

Four Musts or the Secret of a Christian Life

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the four essential 'musts' for a fulfilling Christian life, highlighting the need for spiritual rebirth, humility, and adoration of God.

Duration: 1:04:23

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the importance of prioritizing our relationship with God above all else. He emphasizes that even though we may be busy serving the Lord, we must be careful not to let the good things distract us from the best thing, which is our intimacy with God. The speaker also shares stories of God's faithfulness in difficult times and the impact of preaching the word of God. He highlights the power of God's presence and the conviction of sin that comes when encountering a holy God. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the authority and power of Jesus Christ, who needs no earthly support but only a word from God to accomplish great things.

Transcript

...beings in heaven cease not to cry day and night, holy, holy, holy. We're glad, Lord, that you remember our frames and remember that we're dust. We have to stop to eat.

We have to stop to sleep. We have to stop to do our other duties. We thank you, Lord, that those creatures of Parnassus, they don't need to eat or sleep.

They have incessantly, eternally, the awesome privilege and task of giving you adoration. I'm sure, Lord, with voices that we never dreamed of, so beautiful, so excellent, every one of them as perfect as perfection can be, not as we bow before you tonight. We remember your word talks of our Lord Jesus Christ as being the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Even the cherubim veiled their faces before thee. They couldn't bear the scrutiny of those holy eyes, which is a frame of fire. They covered their eyes.

They couldn't gaze on your majesty. Lord, we ask you to unveil yourself to us. Lord, we need to see into eternity.

We're so earth conscious, so time conscious, so possession conscious, so position conscious. Lord, we live in a world that's sordidly tied to materialism. It believes only in what it can eat, and touch, and smell,

and see, and feel.

But Lord, we thank you. You've moved us into another dimension. We bless you.

You've awakened us. We too are dead in trespasses and in sins, not just bad but dead, without God, without hope. Lord God, how did you see anything in us? You didn't see anything in us.

You saw our need and that broke your heart. You left the glory out of the ivory palaces into a world of woe, this world of incredible corruption. It seems to corrupt more and more every hour.

This corruption puts on more corruption. This lying system puts on more lying. This deception puts on more deception.

This cruelty puts on more cruelty. This hatred of God puts on more hatred. But Lord, we bless you.

You do have a remnant who love you tonight. We love you, as the Hebrides says, for wearing the thorns on my brow. We love you for gathering us from the outcasts.

We were not even of Israel. We would have fired off without God, without hope. We thank you.

There was one eye that pitied us, one heart that loved us, one arm long enough to reach us, and one awesome act of mercy. Lord, I've thought so much about verse we sing so often and may be likely. Mercy there was great and grace was free.

Lord, if we had to buy, we couldn't buy if we had the ransom, if we had the money of a million kings. But we thank mercy was free. We thank you took us out of the bondage from priestcraft.

We thank you one day you released your holy word out of the Latin tongue, out of the Greek tongue, and put it into our mother tongue. We bless you for this love letter from heaven that tells us of the Savior who came for us, died for us, rose for us, ascended for us, lives for us tonight, making intercession. Otherwise we would have no confidence to come.

We thank you we don't need the smell of bleeding beasts and a roasting flesh on an altar with some dignified priest to take us through a performance. As the hymn writer says, Wesley I think said, he ever lives above for me to intercede. His all-redeeming love, his precious blood to plead.

With confidence I now draw nigh, and father, Abra, father cry. I don't remember Lord that even Abra have ever called you father, nor the great Psalmist, though he gets to almost into eternity, when he sees the majesty of Jesus and says lift up your heads O ye gates. Lord we're going to see some gates one day beyond anything that man has ever dreamed of, and they're going to swing outward, and all the ransomed host will sing.

Lord as we sang just now, all the earth shall praise thy name, means earth or sky or sea. Remember the last Psalmist says, let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. And then Revelation 5 says, let everything that had breath in the air, in the sea, under the sea, or on the land.

Lord we think when you make everything in creation, thank you for creating it. One day you're going to do that. One day we're going to hear something more than a million hallelujah choruses, and every creature, even these obnoxious mosquitoes and things we don't like, use everything that hath breath in it.

The things under the sea will rise and shout their hallelujah. The beasts of the field will groan or shout their doxologies, and everybody will fall down in adoration. Lord we bless you that one day every knee shall bow.

Many will take the name of Jesus in vain today, used it as a curse word of profanity. Yet Lord one day they're going to bow the knee. Every king that ever lived, every ruler, every potentate, every pope, every priest, every patriarch, every peasant, everybody, one day will bow the knee.

No wonder we sing sometimes, or try to sing Lord, then in a, then in a, a nobler sweeter song. We'll sing thy power to save, when these poor lisping stammering tongues shout victory o'er the grave. We thank you Lord that death is going to have acknowledged you.

We bless you, you have the keys of hell and of death. You are the resurrection, you are the life. This poor dumb stupid world thinks it's got rid of you, and it's yet to meet you.

Meet you in a splendor, in a glory it doesn't know a thing about. Lord it seems tonight to me your church should have on a wedding dress, but tonight it seems it's in rags. The rags of hypocrisy, the rags of prayerlessness, the rags of indifference, the rags of passionlessness.

Lord we ought to be the most buoyant people on God's earth. At least we should be in ecstasy because of what you've done for us, and for what you're going to do for us. Not just in eternity, but before we get to heaven.

Lord we believe you'll still break through this poor sin-bound, blind, harassed world in which we live, and raise your church up yet just one more visitation. Before you pour out your wrath, pour out your mercy. Lord we thank you for this holy word tonight.

