

Faith Series - Part 2

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon explores the steadfastness of God's word and the importance of genuine faith and spiritual growth in the believer's life.

Duration: 1:05:50

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Isaiah 55:11, John 15:7, Romans 10:17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:6, James 1:22, 1 Peter 2:2

Topics: "Faith", "Obedience"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the steadfastness of God's word in his sermon 'Faith Series - Part 2', drawing from Hebrews 11 to illustrate the importance of faith and obedience. He reflects on the experiences of biblical figures like Abraham, Moses, and Joseph, highlighting their struggles and the patience required in their journeys of faith. Ravenhill challenges the audience to recognize the significance of God's calling and the necessity of personal commitment to Him, rather than mere intellectual assent. He stresses that true faith involves action, sacrifice, and a deep relationship with God, urging believers to seek a genuine understanding of the Word. Ultimately, he calls for a return to the foundational principles of trust and obedience in the Christian life.

Transcript

Hebrews 11 again. The emphasis that the pastor just made on the words was on my mind last night. I turned up some scriptures within the compass again of this epistle to the Hebrews.

What we've been trying to say again is that God has spoken, and he reminds us in the second chapter that the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, how much more steadfast is the word of God. And later, you remember it says there, see that ye refuse not him that speaketh, in verse 25 of the twelfth chapter. I guess we've all had the experience somewhere along the road of life where somebody doubted your words.

You said something to somebody, and they didn't act on it. And when you saw them, you said, well, um, oh, so you didn't believe me, eh? Well, yes, and they kind of hum and aah as we say, but there's a sense there all the time that they didn't take your word at, shall we say, its face value. And I'm sure this is true when it comes to the word of God.

I was thinking over the message I preached last night, things I should have said I didn't, um, but, uh, one thing again that Dr., amongst others, Dr. Tozer used to say, the, say, Len, the thing that scares me is not just I have to see Jesus in all his resurrection majesty, and, uh, I'm really not too concerned about the things that I've done. It's the things that I could have done that trouble me. In other words, all the availability of God that we, we don't use.

The, uh, again, to use Lowry's words, the possibilities of grace, or to use the, uh, figure in Ezekiel 47, the river, you know the river, uh, everything in Ezekiel he seems to measure, and, um, it's all in stages. Uh, there's, there's a valley of dry bones. Well, uh, he could have said, stand up and go, but instead of that he speaks, and it changes from a valley of bones to a valley of skeletons.

Uh, from skeletons they get, uh, sinews on, on them, and then from sinews they get flesh, and then on top of that they get skin, and then finally he talks to them, they get up, and God breathes into them. It's, it's all in stages. And so by the, the river, there's water to the ankles, and water to the knees, and water to the loins, and water to swimming.

And, uh, I don't know how far you are in that river. You know, when you go to a hospital, almost the first thing they do is take your temperature and ask some questions. And they put a chart there.

And the next person that comes on, he, he checks your chart. Oh, you're so old. Oh, I see your temperature.

Oh, I see your blood pressure. Oh, I see this. Now, when people come to church, you take the whole lump of them.

You don't know whether they're sheep or goats. They just sit in the pew and look how, they're dead, some of them. And you try to preach, and, and again, you don't know whether they're interested or disinterested.

You don't know whether they're two days old in grace or twenty-five years old in grace. And you put one message out, and they expect them all to assimilate it, which is not, not really possible. Uh, this is really, I'm sure, the, the advantage of teaching, that, uh, you can grade people, not just merely intellectually, because some people are very sharp intellectually, are very dull spiritually.

And some people are comparatively dull mentally, are very quick spiritually, very perceptive. I think of a coal miner on the hills of Wales. I used to hear him handle the Word of God.

Uh, he excited him more than Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, and I heard him preach many times. But he didn't have the insight. You see, there are two ways of knowing the Word of God.

As I say, it's one thing to know the Word of God. You get to know that at Bible school. But you may not know the God of the Word.

And there are two ways to know God. One is to know him by education, that is on the Bible school level, and the other is by revelation. And we make so much of the education.

As I say, if you're, if you're going to candidate for a church, if you're a preacher, you could be backslidden until you get the job. They won't ask you how much time you spend in prayer. They won't ask you if you worship God in spirit and in truth.

They, there's a lot of things they won't ask you. They'll ask you, oh, how many people worshiped in your last church? What was the Sunday school when you went? What was it when you left? How many buses did you have when you started? How many, this bus minister's getting something. I was in a church not too long ago, and they had so many doctors.

Man, I was, I was, ministers, I was amazed. They had the minister, they had the assistant minister, they had a youth minister, they had a psalm minister, and they had a bus minister. I, I couldn't find it.

I looked, you know, and it says he made some apostles and some evangelists and some bus ministers. Well, it doesn't say it in my book. But, you know, it's getting so important.

I know a man that left a church. I preached in his church, eleven hundred members, a marvelous church. And he left it to take over a bus minister in another church.

I think that's crazy. To leave a passport of eleven hundred people, eleven hundred sheep, and then go down and look after some of these buses. Because some other guy's keen and says, this is the answer to the problem.

As I said before, I think the slowest growth of all things is growing in grace. And again, not only in grace, but in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, you know, after all, you can reduce the whole thing.

The only reason we're on this earth is to get to know God, that's all. Not to be famous or clever or even write books or be somebody's and be the pastor of the first Baptist church or the first something else. That's not what God's after.

God's after men who are totally, entirely committed to him, in every sense of the word. And again, we've been trying to say in Hebrews 11 here that the prophecies that God has are so very different. There are not, there are no duplicate copies in Hebrews 11.

They're all singular. But again, let's just stay here a minute. The emphasis in Hebrews, again, oh, there are so many key words.

One word is they endured. I mean, notice how many times that word comes in the epistle. There are so many studies in Hebrews 11.

For instance, you could start here at the beginning and go through all the heavenlies that there are. There's the heavenly calling, the heavenly gift, the heavenly things, the heavenly country, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the names written in heaven. There's a dozen different studies in Hebrews.

Some of you, I'm sure, must have read Arthur Pinck. Have you read Arthur Pinck, anybody? Good. Well, Arthur Pinck claims, I think, he had 49 commentaries or commentaries on Hebrews alone.

I have a friend who says he has more than that, just on the epistle to the Hebrews. And scholars debate whether Hebrews is more profound than Romans. Well, they're both very, very deep.

The book is an emphasis on the better things. What does it say? The Lord Jesus is, well, better than angels. And you have a better hope, a better testament, better promises, better sacrifice, better substance, you seek a better country.

