book was shredded, they were under such conviction, one man told me himself, a man who eventually became a wealthy man in Ireland, and he told me, he said, Brother Angel, I went into the meeting the first night just to hear Nicholson out of fun, because he really, he really scalded all the preachers, and he said, I said, I'll never go hear that so and so again, I cursed coming out of the church, but I went the second night, the man alive, he said, he roasted in the second night, and I cursed and said, you won't get me in there with a team of horses, but he said, I was there the third night, and I preached in that big building that the man got saved in, and I can remember people when we used to get the place packed to the gallery, and he said, I was sitting on the back seat, but when Nicholson made the appeal, man, he said, I toppled down those steps, and he said, men were even cursing going to the altar, but he said, you know what?

Nicholson would say, everybody else get out, go on, get out, quickly as you can, no talking, all of you that came forward, sit up now on the seat, and he dealt with every person individually, if he took him to a father next morning, so what? What's he there for? You can get him there to wave to God, or sign a card, he'd start right off, now, what's your problem? Come on, what's your sin? Are you an adulterer? Are you a liar? Are you a thief? What is it? What is it? Are you just a thoroughbred hypocrite?

He'd help them to get through, you know, if they're short of memory, he'd help them. But you know what? When they got through, they got through. He had the largest amount of abiding fruit of anybody that's preached, maybe since Wesley, or the Irish people had their own Wesley, a man called Gideon Ousley.

You see, if you're going to build, I remember when we were in New York, when they were going to build a skyscraper, I didn't know what they were going to build, but I noticed the sidewalk, and these big boards were up, and there were holes drilled in, and I looked down, and I had to stand on my tiptoes and see why the men down there look like worms about this size. And then I saw notice, they're going to build a skyscraper, a new skyscraper. And the whole Manhattan is supposed to be one solid rock.

I don't know whether it is, but what they did, they went right down to the bedrock, and then they scraped it as clean as a plate, and the dogs licked it. And they started building. Why? Because they're going up 80, 90 stories, it's going to stand all that vibration, all the resistance, but you've got to anchor it deep, deep, deep.

had much happiness.

I don't think it'd be... One man that got away from Russia three or four years ago said that he had never had a decent night's rest for I don't know how many years. He slept on a cold slab of concrete and often there was urine on the floor and human excrement in the corner, stinking, lousy. He hadn't had a bath for I don't know how many years.

He hadn't had a good meal for so long. Are you suggesting that those people have any happiness? But I suggest to you a lot of them have blessedness. You think of that statement of the Apostle Paul's in the 20th of Acts.

Where is it here? Let me find it. Here he says, and now behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, not knowing the details, save the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, not account of my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy.

Well isn't that a part of blessedness? If the Holy Ghost told you that six months from now you're going to go in three different cities and get beaten up, get stoned, get something else. You see we think the spirit just bears witness with our spirit that we're saved or the spirit bears witness that we're being obedient. But this man knew he had a lot of foreknowledge because God bore witness to him even before he goes into it that he's walking into bondage and he's walking into tribulation, he's walking into trial.

And he says even those things are threatening me, none of these things move me, now notice what he said, digest it, none of these things move me, he didn't say none of these things hurt me. See people say well if you really get filled with the spirit nothing will hurt you, well then you're not human. Sure they'll hurt you but they don't need to move you.

You mean like affect your faith? Pardon? You mean like affect your faith? They don't need to affect your faith, they may affect your emotions, they may affect your feelings, they may affect your circumstances. As I say if Jesus said look I guarantee if you come into my kingdom you'll never have ill health, you'll never have adversity, you'll never have poverty, you know all those things which we think are the most chronic things that could happen to us. He doesn't deal with those things at all, he deals with things that have to do with character, he deals with those invisible things which again money cannot buy, moth and rust can't corrupt them, thieves can't break through and steal them, they're of the abiding quality of the inner heart.

None of these things move me, neither counter my life dear unto myself so that I may finish my course with joy in the ministry which I've received of the Lord Jesus to testify of the gospel of the grace of God. Now if I enter into this kingdom, if I'm born again with the Spirit of God I'm going to have a knowledge of the true God, I'm going to walk in the light because we do not longer any longer walk in the kingdom of darkness. Think of that fifth chapter there in Galatians.

In verse 16 Paul says, this I say then, walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Verse 19, the works of the flesh are manifest which of these adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, envies, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like. The witch I tell you before as I've also told you in time past that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Those are God's prohibitions not mine and they're not Paul's. They belong the kingdom of darkness. He has brought her out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear son, into the kingdom of light.

