

Deeper Waters - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon explores the depths of sanctification and the call to a deeper spiritual life through the teachings of the Gospel of John.

Duration: 25:54

Scripture: Matthew 5:8, John 1:1, John 14:6, John 17:17, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 6:17, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 12:14, James 1:5, 1 Peter 1:16

Topics: "Depth of Relationship with God", "Sanctification"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the profound depth of the Gospel of John, particularly focusing on the themes of sanctification and the nature of Jesus as both divine and human. He argues that the Gospel is not merely a collection of four accounts but a singular narrative revealing the essence of Christ. Ravenhill highlights the importance of understanding Jesus' prayer in John 17, which he considers a sacred moment that showcases the need for believers to seek wisdom and sanctification in their lives. He challenges the church to move beyond superficial spirituality and to embrace a deeper relationship with God, emphasizing the necessity of separation from worldly influences. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to holiness and a deeper understanding of God's majesty.

Transcript

John 17 is the chapter on sanctification, alright. Uh, chapter 18 is going into the garden of Gethsemane, that's deeper still. Chapter 19 is going to judgment.

Chapter 20, you have the resurrection. So once you start reading from John 14, you start going into deeper, deeper, deeper, deeper. Now, a very lovely, beautiful, wonderful thing.

I'm very fond of the gospel, which is not the gospel of John. You know, people say very often, and say wrongly, and we shouldn't say things that are wrong, but very often Bible teachers say, now we're going to take the fourth gospel. There is not a fourth gospel.

There's one gospel told by four different people of John. You know, people say very often, and say wrongly, and we shouldn't say things that are wrong, but very often Bible teachers say, now we're going to take the fourth gospel. There is not a fourth gospel.

There's one gospel told by four different people. There are not four gospels. Matthew shows Jesus as a king.

Mark reveals Jesus as a servant. Luke reveals Jesus as the Son of God. You know, we need to keep the balance between the humanity of Jesus and the deity of Jesus.

Not as people say sometimes, Jesus was divine. No, no, no, no, he wasn't divine. I'm divine.

You're divine. If you're made a partaker of the divine nature, you're divine, but not deity. Deity is way beyond divinity.

If you and I are made partakers of the divine nature, we receive the divine life, which is so different and contrary to human life, but we're not deity. Deity is equality with God, as a matter of fact. You think of this sometimes, when you have nothing else to do, and I'm sure you have many times like that around here.

Get under a tree and read the first verse of the first chapter of the gospel recorded by John. Anybody recite it? Okay, in the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God.

The Word was God. Okay, so then in the beginning, oh, here we are, in the beginning, the Word was with God. The second thing, the Word, in the beginning, the Word was with God.

The second thing is what? The Word was God. Can't recite it properly myself now, I've confused myself here. Let me think of this a minute.

In the beginning, the Word was with God. All right. Pardon? In the beginning was the Word.

So, in the beginning is eternity. I'll have to learn to talk, I haven't done this for years. In the beginning was the, in the beginning is eternity.

The Word was with God. Equality. The Word was God, deity.

Now, the whole of the gospel, we'll call it the gospel of John here for convenience, the whole of the gospel as John revealed it is an expansion. In other words, you've got the whole of this teaching condensed like, you know, a telescope. You can push it in, you've got the barrel of the telescope, you can extend it, extend it, extend it.

The barrel of the telescope is in that first verse. In the beginning was the Word, that's eternity. He was in the beginning, the Word was, he was, eternity.

The Word was with God, equality. The Word was God, deity. Then the rest of the book again is an expansion of that statement.

Now, 92% of what John says in his interpretation of the gospel is his own. Do you get the drift of that? What do you have in chapter 15? The vine. We don't find that in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

What do you have in the 16th chapter? The Holy Spirit. You don't find that in Matthew, Mark and Luke, not stated the same way. What do you have in John 17? The most hallowed thing.

I read the other day where a man said, I write about prayers in the Bible, but I never dare touch John 17. Why? Because you want to kick your shoes off your feet. I'd like to have seen Jesus raise the dead.

I think it would be exciting to see Lazarus get up. I'd like to have seen him unplug deaf ears. I would like to have seen him drive demons out of people.

But most of all, if I could only see one thing, it wouldn't be to see Jesus walk on the water. If I could only have one experience, I would have wanted the experience of hearing Jesus pray. I remember about the second time I went to Chicago and I said to one of the deacons in Dr. Toza's church, well, I'm sure looking forward to a time of prayer with Dr. Toza.

And he smiled. He said, well, Brother Raymond, I doubt you'll get a time of prayer with him. He doesn't come to prayer meetings.