We thank you for holy men of God, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Lord help us in our own devotion, in our rules. May we be moved by that same spirit that wrote this word.

Move us Lord. Move us to new heights of adoration. Move us into new depths of worship.

Move us into new breadths of vision. Lord save us, save me, save us from stagnation. Lord save us from bondage.

Maybe what we don't know to be bondage. Deliver us from it. We think of Lazarus, you raised him from the dead, he was alive, and he shuffled along, but you said loose him and let him go.

Lord it seems tonight your church is still bound. She's little bit alive, but she's in bondage to all kinds of things. Traditional interpretations of your word, traditional ideas, forms of service, everything, every fetter.

Like that mighty carrot who we used to speak up at school, Gulliver's travels, that monster, that little tiny threads, so many of them they held him down. Lord we need to break loose and break out and go forth in your holy name. We bless you for our freedom tonight.

We don't take it for granted. We think of a suffering church again tonight. Some that have not for years been to a place of fellowship.

Folk in Russia and China. We think of another day of raping for Afghanistan and the nations of the world look on and do nothing. It stupefies us.

We don't understand it. But Lord we bless you that everything is in your hand. You're a sovereign God, and Lord we love you tonight.

We want to worship you tonight. We want to give you adoration and give you praise in Jesus name. Thank you.

Be seated. I want us to look just for a moment at one of the best-known chapters in the bible, and it's a kind of jumping off board. The gospel, again as recorded by John, or Saint John, whenever he got sanctified, I don't know, but there we are.

The gospel recorded by John. Over the years I've looked in many commentaries, or commentaries, whichever way you like to say it, and almost every one of them, without exception, take notice in John chapter 3, there are three musts. Even the mighty Mr. Pink says there are three musts.

He needs to pink it, think again, because there are four musts in the chapter. John chapter 3, in verse 7, Jesus says marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again. That's the must of salvation.

Go down to 14, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up. I take that to be the the must of sacrifice. Then verse 30, the great Irish evangelist, I've mentioned him often, W.P. Nicholson.

Whenever he signed a letter, he always signed it, W.P. Nicholson, and then underneath he put John 3, verse 30. Because you've got a must here, he must increase, and then the fourth must, I must decrease. And that's the whole secret of the Christian life.

He constantly on the increase, and we constantly on the decrease. Now let's go back into the gospel as recorded by Saint Luke, again in chapter 3. Now we've just mentioned the statement there by John, which is John of course, John the Baptist, he must increase, and I must decrease. Look at just the first verse in Luke chapter 3. In the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being the governor of Judea, Herod the governor, Herod being the Tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip the Tetrarch of Trachonitis, Lysanias the Tetrarch of Abilene, Ananias and Caiaphas being the high priests, came the son, the priest, the word of the God came unto John of Zacharias, the son of John, the Zacharias in the wilderness.

I read those because you see all those Tetrarch, what do they mean to you? They're about as refreshing as a mouthful of sand, aren't they? What do you care who the Tetrarchs were? That's not the point. The point is there were two high priests, which was totally illegal in Israel, but there were two high priests there. Now I mentioned this amazing character again.

As I said, I don't think Christians should have idols, but I think it's permissible to have heroes. I'm sure I'm nobody's hero, but there are heroes. My number one hero is, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Number two hero, the Apostle Paul. Number three hero, John the Baptist. John Baptist always reminds me of the man who said, all my advantages are against me.

When does he come? He comes between the Testaments, between Malachi and Matthew. Again, a period of 400 years. The nation had been invaded.

He came at the very worst hour, speaking naturally, humanly. The whole nation was in bondage. They were paying excessive taxes.

They had no freedom whatever. Not only had they bondage, but also they were in bondage to a corrupt priesthood. And in that critical moment, God raised up a man.

We should have gone to chapter three again. Go back a moment, please. Chapter three, and it says in the end of verse two, John the son of Zacharias came in the wilderness.

It says later, he was in the wilderness until the day of his showing forth. But if you go into the Gospel recorded by Matthew, it says about that wilderness that Jesus was in that wilderness, and it was filled with wild beasts. Now, I wish there'd been more details.

I don't have them. Nobody does. I wonder, when did this man go in the wilderness? I don't have a clue.

I'll tell you, he was one of the most remarkable men in history. And I know that the whole nation was blind. Step now, please, back to chapter one.

Remember, this man comes in a period of 400 years of darkness without any prophetic light, 400 years of stillness without any prophetic voice. What did he have? Well brother, if it's not bad English, he had less than nothing. He suddenly appears in the wilderness.

Dear Lord, you don't start a cruise, a campaign in a wilderness, do you? Because it says when Jesus was in the wilderness, the same wilderness, and I think maybe at the very same time that there in the wilderness of the wilderness, John had something very remarkable. What did he have? Well, you couldn't guess, because you can't think as I think, fortunately for you. He had a Bible school.

In a wilderness? Yes. Do you know, they had no rock and, I mean, they had no music. John Baptist comes, he has no halo on his head.

He stays in that wilderness, as far as we know, maybe for nearly 30 years. And he never got discouraged. As I say, he has, he's not following a pillar of fire by night, or a pillar of cloud by day.

He has a whole nation against him. The priests hate the very sight of him. But I'll prove to you the blindness of these priests.

If you look in chapter one, it says in verse 67, just to kind of telescope the thing a bit, his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied. What did he prophesy? Here, do you wonder, Jesus says of this man, he's one of the most, he's the most unique man in the world. Why? His father was filled with the Holy Ghost, his mother was filled with the Holy Ghost, his priest was filled with the Ghost.