Another discussion, I'll study. But then this morning, or last night as I was turning over the pages, I noticed how often the word is mentioned. How often we say, we quote, the word is a lamp to our feet.

And one of the words we use the most about the word is in Hebrews, isn't it? The word of God is quick and powerful. Oh my, when the Spirit of God quickens the word of God, somebody's going to get hurt. You know, we think sometimes, as I say again, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, that's a bad English word.

It's nearly like the word ghost. We talk about the Holy Ghost. The word ghost actually is a corruption of an old, I'm forgetting what it is now, but it's an old English word anyhow, guest.

He's not the Holy Ghost in one sense, he's a holy guest. A guest comes in when you invite him, a guest stays as long as you want him to stay. That's why you can grieve the Spirit.

That's what the good book says, doesn't it? You can resist the Spirit, you can quench the Spirit. The word Comforter, again, is made up of two Latin words, *comfortis*, with strength. As dear Chadwick used to say to us when I was at Cliff College, the Holy Ghost is not a nursing mother for spiritually sick children.

Now it's true that the word of God will comfort us, but by the same token, as Dr. Havner said, I had a letter from him last night, dear old Soloff, his precious wife, he's written a new book on that, I see. But Vance Havner often says, remember, the word of God is such that it comforts the disturbed and it disturbs the comfortable. It's a two-edged sword, it cuts in two different ways.

And so here we have an emphasis again on the word in verse 3 of chapter 1, upholding all things by the word of his power. In chapter 4 and verse 2, the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith. Again, we make such an intellectual assent to the word.

Sometimes when people are leaving church Sunday morning, I feel we ought to stop that and say, what did the word mean to you this morning? Oh, I enjoyed you this morning, that illustration was nice, and I think the choir gets better, and I love to hear Mary Jones sing. It's seldom that the word of God gets really through to them. I don't believe the word of God is always scorching, but I do believe it's always searching.

In order to get down into areas, whether even it's a devotional message where it disturbs us to some degree, disturbs us so that we do find that comfort that God alone is able to give us, because we find consolations in so many other things, in success, in achievements, in social standings, in intellectual standings even. Then verse 12 of chapter 4, the famous verse, the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. So much in our meetings is soulish, particularly singing, it's soulish.

People, they weep, you know, they sang my mother's favorite hymn. Now that's not wrong, I'm not saying that's wrong, but it's wrong when you try to disturb people on the emotional level in order to try and satisfy them or comfort them or, you know, just get them at ease in a meeting. As you say about our hymns, I'm amazed.

Well, very often I go to a church and I say, I notice you don't have a hymn book and they have a beautifully bound thingy on it. New hymn book, boy, we've all given six dollars recently, you know, each to buy a hymn book. Well, most of our hymn books are not hymn books anyhow, they're song books.

One of the finest hymn books is the old Baptist hymn book, a hundred years old, it's got great hymns in it. And, you know, we keep amputating hymns, we cut a limb off here and a limb off there until, I haven't

really got nothing. For instance, if you don't look now, but I guess if you look in your hymn book, When I Surveyed the Wondrous Cross has four verses.

It has four verses in ninety-nine, ninety-five, ninety-nine hymn books out of a hundred. But Isaac Roth, when he wrote the hymn, did not write When I Surveyed the Wondrous Cross on which the Prince of Glory died. He wrote When I Surveyed the Wondrous Cross where the young Prince of Glory died.

And then he added a fifth verse, His dying crimson like a robe spread o'er his body on the tree. Then am I dead to all the globe, and all the globe is dead to me. Now, maybe it's as good we don't sing that.

As Dr. Tozer used to say, Christians don't tell lies, they just sing them in church. Well, that's what happens so much. Don't they sing tearfully when you pass out the elements? Well, the whole realm of nature, they won't give him what they've got now, they won't even give him Wednesday night at a prayer meeting if he can go play tennis or swim or do something.

It's a lot of nonsense. And very few of our hymns. I like hymns like Fairest Lord Jesus.

I very seldom sing that hymn without choking. Ruler of all. It's a marvellous hymn, that old German tune.

Oh, holy, holy, holy. We go to church, I say to Martha, same old thing here. He knows what he's saying.

Well, come on, everybody stand up. He lives, he lives. You know.

Well, those hymns, as you say, as far as I'm concerned, many of them become redundant. We went to one place that sang Amazing Grace every night. Now, that's a great hymn, but boy, I don't want to hear it every night.

There's some fantastic hymns. We were in a big church of a thousand members just a few weeks ago, and I said, I'd like you to sing, which I wish we could sing tonight, if you know it again. Beneath the cross of Jesus, I say, Sorry, we don't know that.

Oh. Do you know 174 in your hymn book? Holy Spirit, breathe on me until my heart is clean. No, no.

One of the greatest hymns in the book, and they don't know it. Written by Edwin Hatch, who also wrote the hymn, not a Holy Spirit breathe on me alone, but what was the other one he wrote? Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with like fantastic hymns. A man that wrote those hymns, not because he was spiritually bankrupt in one sense, he had a popular church, it was full, they had more money than they could use, but he said the atmosphere isn't in sync with God.

God doesn't breathe on us. We go into church and out. It's mechanical.

We stand up, sit down, stand up, sit down, cry, we'll sing, pass the offering, good, good, good, good, good. This is why many of the kids are bored to death. They know what's coming.

You know what's coming. You mimeographed it last Wednesday. So what can't have the Holy Ghost? You've already told him what he's going to do, what he isn't going to do.

And so we become static and stale and redundant. And I believe there ought to be times when a hymn will so captivate us that maybe you sing one standard over ten times, and everybody gets more and more blessed, and you get deeper into it. As you say, like a hymn, this hymn I like so much, Break Thou the

Bread of Life.

There's so much in that hymn, beyond the sacred page. I seek Thee, O my Spirit, thanks for Thee, Thou Living Word. The second standard, Then shall all bondage cease.

Isn't that great? Wouldn't it be nice to think that everybody's bondage was broken when they came? No, no, no, we sing it, and looking around, say, Then shall all bondage cease. You know. Sometimes I wonder if I'm in church or at the snack bar.

As I told you the other night, rebuke them. There's a fine young woman there. She's a member of this church, charming fellow, looking at her boyfriend, and she suddenly shoots bubble gum out in the house of God.

That's ignorance. Pigs do things like that. I don't mean cops either.

I mean the animals, dirty. One woman blushed, and another woman reached for a gum very quickly. You know, but there's no reverence.

There isn't the dignity given to the house of God. As I say, I believe when people cross that door, they shouldn't say another word. They should come and bow, and meditate, and maybe read a devotional hymn, read a scripture, and set the pace for the pastor.