And I said, he what? I said, say that again. This man that's written so modestly does not come to prayer meetings? Well, he said he did come for a few years in this church. And then we asked him not to come.

Why not? Well, and this made me understand why nowhere in the scripture can I find where Jesus ever prayed with his disciples. Can you think of a place where he prayed? In John 17, he didn't pray with them, he prayed for them. He didn't pray with them for the simple reason that the analogy is best brought out with Toza.

He's a bit nearer and human to us. I said, why doesn't Dr. Toza come to the prayer meeting? He said, for this reason, that when we, he would give a talk on prayer, then say, let us pray. They got about 60, 70 to the prayer meeting.

And he said, after Dr. Toza said, let us pray, there was a silence. 10 or 15 minutes, nobody prayed. Then the doctor wouldn't pray.

Then after he prayed, nobody dared pray. See? That gave me an interpretation without them saying a word. I said, now I've got the answer to why Jesus never prayed with him.

They would never have understood him. He prayed in an area, he prayed with an intelligence, if you like. As I was saying to that sister a few minutes ago there, the difference between having knowledge, wisdom is knowing how to apply knowledge, but Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom.

Now, I don't care how much knowledge or wisdom you have, even wisdom is progressive. When I was in school, I wasn't so smart, I'll tell you that. Sometimes the teacher would say, Raven, you'll answer this question.

He stood up promptly, you know, and very often I'd fumble the whole thing. And the kids would snigger. But you know, God isn't like that.

It says in the epistle of James, If a man lack wisdom, let him ask of God. Now he asked for so many, now when did, honest to goodness, when did you last ask God for wisdom? I think you should say that every day, because not every teacher that comes here will tell you everything that's right, apart from myself. But, they'll put over their ideas and their views and you'll check on it and say, well, wait a minute, wait a minute.

You see, we need wisdom. And if you need it in a real way, you should do what our son David has done. He's coming back to the Lord.

He's been away seven years and God has told him to come back to America to live and come and live in Texas. So most likely he'll come and teach. He's got a very good teaching ministry.

But he has saturated himself on the book of Proverbs. It's the book of wisdom. I think that, in our class in Sunday school with our little fellowship, for one time, one period I said, now children you learn this proverb

by next Sunday and before all the assembled people, we have a tremendous crowd of people, 35, but anyhow, they, the children come in, in our little community, the children come in and I say, what was the text this week? And they stand up and say, Proverbs 8, so and so.

What was the scripture this week? You see, it's no good praying for wisdom if you don't have the material to operate. You can't knit with invisible wool, can you? The lady said, no thank you. I didn't think you could either.

You can't. But if you get wool and then you get a design and you apply a bit of knowledge to this, before long you'll knit one and purl two and drop 40 stitches or something. But you'll do it because you have the material to work on.

Now God needs material to work on. I have a friend, he's a good man, successful businessman, but I always feel uncomfortable. Not that I'm an intellectual.

I never claim to be an intellectual. I know very little. But he's always saying, you know, we don't need profound teaching.

The Bible is very simple. Is it? I never knew it was. I never knew it was.

You see, the world has its standard of wisdom. If God is going to sanctify me wholly, my spirit, my soul and my body. Again, my spirit is my God relationship.

My soul is self-consciousness. But in my soul, I have emotion, I have will. I have all those things that disturb.

They stir me and so forth. I'm soulish. I have to be soulish.

I need purification in my soul area. I need purification in my mind area. I need purification in my body area.

I need to have settled things in my mind that my body is a vessel unto honor, sanctified. I'm not going to pollute it in any way. I'm not going to abuse it in any way.

This again is why God says, look, you need a day, as a hymn writer says, a day of rest and gladness, a day of holy joy. You should do a minimum of work on the Sabbath day or the Lord's day if you want to call it that. Your body needs the rest.

If God could only work six and he rested, then unless you're smarter than God, you need a day in which you'll hardly do a thing. Now don't get it wrong and you need six days when you don't do anything and work one. You keep it in order.

You have one day in which you don't work and you don't soil your hands in one thing at all. You just keep that day as unto God. And look, if you do that, I guarantee if I see you a year from today, if you give that day to God, totally, you can go courting if you like, but make that even a sanctified Emmaus walk and then say, well, it's time to go home and go.

But give God that day. Concentrate on the things of God. Work out that which God will work in you, but you've got to work out your own salvation.

Many of us want to come to maturity without working it out. Brother was talking about Spurgeon a minute ago. I get a tremendous kick out of Spurgeon because, you see, he was only 14 when he was saved and I was saved at 14 and I know Spurgeon.

He never went to Bible school. I did, nearly six months. But, I never went to high school.

I never went to college. I never went to seminary. If I've learned anything, I learned it on my knees.