Now if I've been born again of the Spirit of God there are inborn appetites which I have. When we were up here a few months ago it was a dry spell there and then there'd been a little rain and those ducks were having a good time paddling around there and then they all set off in a line down the road there. What for? The hens didn't go, you've no hens anyhow and if you had they wouldn't have gone.

What did the ducks go? Because instinctively they like to go to water. You don't find hens all going in a bunch down to the water. Well hens can't swim.

No they can't. Why can't they? Well as kids we used to say because they don't have webbed feet that's got nothing to do with it. If you put webbed feet on them they still can't swim.

For the simple reason that all the feathers in the duck are hollow and all the feathers that the main stem in the feather is solid in hens. You put a hen, you can put boots on if you like, it still can't swim. You can kill a duck and tie legs onto it, it can't swim.

But the instinct of the duck is to go for water. Then instinctively, naturally, it should be with us blessed are they who hunger and thirst after God. One of the things I genuinely know if I'm born again with the Spirit of God I have a hunger after God.

If you don't have a hunger for knowledge you won't ask any questions and you'll stay ignorant. But if you have a hunger for knowledge you start asking questions and the result is you become more and more illuminated. If we hunger and thirst after God, not just after the Word of God, according to these preachers the other day where Daniel says in the last days when wicked men do wickedly, well are they doing wickedly? I mean can hell be much worse than we are except there's no fire around.

We're as corrupt as any generation ever lived, we're licentious, we're lustful, we're wicked, we're vile, we make a joke of the commandments, we make fun of marriage. A little old guy there, 84 years of age, George Burns made a film saying he's God and then a second film I'm arrested from creating things, make a joke about God. A man whose name I won't mention who sells more rotten books than anybody in the nation has written another book that was criticized in the New York book review there and one of the men that passed it hadn't read it.

Oh well his books always make money and then when he read it he was shocked. The man who gave the criticism says if he'd read his other book he would have been more shocked. Do you know why? Because he said that the mummified body of Jesus Christ was found by a roadside zoo and hot dog stand.

Would you think a man would dare to be so blasphemous as to say the mummified body of Jesus had been found on an American road at the side of a zoo and an old hot dog stand? Does God have to put up with that kind of rotteness? But he puts up with it, he withholds his anger. Now those men have no appetite, they've no interest in the things of God. A sign of health is you want to eat.

What do you do when you're sick? No I don't want to eat, I don't like to eat. Well this is your favorite meal, I don't feel like it. The more healthy we are in spirit, the more we want to know God.

The amazing thing is that Paul after all he'd done, I would have looked back and said well hallelujah I didn't feel much like it, man my body, my jaw was aching, they hurt my back with rocks and they lashed

my body and oh I was uncomfortable when they threw me out at Lystra but I went and had another evangelistic campaign and hallelujah I founded a church there. I'd have looked back and said well I've written all these epistles, man I've done more work than ten other men put together. All the apostles together didn't do as much as I did.

I've turned more out, I've known God, I've had more revelation. Instead of that he says with all his experience of God that I may know him, not more of the miraculous, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection. Okay going back to Daniel says in the last day when wicked men do wickedly, the people that do know their God.

You see we've got that mixed up with people that do know their Bibles. We've never had more Bible knowledge than we have now in America. We've millions of cassettes, we've millions of books on the Bible.

I got a book list yesterday, a sale of books, books, books, reprints of men back 200 years ago, books and some of them are good, I'm not saying they're not, but I'm saying this that right now as a nation we're suffocating in knowledge. We believe but we don't behave. I said there's a difference between happiness and unblestness.

Happiness depends on happenings, blessedness depends on God. I believe this, I may have to work it out more, but it just came to me I think today for the very first time, or was it yesterday? If I won't learn by obedience, I'll have to learn by correction. If God brings me a truth and I obey that truth, I'll absorb it, it becomes part of my life.

If I don't, I may bypass it, but later he's going to bring me into a place where I have to be corrected. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he received. Now again God is not capricious, God doesn't play tricks.

Again what is this life? Again this life is a dressing room for eternity. There'll be no chance to put things right at the judgment seat. I wrote a letter recently to a very famous man, one of the most famous men in the world as a writer, and he said to me Len, a quote you made there is I think one of the best you've ever made.