As Dr. Sangster used to say in Westminster, there's something strange and mysterious about atmosphere. You know. Usually I say in the crusade, I say, well now look preacher, I have the back three seats roped off, and once I start preaching, nobody comes to the front.

Keep them at the back. Somebody comes in, a woman's carrying a Bible, and you see a watch, and you say, oh, oh yeah. Oh boy, I left my watch at the repairer.

I wonder if I can get it. You know, you distract people in so many areas with the slightest thing. As I say, you have three problems.

First is to get them to church physically. Second, get them there mentally. Third, get them there spiritually, until they settle down in spirit, and then they're able to absorb the things of God.

And it's the Word of God. This is why the old devil, as I say, faith cometh by hearing, but not by hearing the choir as good as they are. But we're building up.

We go to a church sometimes, and they have two specials every Sunday morning by the choir, and sometimes two solos and the announcements, and the preacher gets up about 20 minutes to 12. Now, I didn't go to hear the choir sing. I've got enough phonograph records.

I didn't go to hear all about the notices, the announcements. But lots of preachers like it that way. Do you know why? Because there's so little to say anyhow.

The preacher should need at least, I think, 40 minutes if he's going to get any work through. Well, that wouldn't do for me anyhow, but most guys, it would. You see, this is why we're such weak Christians.

We're not feeding them on the Word of God, really. As somebody said, we give them sermonettes that make Christianettes. It used to be in Westminster.

In fact, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, who just resigned his church, what, three or four years ago, in Westminster, people would say to me in this country, I'm going to England. I'll be in London for a week. Who should I hear preach? Can I go to Spurgeon's Tabernacle? I'd say, go hear Martin Lloyd-Jones in Westminster.

And when they come back, they'd say, boy, that's amazing. Hardly anybody goes to church in England. They're nearly as bad as Sweden and most countries in Europe.

That's, I suppose, 1,500 people in a couple of... And do you know what? Most of them are lawyers and doctors and professional people. And he never preaches under an hour and five, an hour and ten minutes. And that isn't the most amazing thing, they'd say.

Well, I'd say, what amazed you most? Boy, I just couldn't understand it. You know, he said, let's sing this hymn. He never has a choir, never has a musical special, never has a trumpeter.

That's forgotten. He's a real old puritan. It's all God's work.

And after they've sung a hymn, they say, let us pray. He prays about two minutes. It's through.

And then they sing another hymn, and then he may say, we shall have something on Wednesday or something. Or don't forget the Friday night Bible class, class of exposition. And then they'll take the offering while the organ plays.

Then they'll say, let us pray. And everybody that has heard him, I think, has come back to me and said, the thing that amazed me most was that he prayed from 15 to 20 minutes. And when he finished praying, he said so much that you feel, well, why doesn't he raise his hand and say, I've got so much.

Spurgeon used to do that. The men used to give time to pray. It's not done anymore.

As I say, very often we sing a hymn and say, well, Jack, you pray after this. Jack's no more idea of what God wants in that meeting than that pussycat has walking down the road. In most cases, I think the preacher should preach himself.

He knows his theme. I think he should choose the hymn. What's the good of singing hymns on the second coming if I'm going to preach on prayer? What's the good of singing hymns on prayer if I'm going to preach on the second coming? But the song leader gets it.

He doesn't know a thing. He just says, hello, how are you taking in books, things, so and so. He's loyal to them.

We were taught in, if we learned any homiletics and pulpit department, what have you got? We were taught that this is the essential thing. People have come to meet God. I say again, I don't believe our people come to meet God.

They come to hear a sermon about God. And if you don't cross the right lines or the T's or the I's, they kick you off. Boy, I'm glad he's not our regular preacher.

You know, he didn't emphasize this. He'll emphasize that. You see, they want you to tell them what they already know.

Or they want you to tell them what they like to know, but I disagree. I'm not going to do either. I'm going to tell them what God wants them to know.

Again, it won't make you the most popular preacher. I, occasionally I get crowds, get a packed church now and again, not too often. It doesn't worry me.

Because we're living in a day of such flimsy and sloppy and sloppy evangelism. And anything goes. You see, when you get down to the Word of God, again, it's the Word that helps.

All right, where do we get to? We go to the fourth chapter in verse 12. For the Word of God is quick and powerful. But notice it comes again in the first chapter in verse 13.

Everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the Word. Hmm? You check up with some of the young folk in your church and ask them what they believe. They'll give you a parrot-like reputation, I believe in this, that and the other.

But when you've done that, not only ask them what they believe, then put the pressure on and say, why do you believe it? Oh, because the pastor told me. Oh, I see. Hmm? We're told, at least we're supposed to be able to give a reason for our faith.

But I wonder how often we can do that. All right, let's... You can go through, follow through in the chapter on how many times that word is referred to and so forth. Let's go into the chapter again.

Hebrews 11. Yesterday, you remember, we took Abraham on his long journey. The demands God made on him, his unfaithfulness, that you don't have to stand back scared stiff when you go into Hebrews 11 and say, ah, what amazing men.

Oh, man, Abraham and Moses and Noah. They're a bunch of rogues. What can you admire about Noah? He got drunk.

What can you admire about Abraham? He disobeyed God. He lied when he got in a tight corner and he had a baby by another girl to try and help God out of a situation. Now, what kind of a man is he? Again, Noah got drunk.

David's mentioned in the chapter and he's an adulterer and he murdered somebody to cover up his adultery. Jephthah's in the chapter and boy, what a stupid vow he makes. And if I'd been writing Hebrews 11, do you think I'd have put a harlot, a prostitute in to prove faith that God did? Talk about the faith of the harlot Rahab.

Would I have put Samson in with all his problems? No, I wouldn't have put any. Many of those people, I'd have found a better selection than that. I would have talked about real men of faith like Joshua who commanded the sons of Stanfield but he's not mentioned in the chapter.

I would have put Elijah in. Boy, he had some faith but he's not mentioned in the chapter. Again, you see, God isn't giving us a perfect record of men of faith.

He's giving us a pattern again. Let's remember, the first man that's mentioned there is Abel who built an altar which is for two things, sacrifice and worship. Yesterday, we mentioned Abraham going up onto the mountain taking his son.

You would have thought, you would have said, I am the lad, we'll go yonder and sacrifice but he did not say that. He said, I am the lad, we'll go yonder and worship. But worship involved the dearest thing he had which he does in most of our lives.

I've heard preachers weep and say, you know, I don't have much time for this and boy, I'm such a busy Joe. Well, you shouldn't have. That's your fault.