But at 14 years of age, Spurgeon was converted. Well, 14 and 5 makes 19. You didn't know that.

All right. 14 and 5 makes 19. When he was 19, they built him a tabernacle seating 5,000 people which he packed twice a day, which makes 10,000.

He didn't have the baptism. Isn't that amazing? I should think so. Too wild.

I mean, to think that a man at 14 years of age never went to Bible school or seminary, never had the baptism as we have one to interpret it 50 different ways. But, he waited on God. He got along with God.

He bought some good books. He studied. He prayed.

I don't know if any of you have read, have you read Knowing God? Who's read Knowing God by J.I. Packer? Good, good, good. You should read. That's a tremendous book.

In fact, most books by Englishmen are good. But anyhow, J.I. Packer is in the university. But he begins that very lovely book by stating this was preached in a New Park street pulpit.

And he gives you about 50 lines of real profound stuff like the Puritans used to preach. And then when he's finished it, he says, this was preached by Spurgeon when he was 20 years of age. Now, if he hadn't put that and somebody said to me, who wrote that? I'd say, John Owen wrote that in 1546.

You know, I believe that, this is what I really believe. I mentioned about this river, you know, waters to the ankles. I believe right now the Church of Jesus Christ hasn't even got the sole of its feet wet, never mind got to ankle depth.

You see, we're living in a day, again, it's a shrinking world. Sure, that British plane goes over the Atlantic, took Wesley three months to come in, do it in three hours now in this super jet, French-English Concorde. The world is shrinking, the universe is expanding.

David said, when I consider thy heavens, he never considered them in the way we consider them. Until 100 years ago, we only knew the names of 180 stars. And we knew there's a streak through the sky, you know, you'll see it, there's a streak right through the sky sometimes.

I'll do it here, you know, it goes like this. It's just a kind of a light path and it's called the Milky Way. And in it, there are supposed to be, I don't know, 10 million stars.

And it was unique. When I was a boy, I used to gaze on it, the Milky Way, the Milky Way, wonderful. Now we've discovered there may be a thousand Milky Ways in the heavens.

We didn't have telescopes to bring them in. Now we've got telescopes. A telescope on Mount Palomar, it's so big, you sit inside of it to look through it, isn't that something? And it's revealing the majesty of the heavens.

You look at the sun, you can get one, this world in which we live. If I ever watch it, it'll look better. A round world, you know, not just round, flat that way.

Reminds me of the men arguing, one man said the world's round, the other one said it's flat and the other man came out and said nonsense, it's crooked. But anyhow, they've got the world. You can put one million, two hundred thousand worlds in the sun.

It's so big. And you've got suns out in space in which you can put a million suns. They're so great.

Now that's not, that's not a guess, that's a scientific fact. The scientist does not believe in eternity, he does believe in infinity. You see not so long ago we shot, what we do, we shot something from Earth, we were shooting up to a planet here and we shot it from Earth here and the thing went up, went right past the planet and it's still going.

And then say, eventually we'll get a man on a star. Well, if you'd keep that rocket going at the same pace it goes now, it would get to a star in about eighteen hundred years. And I think the fellows on board might run out of pang by that time.

I mean, the only way you're going to get from Earth to a star, alright, here's the planet they missed, there's the star over here, that thing's going to keep going. Well, how in the world are they going to get there? The only two things you need on board, one is a maternity block and the other is a cemetery. Who's going to live long enough to get there anyhow? You see, that's God's majesty, that's part of his great and glorious creation, so vast.

This again is why I go to some meetings and they get no further in clapping, have a good time and whistling and singing. That's alright if you're in the primary. I keep saying to people, get out of your playpen spiritually.

There ought to be times when we not only leave the sanctuary in awe, but we've come with a sense of awe. You know, if you come with a foul spiritual meeting you'll pollute that meeting and God help you when you get to eternity. We need to be pure to go to the sanctuary.

Well, the scriptures say be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. They say, well I'm going to church. Boy, I really need cleaning up.

I've fouled up with temper or secret lust or this, that and the other. And they just think they bring all the dirt and that's all there is. No, no, no.

You should have settled that if it has to be that way. You should have settled it that way before you come. And make the atmosphere pure because God only inhabits the place that's pure.

The priest in the Old Testament wore a garment. He was sanctified. He was separated from the rest of the people.

Oh, I listen to some of these TV boys. TV boys that are about as thrilling as TV dinners. But I listen to them sometimes and oh brother, they just about make me tired.

Their shallow conception of God and the holiness and majesty of God is pitiable. And you know, they stress this, that and the other about their ministry and they'll do this and they'll do that. I hark back every time to the Old Testament.

I say, let's go back to the Old Testament economy. When a man came out of the world to be separated as Aaron and his sons, they never touched the thing anymore. And their garments were made.