There'll be no U-turn at the judgment seat. Looking back and saying Lord I missed it there and I disobeyed there and I No, no, no, no, no. It's like the little boy saying his prayers and he'd said them a hundred times you know God bless daddy and grandmas and everybody and if I die tonight and he stopped and his grandma said well go on.

She prompted him he couldn't say well now come on if I die tonight grant. No well okay and she prompted me no and he ran away. She just sat in the chair and he came back and he knelt down said his prayer right through.

She said what was wrong did you forget it? No. Then he said I quarreled with my sister just before I came upstairs to bed and I hid a doll a stack of old things in another room and grandma I wouldn't like to die tonight. I wouldn't feel very happy to go and see Jesus when I knew I did a dirty trick like that on my sister.

Well you see if we're going to have if we're going to live with a moral rectitude and spiritual character we're not going to have to wait and make some excuses at the end of the day. See too many people put on a robe of righteousness or try to on the sabbath day or or they try to become holy in a certain atmosphere.

Now we ought to live in holiness all the day whether you're licking stamps or you've got a stubborn you know computer or a stubborn horse that won't go the right way or or a wheel comes off something that that that's the very time when you prove what's inside.

It's too late to say well I'm just going to sit down and read the sermon on the mat right here while that horse is kicking the bottom out of that thing or or that thing is going on just a bit too late isn't it? You see but unless it's in it won't work out. God works it in you work out your own salvation. You you can't work these things out.

Blessed are the meek no blessed are the arrogant in our day. Blessed are the peacemakers no blessed are the pacemakers. You see they they couldn't take this Jesus says well Moses said unto you but I say.

This is where he gets in trouble with the Pharisees again and the Sadducees. What did Moses say? Thou shall not kill. What did Jesus say? Oh in this massive sermon he doesn't say that.

He says if you're angry with a brother you know it really when you get so blazing angry if you felt you could get away with it you'd murder him anyhow you've got murder in your heart. It's not doing the act. If you hate your brother you're a murderer.

What does Moses say? Thou shall not commit adultery. If you look on a woman to lust. I was in a conference up in Michigan a few years ago and there's a big big guy came in he was most refreshing he not because he had a big table full of artifacts that he brought he I think he said in America and Canada there are 400 different groups of Indians little little sections and big sections from the Navajos to the Blackfoot to somebody else and he went to one of these camps and he said two or three guys there they'd sit and they'd be disinterested while he was talking but one day one of them I don't know you know Eagle Federer one of these fancy names he walked right out the front and said I give my life to Jesus.

So he dismissed all the others and spent a long while with him and the man just got as liberated as could be. Man he was so happy. He didn't happen to go back to that camp for two years and when he got back a fellow ran up to him you ask about you you hear about Eagle Federer? No.

Oh very bad very bad. Very bad what? Ah Eagle Federer ah he he imprisoned. Oh for what? Oh oh he took Princess so-and-so and violated her assaulted her humiliated her.

Had adultery with her. That was the language he used. Princess said no.

Ah yes yes he in prison. He said I left the camp went down to the state prison asked to see the man. Who are you? I'm a missionary to the India.

Oh very well very well. He got the keys the guy the keeper got the keys and walking down into the prison he said to the man up to the missionary you know this man? Yeah. What's wrong with him? I said I don't know what's wrong with him he said I'll tell you what he's the happiest man there's ever been in this prison.

He's a remarkable man. He's got four or five of the worst criminals in this prison that we were afraid of. We're not afraid they don't curse they don't blaspheme they don't do anything they don't secretly make make knives.

They're just like him. That confirms what I thought. Finally gets to see ah Eagle Federer comes.

Oh brother gave him a big hug and he said yes I did not say what are you here for? Oh. Adultery. No you're not.

Yes I am. No you're not. Yes I am.

No you're not. Look at me Eagle Federer he looked he said did did you touch that girl? No. No.

Well then why are you doing three years in jail or five years in jail? Jesus say whoever look on woman to lust. I came down around reservation and princess so-and-so was skinny dipping. I rode past on my horse then I stopped and looked back at her and for a moment I coveted that woman and Jesus say I I was guilty of adultery.