It says of him what it doesn't say of another being in the whole divine record. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. He has the backing of the Holy Father, a Holy Mother.

He had a prayer group behind him, an old lady, a hundred years of age, and prayed for his coming. Over and over and over she read Isaiah chapter 40. The sign you know that Jesus is near, is a man called John Baptist will come, and he'll cry, every valley shall be exalted, every hill shall be brought down.

That, maybe that's metaphorically. Every, every high mountain, the powers of Rome shall be brought down. Every valley which is way down there, when religion is dead, the priests were done.

People went to church, their altars had sacrifices, but no fire ever fell. They had a remarkable priesthood, but their preaching was the letter that killed. They never had a prophet.

And this man shut away in the wilderness. Look what it says in this second, pardon me, first, uh, chapter again. I read the verse 67.

His father was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied. Look at verse 74. He will grant to us, to being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness, before him all the days of the life.

And thou child shall be called the prophet of the highest. Dear me, he missed it. He's got the greatest child ever born.

He's the prophet of the most high God. Why doesn't he put a chair outside the temple and put his son there, or in the temple, and charge a fee to see him? This is the most remarkable child born before Jesus comes. And his daddy and mommy don't do anything.

They don't spoil him and adulate him. He's raised in poverty. There's not very much for the priests in those days.

He shall be called the prophet of the most high God. Thou shalt go before the face to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercies of our God, whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. It's death everywhere.

What's he doing there? I'll tell you what, nobody ever mistook the preaching of this amazing man. Skip over to chapter 3 for a moment. In verse 4 of chapter 3, it says he has a voice crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord.

You know, again, he had a school of the prophets. I used to think this man was alone. Boy, I'd have loved to have gone to that school.

I don't know how long they went. But how in God's name would you live with a man who's blazing from head to foot? He's surrounded with death. He looks to the left, there's the Dead Sea.

He looks in front of him, and he's walking on the cinders that were once Sodom and Gomorrah. There's death there, there's death beneath him, the priesthood's dead around him. And they listen to this man, this God-ignited man.

His tongue was sharper than the sting of a scorpion. Again, what did he have? He had no Bible. Dear God, how little we do with it.

I'm almost nervous sometimes to pick up this, dear brother. I've got every word God Almighty wants to say from now till Jesus comes. What have I done with it? Again, I ask you, what did those people do with Hebrews 11? Subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions.

And they didn't have what we have, brother Bracey. They had a very limited concept. It was passed from mouth to mouth.

John Baptist had no Bible. He couldn't afford to pay the scribes who wrote every word of the Old Testament out. He couldn't carry those big rolls with him when there were wild beasts around.

I imagine this fellow praying at night. I imagine him hollowing. Behold, and there behind the trees alone, there's a person called Jesus Christ who's waiting to step up into the place of authority.

When this man has pulled down the hills and filled in the valleys, he has no organization. He has no financial backing. He has no choir.

He has no halo. What does he have? He has a word from God. And neither earth nor hell nor the fear of the Romans nor anybody else could move him.

He led the most despicable chapter in the history of this people. I believe what, between Matthew and Malachi, you have the period of Maccabees. You have a period when, when the most awesome things happened.

You know, you've got to kind of push back into this thing a little bit. If I remember right, it wasn't Ezra and Nehemiah that had raised and built what's called the Great Synagogue. They had 120 select priests, maybe typical of the 120 from the upper room, but these priests were dead, whereas these had life.

Herod was a trickster. Of course he belonged to the greatest empire in the world. Of course he got finances.

Of course he built Herod's temple, the most glittering building in the world at that day. And then he sold the whole nation down the river. It was that, in that period, between 150 years before and up to the time that John Baptist came, there was a villain.

I don't know if you pronounce his name. I always call him what's his name? Antiochus Epiphanes. Is that right? Very close.

Thank you. I get a Z minus. I was so close.

Antiochus Epiphanes. What did he do? He corrupted the nation. Herod sold the nation.

Antiochus Epiphanes came in and he got all of the priests. He even cut the throat of swine on the sacred altar. He put a statue of Jupiter where the altar of burnt offering had been.

He polluted everything. There wasn't a single glimmer of light for John the Baptist. He's nobody to lean on.

And yet he doesn't waver. You may say a bit later, well he did waver. You know what we read tonight? He says concerning Jesus, he must increase and I must decrease.

You know what's difficult? Ask Brother Bracey, ask the young Spanish preacher there. Isn't it difficult to see somebody prosper when they can't preach as good as you? That guy can't preach anywhere as good as me. And look what he does, look what he gets.

They said John, that man you talked about, he's stolen your crowns. Again I say this man does not have any evidence of the supernatural. He never raised the dead.

Nobody ran after John Baptist. Have mercy on my son, he's a lunatic. He didn't do that.

He stuck there with his task, I'm to be a voice crying in the wilderness. And again I think he hollered down that dusty road or that wilderness that he was in, until the very powers of hell were afraid. I think, I haven't read this, I imagine Jesus is somewhere in that same area amongst the wild beasts.

And he hears this voice of John. And Jesus knows John the Baptist may precede him. Here is the greatest child ever born before Jesus comes.

Born of a holy mother, born of a holy father, having a holy priest. And they all prophesied. Boy I'd like to have been in their meetings, wouldn't you? I must have been alive.

You know our problem today is we have too many dead men giving out dead sermons to dead people. I'll say it again, amen. I believe that with all my heart.