Nobody else's. If you're a preacher, you have two things to do and only two according to the Word of God. Give yourself to prayer, continually to prayer and the Word of God and it will take you a whole week to get two good sermons for Sunday if you do.

What about visiting? That's not your job, it's the deacon's job if you read the New Testament. It's their job to dispense the tithes and offerings and help the poor and visit the needy. It's not your job as a pastor.

Some of you must have read McLaren, Alexander McLaren, one of the greatest Baptist preachers ever in England. He ruled the North like Spurgeon ruled the South. And I've been in his church, we have meetings in his church.

He was a fabulous man. When he went to that church in Manchester, there were dear old deacons. In those days, there were usually older men with beards and they were a bit nervous, you know, and they sat there and the head deacon sat there and Alexander McLaren sat at this end and the other grave, dignified men were there looking and they asked McLaren a lot of questions and finally they agreed that they would call him as a pastor.

Well, he said, and before I accept it, tell me this, if I come here, it's very good of you to buy me a new horse and carriage, you know, that was the same as buying a Cadillac in those days. I'm a new man in a nice district. Thank you so much, that's good.

But tell me this, if I pass through this great church, it's each I suppose 1500, what do you want? Do you want my head or my feet? You can have one but not both. See what he meant? Do you want me to use this thing and get down and study and meditate? And you know that every one of those sermons in his expositions, if I remember, the edition I had I think had 32 volumes plus an index volume and he preached every one of those sermons from Genesis to Revelation in that church. They have a set of them put there, you know, as a monument to the great preacher.

But he said you can have one or the other, my head or my feet but not both. If you want me to run around, drink cups of tea, visit everybody, run around this city, I'll do that. But don't expect me to teach anything deep and profound and get to the word.

I wouldn't have time. But if you deacons will take the burden and let me get to the word and pray, I'll preach. And when he preached you couldn't get a seat.

Church was jammed to capacity all the time he was there. Why? Because he obeyed the book. You can't be smarter than the book.

Oh, I'm so busy. I hear wives say, you know, my husband doesn't take a day off. Well, he's back to it and if he doesn't, what do you mean he's back to it? Well, he's disobeying God.

Isn't that, isn't that backsliding? Why? Because six days shall thou labor. Somebody said to Spurgeon one day, you're not a good Christian. Why? You work on Sundays.

He said, I work hard on Sundays, you work all week. Well, the Bible says, six days shall thou labor and do all thy work. He said, I do that because on Mondays I don't eat no more liquor.

See? You can't be smarter than God. If you're going to do what God says and expect God's blessing, well, do as he says. Don't lick a stamp on Monday.

If you play golf, that's your business. If you play it on Tuesday, I'll be chasing you. But I believe a man has a right to have a day off according to the word of God.

You need it mentally, you need it emotionally, you need it in every way. You're warm. Or some say, well, you know, preaching, I mean, if that being a policy, it doesn't cost me anything to preach.

Well, if it doesn't cost anything to preach, quit. Quit. I've seen that I could hardly walk home at night.

And when I've got home, I couldn't sleep for hours. Till two, three, maybe four o'clock in the morning. After all, Jesus, when somebody touched Jesus, he perceived that virtue went out of him.

Well, are you suggesting you're stronger than he is? I believe that preaching is the costliest thing in the... I believe that every time you preach, with even any anointing, it cuts something off your life. One of the old Puritans, was it? One of the old Englishmen, anyhow, said you have to bleed to bless. That's the order of blessing.

You bleed, you give. All you have. Now, again, God made these men in Hebrews 11.

He made them all in different ways. There are no duplicates here. Sure, this man goes on the mountain, he takes his son, his only son.

As I said yesterday, if he'd said to him, take thy son, he'd have taken Ishmael and got rid of him. You almost wish he had. I guess Kissinger does, anyhow.

But the Lord wouldn't take his son of the flesh. No, no, no. Take thy, thine only begotten son, he says.

That's something. The choice is the best thing that he had. The gift from God, take thou thy son, thine only begotten son, offer him on Mount Moriah.

So, worship involves sacrifice. The first man in Hebrews 11 is Abel. He's there because he built an altar.

Worship and sacrifice. The second man is Enoch, and he's there because he walked. But you can't really walk with God until you learn to worship God.

And the third man, at least the third character he took there, is Noah. He built an ark. He worked.

You see, your faith isn't a mysterious, funny thing. It isn't a wishing well. It isn't a magic carpet.

Faith is substance. And faith, in the case of Noah, put a hammer in his hand, but he used it about a hundred and odd years. Remember the fact we say what patience we need, what patience we need.

God works on Abraham, starts when he's 75 and finishes when he's 175. That's a good long while. A hundred years to make a man, eh? And Noah is a hundred and twenty years about building an ark.

And everybody's looking for a book on how to become a saint in six easy lessons. Boy, if I could get to that conference, I'm sure it would change my life, you know. I mean, so-and-so went and said, what a blessing.

No, it wouldn't. God doesn't make people over the weekend. There's a building process.

And you find it all through this book, and you see again, I don't want you to wear my sackcloth. I wish you would, but I'm going to make you. God lets one man trek, and oh, he sees the beauty of the earth, and he has his problems, sure enough.

But this little boy is down in a jail. He's only about 17 years of age, and he stays in jail for 13 years. That's rough, eh? I wonder how many that are in jail this morning.

Did you think and pray for them in Russia and China, or were you too busy? Because the toast was burned or something. It's amazing how often people come out to me and say, Mr. Ravenel, I'm afraid I haven't prayed for China for, I don't know if I ever prayed for China or Russia. I just think, you know, dirty, rotten communists, they're just, well, don't they need compassion and consideration and prayer more than our folk? The difference is, you see, our folk could go to church if they would.

Whereas lots of those people would go to church if they could. There are no churches to go to. I remind you again that 800 years ago, China had a thriving New Testament church in every town, in every city.

800 years ago, eight centuries ago, China had those churches, thriving, throbbing. What have we got today? You think it couldn't go the same way here? The pastor of the First Baptist Church in a certain place told me the other day that four Southern Baptist churches a week have left the Association since January this year. And I forget how many hundred have left in the last ten years because of liberal trends and other things.

Oh, it's happening in other denominations, sure. There's a deterioration of spirituality. On the other hand, it's phenomenal, isn't it, that this man Bill Gofford has just finished a meeting in Minneapolis and they had a hall seating 20,000 and they had to put an extra closed circuit for 7,000.

He got 27,000 a night and he's going back in the fall and they're fixing up a place for 40,000 people. And he doesn't have broken down film stars and he doesn't give them \$500 for testifying because they play for the Rams, you know, worship the Lord under a stack of flesh on a Sunday afternoon. Good Christians, but they break the Sabbath.

