

Elijah - Part 5

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of rebuilding altars, making restitution, and recovering first love for God in order to experience spiritual revival and renewal.

Duration: 8:46

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 28:13, Matthew 5:23-24, Acts 3:19, Ephesians 5:1, Hebrews 12:1-2, James 5:16, 1 John 1:9, Revelation 2:4-5

Topics: "Repentance", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of rebuilding old altars in our lives, highlighting the need for repentance, restitution, and a return to God's ways. It discusses the significance of not dwelling on past sins that have been forgiven and the importance of focusing on holy and pure things. The message also touches on the concept of leaving behind distractions that hinder our intimacy with God and the need to recover lost spiritual fervor by returning to where we initially left it.

Transcript

There's a lot of old altars that need to be rebuilt. Some of you once made a vow you'd never get married, but you've got married since on the edge of it. What about repairing the old altar? Do you mean I should break my engagement? Yes, if you made a vow to God that you wouldn't get married, you'd better halt and wait and find out what God wants.

I've read and reread the fifth chapter of Ephesians this week. Now, you won't remember this, but some of us older people, I don't know if Brother Dale remembers that. No, hardly.

Fifty years ago, there was a popular American by the name of Dr. Buckman, and he came to England and established in Oxford University a series of meetings which spread like wildfire through England. I'm trying to think of the name, what was it? Oh, the Oxford Group, and they used to have what they called a squash. Instead of saying you're going to a house meeting, you went to a squash, because you went to a room like this, which happens to be a bit overloaded this morning, this evening.

You go to a house where you could normally seat about 30 people, and you squash to about 80 people. You all squash together, you see. So, they called it a squash.

Now, John Wesley in the 1700s established what he called a class meeting, and people used to testify. Sometimes they'd start in rotation, but Wesley wouldn't let you get back and say, you know, 200 years ago

my grandfather was a bishop, or I have a cousin that's doing this. You could only testify on your experience between last Friday night and this Friday night.

Now, what the Buckmanites did, they'd meet together and then they'd start talking. I went to some meetings, they were discussing, and they'd start digging up their past sins and talking about them. Look, if God put them under the blood, why do you drag them out? If God doesn't want to remember them, why do you want to remember them? I went to meetings in New York City where I wanted to throw up.

People talking about how many women they'd lived with, and what sin they'd done, and all kinds of licentiousness. What does Paul say? Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things of good report, think on these things. Listen to what Paul says in Ephesians 5. Be ye therefore, in verse 1, be ye therefore followers of God as dear children.

Walk in love as Christ loved us, and hath given himself for an offering and a sacrifice to God, that fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness, like them not once been mentioned among you, as becometh saints, neither filthiness nor foolish jesting. You say, well, shouldn't sin that you've covered up in your life, shouldn't it be confessed? But let me tell you something, and you refuse to stand up for anybody until God convicts you. I believe that sin that has been committed privately should be confessed privately.

You should find a confessor, that is, you should find a pastor, or somebody who's used to counseling, and go to that person and say, listen, this is part of my past. Not spill it out before a crowd, because it can become pornographic. I remember a girl who said certain things in one meeting, and every time I saw that girl, and she'd been to the depths of hell, you talk about incest, and all the other things you could mention, prostitutes.

She came out with a string of stuff one day, and every time I've seen her since, all I can see is all these rotten, filthy things hanging around her. So not to be mentioned amongst you has become a saint. Let's think of holy things and pure things.

Build again the altar. What altar? You see, it's not enough to make confession. Today, two of the most unpopular words in evangelism, number one is repentance, but a more unpopular word is restitution.

Now look, if you got a girl into trouble, and then you deserted her, you get back and pay that girl some money and get her out of trouble. If you stole some money from your boss, go build your fences. If you made a vow to God, and you have, I'm going to pray so many hours or minutes a day, and you haven't kept it, well, you can't fool God, you're fooling yourself.

Don't say I'm not growing in grace, I don't seem to get any taller or stronger. Why should you be? Do you remember, wasn't it this same Elijah who was at the side of the river felling a tree with an axe, wasn't it? Was it he? Come on, Matt, who was it? Elijah? Huh? Elijah, that's right. He was one of those terrible twins, I always get mixed up with them.

So what's he doing? He's working with an axe. Oh boys, these boys have it rough now. They wind a chainsaw up and go... And they come in exhausted.

What would they do cutting one of those sikors out on the west? Have you seen them? You should see them if you haven't. You can drive a... I drove in a car through one of them. Imagine guys, oh, whacking it out all day.

One guy swinging at it, the axe head fell off, but he was too proud, he wouldn't let anybody know. So he tried to chop the tree down with a handle. You say ridiculous, that's what some of us are doing.

You're trying to chop the tree down with a handle, just the knowledge of the word of God. And it needs a sharp anointing. What did he do? Suddenly, boy, the axe isn't heavy.

The axe head goes into the river. And he took some twigs and what did he do, throw it down? And I remember Mr Chadwick, when I went to Bible school, you can see that I'm sure. Almost six months, but anyhow.

What did he do? He took some twigs. Where did he take them? Oh, he took them a mile down the river because the iron is going to swim. Oh, forget it.

The iron went down in the water and he took the twigs. What did he do? And Mr Chadwick read it this way, the iron did swim. The iron did swim.

The iron did swim. Where did he find it? Where he lost it? Where will you lose that anointing and sweetness you had years ago? Where you lost it? No, where you left it. Nearly every preacher quotes that scripture the wrong way.

You've lost your first love. That's not what the Bible says. It says you left your first love.

If you lose something, I'm getting a bit absent-minded these days. I say, Martha, dear, where are my keys? Oh, where you left them? Thank you. I'd never have thought of that.

So usually she knows. She said, dearly, I saw them at Saunders. Where will you recover that tenderness, that intimacy you had with God? Where you made a choice, maybe to go out courting with your girlfriend and neglect your Bible study, neglect prayer, or play handball or something else? Is handball sinful? Yes, it is if you love it more than you love God.

If it's more for anything. I know a man who lost his anointings by collecting stamps. He was one of the smartest men I ever met.

He read Hebrew and Greek, and he was a deacon in a church I pastored, and he could preach far better than I preached. But gradually he lost that anointing. He stood up and he could quote his Greek and Hebrew, but why? Because whereas he used to stay up from nine o'clock till twelve or one in the morning reading the Word of God, he got so fascinated with being what they call a philatelist, or a student of stamps, and he spent a fortune on them, that it ate into his soul.

He would rather get messing around with stamps than searching the Scriptures. Now it's not enough to confess. There's something more than confession that has to be not only

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