Shall they go to John and say, you know that man you talked about, oh he's stolen your crown. Even some of your disciples have left and they've gone to John. You'll be amazed what he's doing.

And John said, just slip back and ask him, say, art thou he that should come? Or do we look for another? You say he was weakening, he was wilting and weakening and wobbling. No he wasn't, he was wondering. But why is he doubting? He isn't doubting.

Why do we always put the worst construction on a thing? Why not put the best on it? I think he, before he gets it, remember this man's so lost in his gospel, he loses his head over the job. Some of us won't lose in our sleep. So he's so excited about presenting the Lord Jesus Christ.

Okay, he isn't intimidated. Every priest in the country hates his name. What do you think these disciples of his come in? He's in the wilderness.

He never left the wilderness. He was there until the day of his showing forth. And yet the news got around, there's a strange man in the wilderness.

You know there are men hidden in the world today, that other men are seeking out, I'm sure of that. In this country, in other countries, they're hidden until the day of their showing forth. This man didn't need any financial backing.

He didn't need to ride through the city on the back of a horse. People went after him. Why? You never, never, ever again, you can't conceal a fire.

Somebody came up to him and said, hey John, I want to ask you some questions. And then they went back and told others. And young men began to leave their jobs.

And they went into the school of silence. You see, that's where we won't go. I'm writing to a man now.

I'm going to do tomorrow anyhow. A few years ago he was at the number one Baptist church in a certain city. We had a crusade for him about 25 years ago.

Tremendous man of God. He got into some trouble, had to get divorced. And now he's hanging his head and he's groaning and moaning.

And you know, I've missed my chance. Maybe he did. But he's got a heart for God.

He's, I'm seeking now, he said, God is going to raise up younger men. They're going to come with a super anointing for the last hour in which we live. And shake the kingdoms of this world.

I don't believe John was wilting and weakening at all. I believe he's trying to exact brother Bracey, I believe he's trying to get Jesus to make the confession before they chop his head off. Yes, I am the son of God.

The confession that, was it Peter got out of him. Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. He wanted to hear Jesus say, yes, I am the son of God.

I don't believe for a minute he was on his own behalf. He was on behalf of Jesus and on behalf of the people. That they wouldn't miss the opportunity.

And yet you've got this man, God closets him away, in the darkness, in the loneliness. Was it, there's a famous preacher called, I don't know pronounce it, C-U-Y-L-E-R. Have you read of him at all? Coyler, I think actually, he was American.

And he said, you tell me how a Christian preacher spends his time, and I'll tell you what kind of man he is. You know, we don't have time. I'm trying to write a book now I should have written 10 years ago.

1951, we had the best crusade in Dr. Chaucer's church, he'd had in 25 years. I was planning to go around the world, invitations all over the world. Suddenly I'm in hospital, bleeding, suffering.

Dr. Chaucer at the bottom of the bed, writer's death. Why did this happen? He told me three months after I'd happened. But I didn't stop.

So the law put me off for two years. No insurance, no income, wife and three children, the other side of the world. And here I am lying in bed, my back broke me in three places, this leg in three pieces, both my feet broken.

I had seven breaks, you can't go beyond that, that's a perfect number. So I stayed just with the seven breaks. And you know, it was a tremendous time of teaching.

The Lord graciously got to me, he couldn't get to me, I've been so busy, so active in the service of the Lord. But the good is the enemy of the best. He'll get, I tell these young fellows, come watch it, you've got to stop somewhere, if you don't it'll break your neck.

He doesn't care whether he'll have beans, whether you have money or not. We had none, boy, we were in a mess. But God is faithful, it's easy to stand there as we did tonight and say, great is thy faithfulness.

There's a warm atmosphere, everybody feels it. Tomorrow, when there's no supporting atmosphere, you're facing a bill this length and all kinds of problems. That's the time when the test comes.

Again, God gets this precious, wonderful man. Again, he comes in the most critical hour. The nation had never been more downtrodden, never had they such empty lips, those preachers that they had.

The people were never so intimidated, they were never so taxed. What did Jesus say? If a man stops you in the street, a Roman, and says, carry that bundle a mile, say, yes sir. When you get to the limit, say, do you mind if I carry it another mile? It'll faint.

Usually turn around and spit on the soldier and curse him. Jesus says, go a second mile. Boy, there's not much second mile Christianity around anymore.

We're exhausted after the first mile, mostly. And yet Jesus teaches this precious man in the silence, in the stillness. You know what the Bible says? It says, be filled with the Spirit.

It also says, be still and know that I'm God. And I'll tell you what, if he puts the stillness, you won't get out of it. It'll keep you as long as you've learned your lesson.

But then there comes a showing forth. He's in the wilderness until the day of his showing forth. What precedent did he have? I don't know whether he heard people say, this is another Elijah that's come.

But Elijah, good night, only had three and a half years in silence. This man has six times that or seven times that span of years. And there he is in loneliness, he's forgotten.

I don't think he was irritated. I don't think he was worried. He could say with a psalmist, my times are in thy hands.

Or Psalm 37, I waited patiently for the Lord. And then he moves out. He has the Roman army against him.

He has the Greeks against him. He has a solid wall of religion against him with the Jews. And he hates everything he sees around him, but he doesn't shake and quaver.

And then he gets to say the greatest thing that's been said since creation. Somewhere in a crowded place. And you know what it says? He said of Jesus what? Behold the Lamb of God.

He says something before that that really stood me today. He said, I didn't know who he was. I never met him.