Of course, they read the Scripture before they go belt another man's head off. I don't know how you reconcile it with love. I don't know how you reconcile it with Christianity, but it's one of the phenomenas of the day.

You know, Christian athlete, real great guy. Break the Sabbath. One of the great tennis players, fine Christian, goes to youth camp, breaks the Sabbath, draws hundreds of people.

Oh, can't go to church this morning because if we go, of course, we won't get a seat at the tennis match. So they break the Sabbath, use money. It doesn't mean a thing, except that God says in Isaiah, what, 58, withdraw thy foot from the Sabbath from doing thy pleasure on my holy days, a condition of revival.

You see, you give God a tenth of your money if you're still in the Old Testament, but he demands one day. And you'll have to find ways of fencing off for your spiritual life. Somebody was talking about, I think this brother, about books today.

I had a friend, I don't know where he is now, I've been to Lettingham, but that man, every third week in his life, he never read a newspaper and he never read a book. All the available time every day for a week, he read the Bible. It was a pattern in his life.

The third week, no books, no newspapers, just the Bible. Built himself up in the Bible. When we were at home as kids, Sunday, if your shoes weren't cleaned, they weren't cleaned, that's all.

You got a belting on Monday for sure, but you cleaned your shoes Saturday night. When I was a younger man, I used to shave at 10 minutes to 12 on a Sunday, a Saturday night, because I wouldn't shave on Sunday. A Sabbatarian, okay.

You see, in Scotland, where they had revival in the Hebrides, I found the secret, I think, talking with Duncan Campbell, do you know who it was? That amongst those Presbyterians in Western Scotland and over in the Isles, the Hebrides, not the new Hebrides, they're in the South Pacific, but in Hebrides, do you know that every morning and night they have family devotions? Daddy says to one of the children, Hamish maybe, which is Gaelic for John, Hamish, bring the book. And they lift the dishes off the table, Daddy opens the big Bible, and he reads a psalm, usually. And he prays.

And the children go to school. Come home at night, have supper, the dishes are moved off the table, the Bible comes out, he reads the Bible, and he prays. The amazing thing is, they have devotions twice a day, and they're not saved people, they're just good Presbyterians.

But I believe that because the Word was head in their hearts, from youth up, Paul may plant a pollis water, God gave the increase, that's why they have revival, in the way that they have revival there, because the Word, the seed, was already planted in their hearts. In our house, if I whistled on Sunday, going to one, Daddy would call, Len? Yes, Daddy? It's Sunday. Oh, sorry, Daddy.

If you're walking through a room, and you're given an orange, and you started doing this, Sunday. Sunday, you sat on a chair, you read a book, or the Bible, or got down to it. Oh, you mean a hill of beans.

Got a church Sunday morning, let's go to the beach, amongst the half-nudes, and all the rest of it. Right? Let's have a wiener though. We were in a church not too long ago, in California.

Man, the girls were gorgeous. Stunning, sunburned, lovely girls, proper hairdos and everything. Skirts too short for sure.

The youth leader got up, and he said, well, let's sing. By the way, he said, I wish you'd been with us last night. We had a tremendous afternoon yesterday afternoon, on the beach, played volleyball, and we had a wiener roast, and we swam for a while, and then we, we read a scripture, and we, you know, said goodbye.

Interesting, having Bible studies, you know, in bikinis. Years ago, they wouldn't do that. They would, folk wouldn't be out there.

Well, you see, standards have gone, and gone, and gone, till there's nothing left. And if you talk about, you're a prude, you're an old man, you're silly. Well, um, there is something in the Bible about being, what, not conformed to this world.

Huh? But be transformed, which is the same Greek word, I guess, as transfigured, by the renewing of your personality. If you were a good Baptist in England, and you got saved, unless it's changed, I haven't been for a few years, for sure. But if you got saved in a Baptist church on Sunday night, they'd be rejoicing, they'd shake hands, praise the Lord.

But if somebody saw you coming out of a ballpark next Saturday, they'd call the pastor and say, Pastor, uh, you dealt with wrongs all last Sunday. Do you think you really got through? Oh yes, oh, I'm sure he's saved. Oh, what makes you doubt it? I guess I'm coming out of a ballpark.

Oh dear. I'll have to get him on one side, I'll have to talk with him. Isn't that terrible? First week after Australia, back in the world again.

In the world? Why, sure, we all go with the pastor and buy popcorn and beer, uh, root beer, and, uh, sit on the bleachers and play and yell our heads off to the angels. Well, if you keep up with those angels, maybe they're the only angels you ever see. But it does say something in the first psalm about what? Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

And every time I hear people talking about ballparks and I think, I think of that psalm. Hmm? You can hear a lot of blasphemy in a ballpark. A lot of foul language.

Plenty of beer. Youngsters get used to it. But you see, this is a fact.

It's stupid, isn't it? Well, you think so. I don't. Because, you see, the further you walk away from the world, be not conformed to this world, but be transformed.

Now, sanctification is not isolation. It's preservation. Incorruption.

Not, not getting as far away from, not the monastic idea. Not in the, uh, dark monastic cells by vows and grates confined. That doesn't sanctify us.

You could be there and have a filthy mind. Uh, who was it, was saying, oh, oh, oh, in this report on Russia that, pardon me, on China, this famous American, um, uh, doctor who, reputedly in the last 20 years has cleared venereal disease out of China and prostitution. And he says, when he went, 95% of the monks in the abbeys had venereal disease.

So, being in an abbey and having your hair tonsured and a cassock and a cowl and a cord and a candle and a, a wooden bed and, a vow to poverty and a vow to silence doesn't make you pure. It sure takes the blood of Christ to do that and the abiding presence of the spirit of God. But you see, as you draw in grace, uh, it should be that these things drop off.

You don't have to hammer at them every time like certain people do. You know, if you have a TV you're the sinner. If you wear your tie you're not sanctified.

if you do, uh, when, when the Pharisees lost the anointing and the glory of God, they, they put emphasis on external things. And some people get only sanctified, their idea of sanctified is always an external thing. But I believe this, that when there's an inward purity and an inward satisfaction that these things, it's all

right to sing it in churches that the things of earth grow strangely dim, do they? Do they really? Or is the ballpark more, oh, what's wrong with a ballpark? Is it wicked to go? It sure is.

It, it's wicked if you can go there and spend three or four hours and take an hour and a half to get there and pay four dollars to get in. If altogether that takes six, seven, eight hours to do that and you only spend twenty minutes in prayer in the word of God, then you love the world more than you love him. That's pretty obvious.