Now that the judge didn't ask all the details what actually happened was when he rode past somebody else came and took that girl and and humiliated her in that way and blamed it onto the somebody else said well didn't you see Eagle Federer go past yes now he says he didn't do it and she I guess in a in the upset that she had saw that Eagle Federer but the point is this that he literally took the word of the Lord Jesus is he now now what if every Christian lived in this state that you you can't hate your brother you wouldn't go to bed with hatred on your heart any more than you go that you you stole a bag of money out of the office there when there's nobody looking it's not the act it's the desire it's the nature and so do you that Wesley says thy nature gracious Lord impart you know we I

have a friend he's a very godly man you know his name many of you and he has no room for any second blessing any any baptism of the Holy Spirit anything like that he says Len I can't put up with that thing at least I can believe in an endowment of power but listen I want to tell you that the new birth is a miracle it is a miracle every physical birth is a miracle man there's a hundred things can go wrong with every child that's born it can be born blind it can be born lame it can be born retarded it can be born this way that way the other way every baby's a miracle I marvel every time I see a baby every time I dedicate a baby but how do you magnify that into this that that all the twisted and rottenness and corruption don't tell me that there's a hell inside of a man you take the Puritan

concept of human nature and you'll throw up if you read some of it the heart is a cage of unclean birds the will is warped man is not just bad he's a rebel he doesn't want this man to reign over him he's in the kingdom of darkness you see I was raised in a group where look when you come out of the kingdom of darkness you come out and you don't run in at the weekend to get some satisfaction so in our you know I never went to a movie until I was 50 odd years of age when I came to New York I had never been in a movie house because in England in Europe the movie house is considered a den of the devil who makes the films adulterous sinners who you're paying your money to adulterous sinners now the thing is whatever you're doing first sit down and say is this in the kingdom of darkness is it in

the kingdom of the light a girl asked me do you think I don't like to ask you this but do you think a Christian girl can wear a bikini I said yes if you'd like to be raptured in it what well then if you don't want to be raptured in it you say Jesus can come at any moment oh see when I was a boy nearly every Christian home used to have signs and one sign was do nothing you would not like to be doing when Jesus comes say nothing you would not like to be saying when Jesus comes go to no place you'd not like to be found when Jesus comes so you didn't go to movies why because there's a lot of filth there we didn't go to professional football matches or the match why because they use the name of Jesus in vain and in any case have you got enough time to sit there you see at your age you think

well oh Mr.

Rainier boy says he's nearly 75 well oh I have another 50 odd years to go to catch up to him how do you know you may not have 50 minutes what if this is your last day on earth have you lived it to glorify God if you don't believe me go down the road look in the cemetery there's somebody there at your age they're all ages from six months to six years 106 years whatever it is there's one thing that you know death levels us all and in one sense life is fair because the rich don't have a 26 hour clock they don't have a calendar with eight days in the week and they don't have a calendar with 395 days in the year there are certain things we're all tied into now if you're going to live life to the full there's only one way to live it and that is that this miracle of God he's done in us that

we're not just forgiven and got rid of a lot of lousy sins and we're going to live in a kind of an eternal bliss a utopia better than anything ever but a Plato's utopia you know I made some notes on that Plato's republic you see man's dreamed of a utopia whether you go to a kid's story like or go back to Augustine or come down to a children's story like what was it Gulliver and Lilliput the idea is there's a utopia in other words there is a kingdom in which there's no hatred no bitterness no crime no roughness no uncleanness nothing that's rude everything's good and kind and holy and pure and uplifting so Plato said you could have a republic like that it was an ideal state everybody would have to go to a school of philosophy and the whole state will be ruled by a king more on his utopia

in which he says emancipation will come to the human race only by education it's a long while since he said it now we're the most educated folk on earth and we don't want God's laws we don't want marriage laws we don't want anybody else's laws that's that's one for education what was it Francis Bacon said that the new Atlantis it will be happiness through scientific conquest because he didn't know about atom bombs and roasting whole cities but that's what he said if you go down the path of science you'll ultimately get a utopia you'll get an ideal world Francis Bacon uh pardon me Hitler said what you can only have a new world by racial supremacy destroy the weak get the pure Aryan race and we'll we'll rebuild the world on a new foundation of a new race of people which he's going to

produce by intellectual again and biological processes like the humanists before world war one Karl Marx said what you can only have a new race of people by abolishing the flabby and that's what he called him he got he called us a flabby flabby faulty what do you call it bourgeois mentality a classless society there is no classless society in Russia today is there a classless society in the kingdom of God there's neither Jew nor Greek male nor female neither Jew nor Greek bond nor free okay there's neither Jew nor Greek racial distinction bond nor free class distinction male or female uh um what am i trying to say here um i can't think of the word it's a simple word well human distinction in that sense in the kingdom of God you're not held out because you're a woman all that's available