I've often wondered, you know, Jesus went up to the temple at 12 years of age. Well, Zacharias and Elizabeth, I think would go with them because they were relatives. And maybe John Baptist was there, like these two little fellows here.

John Baptist there, little Jesus here in the temple. What happened? I don't know. Maybe that's where they parted company.

Yet there came a day, and we don't think of this, a day when John Baptist's mother gave him a hug. He said, she said, son, I know you're going. This is it.

And she's not going to see him alive again, maybe. That's the test. And John goes in the wilderness that way, and Jesus goes in the wilderness that way.

And he said, I did not know him, but the Lord said, you see, what held him fast? He'd had a vision. When you see something descending like a dove, that's the one. And you declare him to be the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

I believe all hell shook. Every, every foundation in hell shook. Immediately John Baptist says, behold the Lamb of God.

Every demon knew that there was a tag on him. He was tagged for death. Every angel rejoiced.

Every cherubim sang louder than ever. This is all history is going to change right here. Well, we should have the same ecstasy.

Anyhow, the world's depressed and dark, and it's about as vile as it can be right now. And we seem to have a stagnant religion, and a crippled priesthood, and hardly any voices around. And God's going to get men that proclaim like this man proclaimed.

What is he to lose? Again he has no credentials. Nobody ordained him, thank the Lord. He had no Bibles.

He had no hymn books. He had no material support. He had no house as far as I know.

He's just got about everything's excellently nothing. You know, it's hard to get to that place where we have nothing. No confidence in the flesh.

No confidence in systems. Just believing that somehow Almighty God is going to break through and do some new thing. And he's going to do that.

I'll tell you I know, because I really believe it. I got a book this week. It's not on loan.

The title is, the fellow who wrote it, Colin Whittaker, is a big shot in the Assemblies of God in England. It's called the Seven Pentecostal Pioneers. So I looked in it right at my favorite character, a little Welshman.

His name is Stephen Jeffreys. Remember England is stagnant. And remember this please.

Every time there's, if I may use the word cautiously and kindly, every time there's an outbreak of tongues, what is it, to get them at the church built? No, the Word of God says tongues is for what? A sign for who? For the unbelievers. So an outbreak of tongues in 1912. What happened? 1914, war came that damaged and devastated Europe.

1927, here's this little guy comes up. A tiny little unpretentious Welshman. I don't think he ever went to Bible school.

The only thing that he did wrong as far as I know, he bought a dog collar so he'd look like a preacher. That's a terrible thing. You look more like a dog.

But anyhow, here's a man without money. Listen to this. This is 1927.

He went to Bishop Auckland. That's a city in Durham. What did he do? He rented a town hall.

Just a handful of people started. There was only a handful, about a dozen Pentecostals in the whole area. But then hundreds of people began to come.

Why? A woman called Mrs. Wilson, went to a meeting. She came home late at night. Her husband says, where have you been? I've been to a religious summit.

Till this hour? What kept you till this hour? She said, well, you know the girl in town, the blind girl, Celia Brown? What's she got to do with you being out late at night? Well, I'll tell you this. What did you say about it? She's a blind girl. Well, she's not blind.

What do you mean she's not blind? I was in a meeting tonight. A brother chimes in. He says, everybody in town knows she has no eyes.

She didn't have even little beads there. She had empty sockets. A little George, no, George was his brother.

He wasn't there at the time. Stephen put his hand on those blind sockets, emptied them, and immediately two beautiful blue eyes came in her head. What do you think that is? Everybody went crazy.

Englishmen don't go crazy. Only Americans get excited. Boy, they threw their hats in the air and their handbooks.

And remember, there were drawing crowds of over 2,000 a night, and nobody had an automobile. You either had to walk or stand up for a streetcar. And you couldn't get on the streetcar.

It was filled in two minutes. And they tramped and tramped. This is what it says a bit further.

The vicar of war, that's a distinguished Church of England minister who had a master's degree, which is a pretty high degree in England. He saw the difference in this girl. He'd heard about her, and he followed up the situation.

He said, I've seen and talked with her on several occasions. Each time her eyes had slightly grown in size and ability. She could count numbers.

Stephen saw many blind people receive their sight in his meeting over the years. That was the first and only one of one who was born totally blind. Well, the miracles went on.

People came. The building was large, but they turned away 2,000 people. The building was packed to suffocation.

Listen, during two weeks, 964 people were born again. How do you know? Every one of the 964, when they said, yes, I want to be, say, go in the back room, dear Brother Bracey. Every one of them was personally dealt with.

If it took till two or three in the morning, dear God, you don't abandon a baby as soon as it's born, do you? They knelt there. They prayed there. People going home in the early morning, tired out, bent down with tiredness, speaking to people, leading them from scripture to scripture.

They had to get an assurance before ever they were allowed to leave the altar. I know that I've passed from death unto life. My burden has gone.

My guilt has gone. My condemnation has gone. My darkness has gone.

I feel joy. I feel free. I'm released.

So this goes on. It says some nights, Stephen Jeffries came on the platform while the people were singing. He was a very strong man, and he was very happy.

He danced on the platform. Fancy doing that in England. You could get shot for doing that.

And the pianist stroked up a song we used to sing. Remember the song we used to sing, Give Me Oil In My Lamp? They were singing it. You're going in Sears Robux, and somebody says, well, what do you want? I want this dress.

Give me oil in my lamp. Keep me burning. And all the all the shops sang it.

Going down the streets, people sang. Football matches, people struck up, Give Me Oil In My Lamp. All over London, they were going around singing and singing and singing, magnifying God.