But the line of demarcation isn't drawn anymore. Why? Because you've got the ballpark in the church. You've got to keep the youngsters in you're never doing revival.

I'm not, I'm not sure you'd ever find a church with a, a gymnasium that has true revival. They may get a gimmick and get crowds in and something, but true spirituality is very rare. And the more you get into the word of God, the more you realize again how little time you have really to be, as I said the other day, Dr. Campbell Morgan, I heard him many times, and I remember one day I was stunned when he was seventy, seventy-two, and, and he said, you know, I know so little about the word of God he wasn't mock-modest, he'd written fifty books on it.

He'd written fifty books on the Bible and he still said, you know, it's so profound, it's so deep, I, I know so little about it. Now, don't let that make you despair. But after all, if he got enough material from God to write fifty books, well, there's still plenty in God for you to get something new and for me to get something new and for us to be strengthened in the faith.

Ah, we got where? We got to Abraham. We passed Noah, Abraham, all right, let's, let's just skip into the, we've no class tomorrow morning, we don't have a Saturday morning class, so, thank you for coming, I'm glad you've been coming these mornings. Ah, ah, verse twenty-two of Hebrews 11, by faith, Joseph, when he died, made mentioning of the departing of the children of Israel and gave commandment concerning his birth.

That doesn't sound very inspiring. You need faith to leave a, a record like that. It seems a bit stupid doesn't it? And yet, remember this again, the, the two perfect characters in the Old Testament, number one, Joseph, number two, Daniel, there's no blemish in either of their lives.

And I remind you again that, that Joseph's life was down, down, he starts up here, his daddy sends him to take sandwiches to his brothers, they put him down in a, in a pit, they sell him, he goes down into Egypt, they put him down in prison, the bottom falls out of the prison, he prays, he gets some fellows out, he still stays there, and God's forgotten all about him. Now, that's pretty rough. But it was God's way of making him.

Now, the Lord brings him out of that prison, what happens? Oh, he starts going up and up and up and up until he sits on a throne with the king. Now, I confess to you, I used to get troubled and, uh, kind of, somewhat distressed in a certain Bible class that I used to conduct and still do so sometimes, where these ladies, very wealthy millionaires, multi-millionaires, would come and they'd sit there, you know, and listen to you like this and they'd, they'd jewels and watches were encrusted with diamonds and the bracelets all diamonds and \$10,000 rings, this, that, and the other, and you look around the fabulous haunts and I used to think, how in the world can you have all this and be a humble follower of the Lamb? I don't, I don't know. Well, if you go far enough in the book, you get a lot of answers.

Now, how do you find an answer in Hebrews? Well, I found an answer in Hebrews for the simple reason that Joseph is a little boy looking after sheep and God promotes him till he gets up there with the king. Now, what did he do? The king went out of the city. What did Joseph do? He rode around in a chariot.

Uh, in our language, a Lincoln Continental, maybe. And he goes down the street and everybody bows and says, His Excellency Joseph, phew, I don't think much to him. You know, if he was really where he should be, he won't be riding up with that rich bunch and he lives like a king.

He's got servants, they wash his feet, they do this. Boy, that's something, isn't it? He's got, made it in two worlds. But you see, the only use he could be to God was to live in a mansion, in a palace.

God wasn't looking after Joseph merely, God's looking after his own interest, not Joseph's, God's interest because later, that boy has to have the keys of the kingdom and open the granaries and feed God's children. And the only way he can do it is take him down into the prison and then bring him up until he sits with the king. Now, who's the next character? The next character is Moses.

What did he do? Well, he lived in a palace for forty years and then God says, You're no good to me in a palace, get out of here if you're going to serve me. You see the difference? They were both in the will of God. One came from being a shepherd to sit as a king and to stay there as a ruler.

And he stayed on as a ruler. But Moses had been living as a king. Read the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

He was mighty in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was maybe the smartest man alive. I believe he knew science, I believe he knew languages.

You know, those pyramids are amazing. If you follow the slope of the pyramid up, it goes to a certain star that way and another that way and if you follow the line of the pyramid it goes into a certain area in the world. It's a scientific thing.

Maybe he knew all the answers about it. Maybe he knew who built it. But he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and they were very wise.

You know, they just discovered when we saw the, was it an Englishman, um, I've forgotten his name now, but discovered penicillin a few years, remember the excitement? That old junk on the tree that you used to knock off we used to knock it as a boy, that green stuff. Penicillin, it can heal, it can do this, that and the other. And, uh, now they discover they had penicillin in the days of Pharaoh.

There's nothing new under the sun, the good old book says. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was mighty in word.

He wasn't an arbitrary standard. He didn't want to do the job. The Lord says, oh, oh, oh, I can't, I, I, I, I, I'm so embarrassed I, I, I, I fall over my way.

Oh, well, I'll make you a brother to be, you know, you never get out of it if God really wants you to, to do the job. But he was mighty in word. He was a statesman before ever he got the Ten Commandments.

All right. What does it say concerning Moses? It says that, uh, his parents saw he was a proper child and they went and hid him. What? Defied the government? Hey, you better read Romans.

What does it say? You better obey the government or, wait a minute, you don't obey the government if it contradicts the Ten Basic Laws of God. You only obey the government on, uh, when you, well, I should, I, I drive on the left side of the road in England and in the Bahamas but over here I obey the law or I'd be in trouble. I pay taxes.

I do what the government says but not if it violates my conscience, I don't. Oh, no. If you obey the government in everything, why do you have Daniel in the lion's den? What did he do? Defied the government.

Why do you have the three Hebrew children? Defied the government. You defy the government when it comes to an issue of, of, of, of something spiritual. And the government said, uh, this baby's born and all babies have to die.

Now, I don't know whether the little guy was going to be a preacher or an auctioneer but he got good lungs. And they hid him until he was three months and then one day he yelled out, oh, his mother said if we don't hide this boy they'll hear when the cops are going past they'll hear and they'll come in and take the baby away. And they hid him defying the government.

And if you think there are no jokes and irony in the Bible, what did they do? What did we say about faith? It reckons on God is. He's all he said. He's able to keep you.

He's able to preserve you. He's able to save to the uttermost. He's able to present you.

Follow us. This amazing God whose throne is forever. His standards never vary.

He, he, he never vacillates. He, he never gets weak. He, he's never in fear in any way.

So you believe first of all God is. Faith reckons and faith risks and faith rests. Don't you think faith reckoned on God? Didn't faith risk when they put that precious baby in a little wicker basket like that and pushed it out on the water? When we were kids in England if we saw something on the stream or the river that wasn't there yesterday we'd pick up a rock and say, hey, see if you can think that thing.