to the man in the kingdom of God is available to the woman but the entrance is ghastly it's repentance it's turning you back on the world of flesh and the devil it's realizing i've come out of the kingdom of darkness with all that's associated with it and i think that needs stressing in the just this week a man a young man sent me a book he's written on separation and asked me to write didn't ask me to write a preview it he asked me to write criticisms i wrote a number in the margins of it he wants to get it out pretty quickly and i went right through the whole thing and i felt the one weakness was he did not distinguish enough in separation from the world love not the world nor the things of the world as i say if you go to a movie i'm not saying you're not to go i'm just saying would you

feel comfortable if the lord came and rapture you from there what are you doing in a ball match what are you doing somewhere else uh it was um um it was paschal that said perfection is made up of trifles but perfection itself is no trifle you see it's all the little things as it says in the old testament the little foxes that spoil the vine oh he's a great man but she's a great woman but and usually it's that tiny little snag of a thing isn't it that spoils our lives i remember one day because of a certain thing i got my boys and i asked them one of them i was in particular difficulties he'd gone to college and i knew he was having certain difficulties and so i said to him i want to ask you a question and don't answer it as though i'm your daddy answer it as though i were a professor at

the college you're at i said is that do you see anything in my life which would hinder you from becoming a fully committed christian be very honest don't don't spare my feelings at all and he waited a bit his eyes filled with tears and he said daddy if it wasn't for the way you and mommy lived i would totally disappointed with christianity as i've seen it in a christian college i didn't feel flattered about that i felt satisfied because we tried to live before him and that's what i say you see it's not a it's not a list of prohibitions that i shall not do this you must be in bed by 10 you must be up at four or you're not a saint you must do that it's it's not that there are certain things god will lay on you as i say to people i'm not asking you to wear my sackcloth no i'm not but i'm

asking you to get into this truth of the word of god again to find do i do i have a disposition that that doesn't need so-called happiness and excitement to keep me on top do i have to leap from the top of the tree to the top of another tree that is i have some big event coming up in my diary oh i'm going to sloan so's wedding oh i'm going to something else a lot of people only live on that they live on big meetings they live on um with multitudes of them now these these seminars they go to somewhere who do you think i'm sat on the next table to us you know so they sat next to gabriel some broken down film star that professes to be saved or something you can't live there you you live only on the indwelling christ it's his peace it's his indwelling he is made unto us wisdom and

righteousness and sanctification you can't put it on externally it's internally and if the internal righteousness is there the fruit will be righteousness if there's internal holiness we bring forth fruit unto holiness but we enter into the kingdom through through being born again we enter into being born again through repentance in being born again we're made partakers of the divine nature this brilliant brilliant man spotless immaculate impeccable morality that comes to jesus not a jew only not not just a pharisee a ruler of the jews a pharisee of the pharisees and jesus says unless you're born again no external righteousness no peeping of new moons and sabbaths no fasting no penances no giving just just giving and giving see lots of people they think holiness is denying the world and

going living in the convent living in the monastery that's exactly what jesus said don't do he said you'd be in the world but not half the world he says in this very epistle doesn't it were to be lights what's the good of having a 500 lights and sticking them all in the monastery or somewhere else but what does it mean by light it doesn't mean we just shout and carry light it means that our lives are so filled with god who is light that we radiate wherever we go our unconscious influence is greater than our conscious influence i say this last thing i went to a little college i went to and at the side of where i sat there was a wall and there's a picture of a man and he had a marvelous looking face he didn't wear a clerical collar he wore a white shirt and a white tie and and when i was

you know i couldn't get an answer i'd look up there and say yeah thomas cook yeah great guy great guy but thomas cook was going to africa to preach there were no planes in those days he went on a boat and

when they got down i think they went through the suez canal and were going down the east coast of africa and as they went through the mediterranean one night he knew what would happen after dinner that the lounge was filled with smoking gambling drinking men and women that he needed to go see a friend who was in the cabin right through the other side of that big lounge and he walked through and as soon as he walked through the open door swung the doors open men just stuffed their pipes on one side and hid the cards under the table and and the whole place was transformed and one guy said

why did we do that nobody told us to do it and the other man said didn't you feel that you're doing something wrong when a man had a face like that and such a godliness about him now he could have gone and said hey you're all going to hell put those cards away put that beer away and stop drinking and smoking and saying rotten language didn't do that his very countenance was radiant with god after all isn't jesus the incarnation blessed are the poor poor in spirit oh poor today we think of poverty as something which is inausciating almost but it's talking about poverty of spirit i said we might get to it this week we didn't we will next we'll start right on that next week but again you can't put these pieces all together and say these are all in me now i'm holy what are these well i could