People came to meetings at night, and as soon as the meeting was over, they walked around the building and stood at the door, lined up for the meeting the next day at three o'clock. Some slipped home. You saw Deacon coming down the road with a chair on his back.

You wonder if he'd stolen it. No, I'm going to put it outside the building. I'm going to sit there till four o'clock in the morning, and then my wife's going to get the chair, and I'm going to work at six.

And they did that for weeks. What happened? What always happens in true revival? No, men were magnified. There was never any fundraising.

It was Christ only. I went to one of the meetings, not of Stephen's, of George Jeffrey's. Perfect gentleman, wonderful man.

Boy, he stood there. So, you know what? They had about 30 or more Pentecostal pastors on the platform. The song leader always did his, he beat times this race.

If never done it, it's interesting. Didn't matter what it was. You know, if it was a lead guy, he was blessed with insurance.

He just altered the switch. But boy, he could make the chair sing almost. And there I was up in the gallery, waiting for this remarkable, renowned man to come on the platform.

When they'd sung, the song leader said, shall we bow our heads in prayer? And the mighty man of God slipped in the back, on the back seat, and he sat there while the congregation sang a couple of hymns, and somebody prayed. And then they said, we're glad to have Principal George Jeffreys. He was the head of the Bible school.

And he came on the platform, stood there. He never raised his voice. You could feel the power of God emanating from him.

The whole congregation was ignited. There was an expectation. They did with him what they did with this man.

They brought cripples off the street. Women, a woman had been in bed 31 years, and they laid her at his feet, and he spoke, and she jumped straight up. And everywhere they went, they had people jamming the streets.

They had the most horrible cases of twisted, deformed, demented people. There was no fundraising. There's no asking for money.

They just pass the basket around, if you want to give, you give. But the point to me is this. There was no magic.

There was no show. No pretty girls with tambourines slapping their hips like they do in shows. I hardly ever had a soloist.

The glory of God filled the temple. He went to London to the high class, and the society people came. At the other side of London, there's a place called Billingsgate.

That's where they sell all the smelly fish and whatnot. And these guys would come straight from Billingsgate fish market, and sit with these society people. People from government came.

They'd never seen anything like this. Again, you do not have to advertise a fire. And there's no hoopla.

Do you know what happened? So many people were born again. He went to Sunderland. Let me say this one thing.

He went to Sunderland. In England, there's a lot of halls. In different cities, they have a Victoria Hall as a memorial to Queen Victoria.

She was Queen of England for 51 years. She read the Bible every day and prayed, was a devout Christian. So all over the country, they have Victoria Hall.

Victoria Hall holds 3,000 people. He had no money. He went and rented it.

First day or two, not much happened. Then the people began to come. He stayed in that town about three weeks.

What happened? A church of over a thousand new people were born again. That church is the strongest church in that city today. Side two.

The largest church in town is called Bridge Street. But wait a minute. George Jeffries came, preached in the anointing, saw people delivered.

But before he went, there was a little man by the name of Mr. Jewett. J-E-W-I-T-T. Mr. Jewett.

He was considered a fanatic. My daddy knew him. I didn't.

I saw him once. He had a little Pentecostal church. Then a Methodist church fizzled out, so he got that building.

I went to sing one night. Would you believe that? I sang the song, Saved by His Power Divine, Saved in Your Life, Survived. And just as I hit the top note, I noticed a girl at the back that came from our church, a mischievous girl.

And she looked at me and went to say, Are you singing here? And I cried. I was only 14. But I went again when the glory of God was on that place.

What's the secret? That little man, a man who labored during the day, he didn't even get paid in the church. That little man had three physical breakdowns, not mental. He fasted so much.

His wife would say, I'll find a bunch of bones one day when I come in your prayer room. But he fasted by night. He fasted by day.

He prayed. He wept. He groaned.

He interceded. Lord, I don't want to die until glory hits this place. I didn't know he was praying there.

I went in the woods just near our home, part of Sherwood Forest. Somebody, my Sunday school teacher, gave me an abridged edition of the life of David Brainerd. And boy, when I read it, I couldn't believe it.

I'll tell you what I discovered after reading this book. You know what the smart people say? You see, miracles are not for today. Miracles ended at the end of the New Testament.

I'll tell you when miracles ended, when the Holy Ghost got strung up in a church. That's when it ends. You can have Pentecostal on it, or you can have Presbyterian, anything.

But once the Holy Ghost is restricted and we deal on the formula. A guy said the other day, he said, people come out in our church, they hardly get out. We all lay hands and say, God bless you, heal, I believe you, heal you.

Nothing happens. Boys, something happened in these places. And it's only when the Spirit is restricted, grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, resist not the Holy Spirit.

And when the Spirit can have his way, then he does the unusual thing. Dear Lord, we don't know. We type out on Wednesday in the church office, what's going to happen on Sunday morning.

Hymn number one, then the choir will sing, then Miss Jones will gargle to music, and then something else, then a message at the end. It's all typed out. What is the freedom of the Spirit of God? I believe that one of the most amazing things about the New Testament church was, it was totally unpredictable.

Do you think everybody went to church, explained to see two old hypocrites killed on Sunday morning? That's Pentecost as much as healing the sick. People say, I'd like to see Pentecost. Well, if we did, you know what, half the preachers would be in jail before the week was out.

We'd be praying down, and God would put people to death who've been stumbling, blocking the church. Well, anyhow, I hope you're interested in this book. I'm going to try and get it printed here in America.