Everything was pure. They didn't have electric lights. You didn't know that.

They didn't have electric lights. They had lamps that burned with oil. You say, yes, they put olive oil.

No, they didn't. What did it? They put pure olive oil in. The vessels were made of gold.

No, they were made of pure gold. Everything in that sanctuary was pure. Now, the garment of the priest went up to his chin like this.

He had a coat that buttoned up. It had hooks and eyes on. Right up to his neck.

And it went right down to his feet. It was made of linen. No, it was made of pure linen.

It could not have any wool in it. Why do you wear wool? Right there, to keep warm. What happens if you get too warm? Sweat.

Well, you don't use that now. You say, perspire. Well, you go to see a rule book and the lady says, what are you looking for? You say, I'm looking for two perspiration shirts for my husband.

You say, what? Say, well, I've been to college. You don't say perspiration. Sweat, you say perspiration.

No, no, sweat. Sweat. Jesus' sweat, great drops of blood.

The priest must not sweat. Why? Because sweat is a sign of the curse. None never sweat until the curse.

Just as in the case that people didn't understand why there was going to be a flood because it had never rained. Do you ever realize that? It had never rained. They'd never seen rain.

God watered the earth with dew. And when you say there's going to be holes in heaven and there's going to be holes in the earth and water from beneath is going to meet water from underneath. Forget it.

How can it rain? What's rain anyhow? But in the old economy, then the priest must not sweat. That's the only commandment that preachers have bought from the Old Testament. They refuse to sweat.

Thank you. He must not sweat. He has to come with dignity.

I don't like artificial dignity. I think in America particularly people are too familiar with the preacher. Hi Bill, see you Saturday.

Can I play golf? Now maybe the Europeans have overdone it but there is a dignity you respect the man of God. He doesn't want it but it's a command of God. He's a sanctified man at least he should be.

He is separated. He doesn't have to do the things that other men do. The priest, you'll find these fellows for instance they say well praise God I'm glad he called me and he filled me with the spirit and I'm this that and the other and I'm walking with God and everything else and he made me a priest like he made Joshua like he made Aaron I sometimes wish TV was two way or radio don't you? I'd say you mean to say you don't own a thing? The priest was not allowed to own even a spoonful of land.

He was sanctified. He must not contaminate himself with anything commercial. He was sanctified to that degree.

All right. So Jesus sanctified himself. Why? You say well sanctification means holiness but he did not make himself holy.

He was holy. But again sanctification is separation. From John 17 he starts going into this area here and he sanctifies himself he separates himself.

Let's see did he do any miracles? I don't think he ever did one after that 17th prayer except one you know when Peter slashed at a fellow's ear well he should have he sure didn't mean to cut off his ear he meant to cut his head off now I wish he had because Jesus would have stuck it on anyhow. That would have been a better miracle if there were any degrees of miracles. He had separated himself.

Now somewhere along the line God is going to ask you to separate yourself even from people and you know that's desperately hard. Some lady comes up and says Brother Raymond you know last time you were here you said so and so and I prayed about it. Do you know what happened? In my mind I say yes I know.

Do you know since you were here last time I believe I've grown in grace but you know what? I've lost more friends I've lost this I've lost that great lost the other. You know most Christians are stupid nobody present but all the other folk outside they're all such a stupid bunch. Some of you folk will start writing love letters if you haven't already written them.

I think the second love letter my wife wrote to me had a verse in it I've never forgotten. I don't know who wrote it I've tried to find I can't find it. It said this Measure thy life by loss and not by gain not by the wine drunk but by the wine poured forth for love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice and he who suffers most has most to give.

You see that's God working in and it's God working God working out. Measure thy life everybody says you know the Lord's blessed me do not I have. Now I know wealthy people and I'm glad of them for the work they do for God.

That's their ministry they're going to have their reward in eternity. Trouble is that when somebody gives money you know the fellows pass notes round hey if you're going through those stop songs you get a couple of hundred at least. He gave me a thousand he gave John fifty he gave John and they tip each other now I would never do that.

If people give me a gift it's between them and me not anybody else. I never pass on any information I've got other faults I forgot what they are but I don't pass on information. I'm not in the business for what I get out of it except eternally.

Now don't measure your life necessarily if God gives you something he gives you it as a stewardship whatever it is. So you measure your life by loss and not by gain. Not by the wine drunk.

If you had a hundred guests and you had a costly French wine I guess you don't drink wine I don't maybe you do I don't know but if you drank wine and you poured out a hundred cups of wine and some only sipped some they coughed a whole lot in one thing which you should never do I understand but if all the other people leave their wine half drunk you don't measure the wine.

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