put it in one word i think they're cosmetics of the spirit i preached to a group i said next sunday i'm going to preach it to you on the cosmetics of the spirit and they all stare and i took the 45th psalm the king's daughter is all glorious where within cosmetics of the spirit worship the lord in the beauty of holiness wasn't jesus a beautiful character it wasn't his face he was mad more than the sons of men and yet there was a radiance about him there was a beauty about him there's a magnetism about him then drew near unto him publicans and sinners they never drew near to the pharisees they brought to him all who are possessed of the devil they never took them to the pharisees or to the sadducees or to the high priest there was something magnetic about his holiness and that's what we

should desire in our lives surely it's not to feel that we're holier than other people that's that that's the very opposite of what it produces it produces a humility it makes us realize this is all the marvelous grace of god it's not that i've made up my mind not to be a drunkard or a prostitute or a thief or something else we all tried that it broke down but god comes and and miraculously enough we're made partakers of the divine nature and the divine nature is everything that there is in that fifth chapter and we've got to work it out god will work it in but we've got to work it out and i say again if we live like that if the world live like that if every christian in offices live like that if every christian that christian parents in homes i get so caught up in my spirit when i go

to a home i was in a home not too long ago the guys are brilliant preachers six thousand members in this church they'll do anything for him and he's got one boy that's the he's the heartbreak of the church not only his father he's only about 14 his hair's way down his back it's known that he's on drugs he drinks he carries on now that boy should not be in that state at 14 that's not the boy's fault it's his parents fault as far as i'm concerned but the fact is this you see that he's lived in that home and yet somehow he he managed to live in an atmosphere where there should have been holiness that he should have choked on it he should have choked on it he should have felt like somebody when the rooms overheated and and all the oxygen's gone out you you gasp you gasp you gasp my dad didn't

have to say much to me he lived before me my mother lived before me i said the greatest thing my daddy ever did for me was to take me to a half night of prayer when i was 14 years of age and once i'd seen men pray take their coats off and really pray and sweat and weep my dad was a big husky guy about i was gonna say six foot eleven five foot eleven and the other fellow was bigger and the other man was broader

but boy when they pray no i i didn't need somebody to tell me there was a difference between my dad and the neighbors i didn't need somebody a lot of prohibitions don't do this i knew if there was trouble everybody in the neighborhood came to my mother why because she walked with god and this is what god wants in us thy nature gracious lord impart come quickly from above write thy

new name upon my heart the new thy new best name of love and what is the ten what is these commandments they're the eight commandments the attitudes of jesus well they're the cosmetics of the soul they explain to us the royal rule and reign of love and that's the badge of discipleship by this shall all men know that you're my disciples if you have love one to another lord we thank you tonight for yourself we thank you that as an old saint said how can it be thy heavenly king that thou dost us to glory bring make slaves the partners of thy throne decked with a never fading crown we bless you lord for where you've lifted us from out of darkness into the kingdom of your dear son and we pray again that we may explore the possibilities of grace that we'll not be content with waters to the

ankles but push on to waters to the knees and waters to the loins and waters to swim in that you won't have to embarrass us at the judgment seat and say i had many things to tell you but you couldn't bear them that we won't be satisfied lord with anything but the conscious witness of your spirit that we're walking in all the light that we have that we've left darkness we're no longer the children of darkness that we've been translated into the kingdom of light with all its beauty and all its glory lord i pray particularly here last days that there'll be something unique about this place there'll be a radiant holiness not a stilted holiness not a legalistic holiness but the beauty of holiness the meekness of what peter says the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit that these people will

all together be pure in heart not to see god ultimately in eternity but to see god now we're told even a heart condition can affect the eyes and lord if our hearts are pure then our vision will be pure that lord there'll be nobody striving for mastery here in the fellowship but in honor we'll prefer one another above ourselves but again we'll have a meek and a quiet spirit we live in such an arrogant world we live in a world of such force such bitterness not much sweetness such hatred and not much love lord may this be as paul wrote he said we are citizens of heaven our citizenship is in heaven or we're a colony of heaven on the way to heaven that the kingdom of heaven is within us before we get to heaven itself but the king is ruling in our lives and and we are by the grace of god living

this that you desire us to live that we're well pleasing in your sight and we give you praise because you alone are worthy in jesus name amen

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