See if it's a box. See if there's something in it. Were boys any different when they, when they put that little ark of bulrushes on the water? Couldn't some boys have thrown rocks? Couldn't the wind have blown the cover off and the little baby would have barbecued? Couldn't you have had a flash flood? Couldn't the, somebody come and stole it? Couldn't the crocodiles eat it? Oh, but they, they, they risked.

What a risk to leave a baby there. But you see, faith reckons on God and faith risks and faith rests. I don't believe his mother went up the hill walking up and down and said, what do you think is going to happen? I, I, I wish I, I don't think faith rests.

There remains a rest for the people of God. How many people do you think really rest in God? You can't have a nervous breakdown if you rest in God. All hell can oppose you but you rest in him.

Hmm? As a good book says, Standing on the Promises, but, uh, Van Thavne says, we sing Standing on the Promises and all we're doing is sitting on the premises. Well, maybe he's right. But, uh, faith reckons on God and rests and rests and there's a little baby asleep and the princess comes down and she's turning around to go out to the water and she says, hey, what's that thing there? And they open it.

And what was the first thing she said? Talk about jokes. It's a child of the Hebrews. Drown it.

My daddy says they're all to be killed. Drown it. No, she didn't say that.

She defied the king, too. And they took the baby and what did they do? Well, they found the mother of the babe. She came along and nursed the child and cared it and, um, the government paid all his expenses for his education and, uh, looked after him until God wanted him.

And at forty years of age, he's learning all the wisdom. He's got all his degrees. He's a soldier.

Everybody salutes him. He's a man of authority. And God says, get out of here.

Get out He says, come up here and live in a palace. Live like a king and you'll be able to rule. He says to this man, if you stay in this palace and live like a king, you'll be no good to me.

Get out and live with the slaves. And he didn't bribe him, did he? If God had said to him, Moses, look, I'm going to make a good deal with you. The best deal you've ever had in your life.

Number one, I'll make you one of the outstanding men in history. Number two, you can write five of the greatest books. You won't get your royalties until you die, but you'll get them afterwards.

And number three, I'll let you see my finger mark a stone that will give you the ten basic laws of society. Number four, I'll let you see my glory go by. I'll give you a place with the immortals.

And when my son comes to earth, just before he dies, I'll let you have a talk with him on a hill in his transfiguration. And not only that, but I'll tell you what I'll do too. I'll give you a bonus on that.

When people get to heaven in the millions, I'll let them sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Prepare to make a deal? The Lord didn't make a deal with him. It's a case of faith.

Get up and go. Go, go out there into the wilderness. Go join those slaves.

Go march up and down. Boy, that would be a change, wouldn't it, from delicate slaves to dishes they had every day at the king's table to scrapping for food and living on berries. When it just, you know, a slave comes, your excellency, bring me some orange juice, bring me papaya, bring me this.

Something to joining a million and a half folk on the road, greedy folk that grasp for everything, a problem to God, a problem to Moses, and he puts up with it. And God has to get him to a place of despair. Get up and go.

You see, he got to the place where he couldn't tolerate the situation, where he saw the nation in bondage. And you remember what he did? He killed a man. You know that hymn that we sing, Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldier of the cross.

The arm of flesh will fail you. You dare not trust your own. But if he'd been going to wipe out the Egyptians one at a time, he'd still, one every day, he'd still be at it and he wouldn't have got very far, would he? God's going to wipe them one day.

He's going to take them through the sea and just pull the plug and let them all drown. Wipe them out. He's going to do it with the arm of flesh.

And the Lord says that's no good. And he has to flee into the wilderness, and there he is in the wilderness alone. Forty years.

It's a long while, isn't it? Forty years His life is divided in three forties. First forties in the universities of Egypt. Second forty years is in the wilderness.

Third forty years. Third forty years. Why doesn't God take a man at forty and our life begins at forty? Why doesn't he take him? He's brilliant and sufficient.

Well, that was his problem. He was too sufficient, too efficient. Boy, what a thing to walk out in the courtyard admiring the fruits and everything, and everybody salutes your excellency most absurd foreign representative to see you.

Somebody comes up and says, well, we can't speak his language, and Moses goes right off and speaks it. And the next thing you're on the back of the desert looking after a bunch of woolly sheep. Forty days would kill most of us.

Forty weeks. Oh, what's the Lord doing? Forty months. Oh, he's left me here.

That's no good. Forty years. You know, in case you've forgotten, and we seem to read it as though they were made of, they had no emotions, no feelings, you know, no moods.

Don't you think he ever questioned in his mind and wondered when it was all going to end, and, boy, this is crazy. Boy. Tomorrow I'll be 80.

I've been here 40 years. Oh, boy, how many sheep have I killed and destroyed? And my biggest enemy is Moses. Oh, yes, it wasn't only Moses, but his people were still in bondage, dying like flies in captivity.

God's doing nothing. People think that these days sometimes. Boy, look how many, what do we have? Ten million alcoholics, and nine million drug addicts, and how many millions of divorcees, and how many millions of children tossing between divorced fathers and mothers, and the country has never been in a worse mess than it's in now, but the dollar gets more sick every day, and according to Willard Cantillan, if you've read his book on the day the dollar dies, we're in for worse trouble further up the road.

Hmm, what a mess. God sits on his throat and does nothing. Hmm? The only thing is, of course, again, God is very patient.

Very patient. And he decides he'll change the course, and poor old Moses goes down the road. Oh my, I don't know why.

Yeah, I saw that bush this morning. Nothing unusual in bushes burning, but they certainly don't burn from morning till night. I'd better go see what's happening.

You remember he drew on one side, here's a voice, take off thy shoes from off thy feet. The place of consecration. The place where God came to him.

Now he's going to go back and lead the nation. Afterwards there came a man, Joshua, who took the same miserable crowd that broke the heart of God, and God was going to destroy them, you remember. Moses, I'll liquidate them.

And Joshua takes them over. And he has the same headaches that Moses had. And I figured someday he might have said, well, I don't think, I don't think the Lord really, maybe the Lord called me.

I mean, the Lord never, the Lord never appeared to me in a bush. I never heard him say, take your shoes off your feet. Maybe I shouldn't have done the job anyhow.

I can see him walking, you know, with his head down, discouraged, and he turns and, ooh! Who art thou? I am the captain of the Lord of Hosts. Take off thy shoes off thy feet. The place where thou standeth is holy ground.

