

Cost of Discipleship - Part 9

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon explores the profound cost of discipleship, emphasizing faith, love, and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 8:53

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and maturity in faith, highlighting the need for individuals to find their unique roles in the body of Christ rather than trying to be everything in the church. It delves into the profound love of Christ as the driving force for believers, urging them to embody sacrificial love and selflessness. The message also touches on the transformative power of being filled with the Holy Spirit, leading to a life of freedom from sin and bondage, ultimately resulting in a deep spiritual burial and resurrection with Christ.

Transcript

Pray night and day exceedingly that your faith may be strengthened. He starts the second epistle, the first chapter, verse 3, and says, I rejoice. What? That your faith grows exceedingly.

His prayer had been answered. They haven't all just become millionaires or famous personalities. They haven't all become evangelists and teachers and prophets.

Those things are there, and I would to God they were more manifest than they are in these days. I'd like to see the force at Agape here. I'd like to see the force around the corner there, the YWAM, and over at Joe's and other places.

I'd like to see a place where we know there's a man. He's the prophet, and he's the evangelist, and he's the teacher. Every man's standing in his own place.

The trouble is now, the preacher wants to be everything in the average church. He wants to be teacher, preacher, prophet, and everything else. You ought to be glad he's one spoke in the wheel, that these ministers were not given to boys and girls, spiritually immature.

It must have been a great thing to follow Jesus for three years. It must have been a great thing to be a Timothy. For all that love Paul showed on Timothy, he kind of says, this is my spiritual heir.

He's coming after me. See how much? Read his epistles if you want to know about preaching and teaching. Read his epistles, the first and second of Paul to Timothy.

The heir, as long as he liveth, as long as he's a child, he's no different from a servant. But let him come to the age of maturity. I have never, never discovered the answer to this.

I'll discuss it with God some time, and you are the wise men here. Three wise men on the front row. But you know, Paul, isn't it amazing? Paul is the most profound theologian the church ever had, and usually when we talk about apostles, we call John the apostle, the apostle of love.

But he didn't write one Corinthians 13. Paul wrote one Corinthians 13. Paul says, do you want to know what my success is, if you put it that way? Do you know what it is? And he goes in the second chapter of Corinthians 5, and he recites, you know, if the earthly house is dissolved, we have a home in the heavens.

And then he comes down, he says, do you know what the secret is? The love of Christ constrains me. I told Brother Tony about three months ago, I said, you know, I saw a very daring thing today. He said, what did you see? Oh, I said, I was coming into a building, and it said agape love on the outside of it.

It's the greatest thing in the world. I said, Tony, what we've done, we've hung a sign on our gate, that if you can't find divine love anywhere, you'll find it agape. If you can't find love that never breaks down, you'll find it agape.

If you can't find love that beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, we never give up on you. I mean, we stuck it on the wall out there. Now, either it's true or we're hypocrites.

Love! So amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. And the poet says, love ever stands with open hands, and while it lives, it gives. For this is love's prerogative, to give and give and give.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son. Christ loved the church and gave himself for the church. And if you love you, he said, you'll give your life for your brethren.

That doesn't mean you die for them. It means you share your life. It means every day when there's need, you supply that need.

It's not just saying, well, shoot me instead of him. That's easy, man, you'd be out of it. For you could blink your eyes, you'd be in eternity, got rid of taxation and everything.

It would be wonderful. But when it comes down to sharing your life, it's a very, very different thing. Let me just look.

I'm going to take three more minutes, don't know how much time I have. I was reading in Romans this morning, Romans chapter 6. You know, you can't find in the New Testament any place where some of the disciples were saved. But you can find the place where they're all filled with the Holy Ghost.

When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, which is a type of the world, and they left Pharaoh, a type of the devil. When they came out of Egypt, they sang a song, it blew away on the breeze. But when they went into the promised land, Canaan, they built a permanent altar.

They built a pile of stones, a permanent record that they were crossing into the promised land. A land flowing with milk and honey. And sometimes we suggest you get filled with the Spirit.

That's the answer to all your problems. That's the end of all your problems. It is, the beginning end.

That's where they start. Jesus was filled with the Holy Ghost and immediately led of the Spirit into wilderness. Do you know the baptism of the Holy Ghost can do for you? And boy, do we recite it.

Sure we should do. I'll tell you what it did for those men in Acts 2. And so many people say I got an Acts 2 experience, but Acts 2 goes into Acts 3. Where did Acts 3 get them? In jail. I know other Spirit-filled people should be in jail, but apart from that, it's jail.

It's jail. It's bondage. The kind of bondage you put on a train when the engine's snorting down the line.

And the only safety is that it's in control by those two strips of metal. Otherwise, it's a lethal thing. And Madame Guillen says, my freedom is thy grand control.

The only freedom in the world is to get into bondage to God. Out of the bondage of sin into bondage for God. Now look what he says in the 6th of Romans.

Therefore we are buried with Christ by baptism. We're buried into what? Into death. Verse 5. For if we have been planted in the likeness of his death, knowing this, that our old man, our old self, is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Now look, you're either serving God or serving self or serving sin. There's no other alias. Verse 7 is quite a text.

He that is dead is freed from sin. No, no, it doesn't mean when this body dies. The next verse goes on.

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also rise with him. Verse 9. Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, death dieth no more, death hath no dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. I'll tell you what, when that happens, you never forget it. When you go to your own funeral, on your hymn sheet this morning, I don't have mine.

Will you give me a hymn sheet, please? We're not going to sing it for a moment, but I like this hymn. I was thinking of this before the meeting too, so I got in line on two things, if nothing else. Singing the old rugged cross and this hymn.

I will praise him. Look at the second stanza. Though the way seemed straight and narrow, all I claimed was swept away.

My ambitions, plans, and wishes at my feet in ashes lay. I said in a meeting in Scotland as we closed it years back, I said if you let this be true in your life, you'll bring your ambitions, your plans, your wishes, your own desires, your self-life, put it on the altar, God will burn it up, and you'll do more with the ashes than you can do with your entire personality. And I said if you want this blessing, raise your hand, a dozen people raised their hand, and I said anyone else, a little woman at the back, raise your hand like that, down.

I said I saw it. She got flaming red hair. Fifteen years after my dear wife and I were in Manchester at a missionary meeting.

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