Here is this gentleman, listen to what it says. He danced and sang, and the people sang, gave me oil in my lamp. Before the camp finished, they were singing the chorus in the streets, on the football fields, in the buses, and in the coal mines.

When Stephen preached, he was full of melting tenderness and fiery wrath. When he preached, the hammer came, the hammer of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, or like a sword flashing, it pierced the hearts.

People started to sob. I looked up during one appeal, and Stephen's face was filled with unutterable tenderness. I heard him say, come unto me, come unto Jesus.

And people left the hall under deep conviction of sin. He would not allow any adulation. His point was not adulation, it was adoration.

Don't hear you say you've heard me. Go home and say God was in the midst. Well, people in England hadn't known God.

They thought God lived somewhere beyond Jupiter. To go in a meeting and be confronted with God, with a holy God, until people trembled. Often they'd break into tears without a word being said.

Spirit would grip them. Men would start moving up to the front and mourning over their sins, complaining about the sin that they had hidden. This book is worth, I won't tell you what it's worth.

I'll tell you what I learned, too. You know, one of the great men that went with, in the Cambridge Seven, that's a remarkable book. I happen to have an old copy.

Well, here's Smith Wheel was on the cover. Paul Hill was one of the highest aristocrats in England. He got filled with the Holy Ghost.

What did he do? He did what C.T. Studd did. Sold everything he had, and he went with C.T. Studd to China. And they had a career in China.

Before ever C.T. Studd, you see, C.T. Studd came worn out, 53 years of age, nobody would touch him. What did he say? He said, God will touch me. At 53 years of age, when no missionary society in England would have him, he went to Africa on his own.

He didn't need visas in those days. In the C.T. Studd's mission now, the Worldwide Evangelization group said, has nearly 2,000 missionaries, all out of one man who gave every blessed thing that he had. His mansion, his estate, every creature comfort.

And Paul Hill, I didn't know Paul Hill was there. And Paul Hill was filled with the Holy Ghost. And these geniuses from Cambridge University, they might have been the leading politicians, they might have been the Archbishop of Canterbury.

I lay in dust, life's glory dead. They said, there is no thing in the world worth holding on to, if God will anoint me with the Holy Ghost. And let me tell you something, I believe with Finney David, Brother Bracey, I don't know whether you believe this or not, if not, you're wrong.

But I believe in repeated anointings, if you want to call it, of the Holy Ghost. Doesn't Finney say, I crossed to Boston Common, and I felt an endowment of power, a drenching of the Spirit of God. People go to church, I got the baptism 50 years ago, they've been leaking ever since.

Come on, we need fresh anointings. This is a crisis our America's in. There's a dear brother, you're from where? Zimbabwe, a brother from Zimbabwe.

Patel, then there's another brother, where? Where are you from brother? Yeah, but what's your country? Oh, United States, well that's a hopeless, dark country anyhow. But we had a fellow in this, from Zambibe, another letter, you remember, how many of you remember a fellow called, what was his name, that came this week? Ernest, Ernest from Cameroon, I heard from him this week. Had a letter from another fellow, he came to America, he'd seen the Holy Ghost working.

This is Pentecost, forget about the PTL. Why do you blame the Pentecostals for PTL? You don't blame Henry Ford, since he invented that car, it's killed 50,000 people and crippled the people. It crippled a hundred thousand, but you don't say Henry Ford should be crucified or his son should be put to death.

Why blame Pentecost? This is Pentecost. Pentecost that was pure. It wasn't a begging organization.

They didn't build monuments to themselves, God help us. Not one of those men wanted to go down in history, hell knew them, hell feared them. Do you think devils fear any of our TV preachers, God help us? I don't.

But God's going to get his men. If he isn't, I don't want to die, I don't want to live, I'd rather die. I believe we're going to, these youngsters here, these little guys, I pray for every day.

If Jesus spares them, I trust they're going to be prophets. Maybe you'll be more gracious and come before they're too old to try and handle this corrupt world in which we live in. There isn't a church you know of that's apostolic.

Some are maybe better than others, but boy I'm looking for apostolic power, forget the label. It's no good taking the jar of pickles and sticking a strawberry label on it, it's still pickles. It's no good saying Pentecost if it's a hundred miles away from Pentecost.

You know it's difficult to be honest. I mean we're so good, we're pedigree, pure blood. I was raised up with a holiness people, you know.

They live next door to heaven, in fact half of them are in it, the other half are asleep. These are samples. Willie Burton got disease in his mouth up the Congo.

Came down in a canoe, it took him six months to get from his home down to a city where there was a doctor, a medical doctor or a dentist. He said you're in very bad state, he said I know that, he said I'll have to take every tooth you have out of your head, your gums are all diseased with pyre and so forth. And he said then go back home and come back in six months, he said sir it took me six months to get here.

If you say come back in six months, I'd have to go halfway home and turn back, I can't do that. So what did he do? Are you, I, two of the greatest men that ever had in my life travel with me to England, when we walked the length and breadth of England, slept over hedges, slept on floors, never went in a bed maybe for two or three years. Two dear Pentecostal Assembly of God fellows, Harry Toft and the other man was blind, totally blind, Glyn, Glyn Thomas.

He went in hospital to dear brother Bracey and prayed for the sick, they got up and he's blind. He traveled through London, I couldn't go through London, I'd fall down the steps, there's so many escalators and going the wrong way. And he would get down there and find his way the other side of London, went in an institution, a woman was crazy, he prayed over her and she sat up in bed.

The nurse said what are you doing here? He said I'm taking this woman home. You're not, she's mad. No she isn't, she's sane.