For there was no burning bush. You see, to some people, unless you get through with the Spirit my way, well, of course, you didn't get it right. Unless you had the same traumatic experience, or saw balls of fire, or heard some voices, no, no, no, God doesn't duplicate like that.

He doesn't have to. He deals with Moses, all right. He brings him to maturity.

He makes him the deliverer. And then he lets him become the great teacher, giving us these great books, giving us the Ten Commandments. In other words, out of his inmost being, there flow really rivers of living water.

And he's there as a great deliverer, a great emancipator. But look at the process. Forty years along, and then oh, maybe many times he said, Lord, I, if you don't mind, I wouldn't mind going back in the desert.

These are the most disgusting, disgruntled, dissatisfied, disappointing people I've ever met. And you know what? If it isn't said it, God is on his side anyhow. For the simple reason, God got to the place where he wanted to destroy them.

I literally destroyed them all, and Moses stood in the gap and said, you don't destroy them all except me. Destroy them, but you destroy me with them. Be sure of that.

Aye, that's love, isn't it? When you throw yourself in the gap, when you say, Lord, I don't care what it costs. If it's me, all right. So again, this is how God makes his men.

One one way, another another way. Some people in this chapter just get a passing word of reference. Moses gets verse after verse after verse after verse even down to where they pass through the Red Sea.

We don't know how long some of them lived, or what exact ministry they had. Others you'll find again, the same for you. Moses has forty years in the desert.

Forty years ministering to the people. That's pretty good, isn't it? Two thirds of his life under the direct command of God. And at one time, it looked as though, man, he could have been destroyed.

He could have been lost. So again, God is patient. The time factor makes such a difference.

You know, God is patient. As we've said repeatedly now, we're in a success syndrome. If you leave this church as a pastor, you go to a church that will seat six hundred.

And after that, you go to a church that will seat a thousand. And after that, you go to a church that will seat fifteen hundred. But you know what I found recently, quite a number of times, we went to a church a while ago, they got plenty of money.

The pastor said, when I came here five years ago, our income was fifty thousand a year. I've got it up to a hundred thousand. And he boasted about that church.

Took me in on the Saturday night, said, isn't it lovely? We'll get good crowds, and we certainly did. We got twenty-five to thirty preachers a morning coming. And very often at night, as many.

Down four, five hundred, six hundred people at night. And as we got further into the week, and that we got a little, to know each other, you know, he took me on one side, he said, Brother Raymond, you go around the country a lot. I said, yes.

He said, if you ever find a little country church with about a hundred members, would you let me know? I'd be glad to unload this thing. Boy, there's so many headaches and problems in the church this size. Billy Graham was going down the road not too long ago, and he said, you know, if I could have my choice as a preacher, I'd settle for a little country church away there in the fields where I could feed the flock and really get down to them, you know, minister to them personally, see them growing grace.

You know, our values also, as we get older, we, you start realizing it's quality that matters, not quantity. As I said, Jesus didn't finish up to success. Well, he finished up as a failure.

You don't end up on a cross, do you, if you're a success. And the most he had was, after the resurrection, he was seen of 500 brethren, but they weren't, you know, too good. I'm sure he said, you can all come to the upper room, only 120 turned up.

Where were the other 380? Satisfied. Just satisfied. I think you're going pretty good if you're a church these days of 500 members and you can get 120 a night to come out to a revival.

That's pretty good going. Because you'll find everywhere I go, anyhow, I find that maybe at night, not 25 percent of the congregation belong to the church that you're in. That seems to be a lot.

They all come from other churches. People have come here a hundred miles, 150 miles and driven back, and they're not satisfied. We were in a meeting not long ago where a man came.

He said, Brother Ravenhill, I've read your books, and when I heard you was here, he said, I drove in to see you. And I said, oh, you come a good way. He said, well, I live 350 miles, I think it was.

350 miles away. And he said, I have to drive home tonight because I have to get to my family. But I'll be here tomorrow night.

Isn't that something? A guy drives 700 miles a night, and some people wouldn't cross the street. I don't know. And only about two deacons came anyhow the whole week.

Amazing. You see, again, the basis is, blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness. That's the whole criteria.

As I say again, we try and give God some prestige, you know. One of our deacons is the president of the First National Bank. The other one, he's the head of that big chain.

So what? He may be the dumbest man in the church, too. You don't give God prestige. You don't give God prestige by having socialites and other people in.

It's a spiritual business, isn't it, the Church of the Living God. And God's very patient. And he seems sometimes that he sits back and doesn't do too much.

And he lets us go on, and we grow so slowly. And yet, as you read all these characters, somewhere in this Hebrews 11, you'll find somebody that's very much after yourself, the way that God dealt with them. As I say, he leaves one man in prison 13 years.

He leaves another man on the back side of the desert 40 years. He lets Abraham go into Egypt when he shouldn't have gone, get into trouble, come out again. God's very patient.

He doesn't drive. And they used to say, one of our teachers used to say, you know, Satan drives. The Lord draws.

All the difference in the world. And yet, all he's after, again, is to close the hymn and finish with it. In that lovely hymn, Our Firmer Foundation, he says, God's adding nothing.

If the world lasts 2,000 years, he's adding no more. He's said it all. What more can he say than to you he has said? Whoever had a bigger Bible than you have, Spurgeon or Finney, none of them.

They just used it better. Whoever had more time, nobody. If you want to make money, invent a 25-hour clock and an 8-day week.

Everybody wants more time. What do we do with the time we have? No, it's a case of getting our priorities straight. It's a case of taking time to be holy.

It's a case of not just being rubber stamped even by the pastor or the church, just finding out how God wants me to walk and obeying him. And if he's dealing with Moses that way and Joshua that way and Abraham that way and Noah that way, well, that's all right. That's all right.

He didn't tell Abraham to build an ark, and he didn't tell Noah to make that journey right up there through Palestine, Syria, and across the desert. No, no, no. He's doing it his way in his life.

He'll do it that way in your life. And all you have to do again is come down to the two simple basics, trust and obey. There's no other way.

Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And in that place of obedience, we certainly will draw in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray.

Again, our Father, we thank you for this time of fellowship, meditation, and we thank you for your word. It is indeed quick and powerful. It stirs us, it awakens us, it challenges us, and it comforts us, and it draws us on.

We thank you that behind it we have all the might of the triune God. We thank you for men who have gone before us, and they've been examples of faith. They've shown us courageously how to live in a hostile world that hates God and hates us and hates the word of the living God.

Amen. Help us to go out, and may our lives be patterns that others will see, the manifestation of God's workings in us to bring us to maturity, and to show forth the praise of him who brought us out of darkness into his most marvelous light. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19692.mp3>

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