He asked a question, how did it happen? He said I just prayed for her. People said look you healed us, used to heal the sick, but why didn't you get healed? You're such a good man, he was a fantastic preacher. He spent a whole night, now remember he came back to see us, he said I spent the whole night on my face before God.

And he said Lord you've used these little hands of mine, I've laid them and people have been healed, have blindness, cancer, cripples, have got up out of wheelchairs. Lord here I am and I'm so handicapped. The Lord said you're not.

Lord he said I could be so, he said well I waited about three hours of stillness and God says all right, here's your choice. This is what he said to a crowd and shook them to the very floor. The Lord said son Thomas, I can heal you like that.

You can have your eyes in a moment of time. I'm just afraid of one thing, what is it? If you get your eyes, you'll be like other preachers, you run here there and everywhere, you lose your anointing, you lose your passion, you lose every bit of vision you have, spiritual vision. He said now make a choice, right here make a choice.

Either get your eyesight and with the risk of becoming mediocre or stay blind. He said I stay blind. I went out of the meeting one morning, I had to go across London.

I left him kneeling at a chair brace at 10 o'clock in the morning on a hard floor, no soft stuff to kneel on. I went back at three o'clock, he was still at that chair, he had one eye that kind of, and I'm not being funny here, it kind of leaked a little because he had an eyeball in there, he hadn't one in here. And that pressured man had been interceding.

Do you wonder we spend more nights praying? Dear God, if those fellows were alive now, I believe I'd go back to England. I'd pray with Harry Toft on this side of me and this fellow on this side of me. And boy when they touched God, you felt as though they had their hands on the throne.

I never touched them. They prayed with such passion, they prayed with such anointing. I'm not thinking every meeting is going to be like this, but there should be some meetings when something miraculous happens, when something is beyond explanation.

But I still want God the Holy Ghost to come and do what he did. What if people at the GM plant or whatever it is up in Detroit, supposing somebody stuck up Amazing Grace and everybody sang it, boy it would do something. These men went again, they had no flamboyancy, there was no TV to announce them, they had no choirs, they had no gimmicks, they sold nothing, they sold no books.

They just went there and preached the glorious Word of God with anointing and tenderness and vision. They hardly opened their mouths before you could feel out of the being there was some divine energy coming. I'm glad this little fellow's put this book together, I'm hoping to get some copies of this, because it's so easy to say it.

I say you'll all nod your heads and you'll say yes. I say Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Just one last thing.

I talked with Miss Kuhlman in one of the healing meetings with Dave Wilkinson. I said this has been a wonderful meeting, there have been some wonderful healings. And she said, you know, a lady came to me the other day and said, you know Miss Kuhlman, we have a wonderful church.

And one of the favorite things, our preachers every Sunday, remember Jesus is living, he's the same yesterday, today and forever. She said, well go and ask him if, oh he's in our midst, does he what? She said, well go and ask your pastor, if he's in the midst, why did he do the same here and there? I think dear brother Bracey, this is awkward explanation. I think we're trying to worship an absentee God.

He's not there. People sit and chew and talk and you go in a meeting, it sounds more like a turkey farm. And we want to switch it off and suddenly be reverent.

I want that holiness to come so that we tip to out of the sanctuary subdued. I'm asking God more and more for myself. Lord there are depths I don't know.

I'm not seeking a place in the sun as a preacher or to be known. I don't think God vindicates him just by things like this. It's points, it's when you go to a criminal settlement and God works.

A place like there, what's his name? Joe. Joe Foss goes and gets on death row, goes to some of those other places and men are getting saved. You know there's awful pressure on right now.

I read the report the other day that Mozambique, that's what the west coast of Africa, east coast, east coast, 40 people set off for church, one made it. The others were massacred. The communists came in, there were some people in the church already.

He went and in front of all the children he took a razor and he slit the throat of the song leader in front of all the children, everybody. 39 were massacred on the way to church. Other areas, a man phoned me this week and said the government shipped I don't know how many, two or three busloads of Mexican missionaries to the border and released them, told them not to come back.

The pressure's on all over the world. A brother said to me recently, do you think God Almighty, he's tried every way, we're the most fed nation, best dressed nation, we've everything going for us, what do you think? And this brother said, maybe God would like to put America under the heel of communism to bring us to brokenness, to bring us to the place where he is number one, where we seek his face. Dear John Baptist came single-handedly almost, except for two or three disciples and we don't know what happened to them.

But boy hadn't been there long, they were coming from north, south, it was a success socially. Again, read the third chapter, I quote it in the finish, read the third chapter of the gospel recorded by Luke. Who were there? The people were there, the soldiers, the heathens from another country cried out.

He didn't make an altar call, they cried out, what shall we do? The people cried out, what shall we do? The Pharisees cried, that's conviction, that's, he isn't spotting sin, you're an adulterer, you're a liar, there was such a holy presence. Here's a man who is so in touch with the infinite, he's very present, he's radiant. Every word he said was like an arrow in their hearts.

And so the whole nation, he didn't raise a dead person, he raised a dead nation. I believe God's going to do this, he's going to find some men. Men that are not looking for a place in the sun, don't want to be famous preachers of great, or a halo around their name.

Just hide away, dear Lord, there's hardly a place more unattractive than the wilderness. No fresh water, no fresh food, nobody to talk to, except one or two cronies like yourself, and that they hang on. God's word has been given to us, Messiah is coming, I'm going to prepare the way before him.

And against every contradiction, that precious man believed God, and God honoured him. I thank God for the hidden saints, every day of my life. People hidden away in America that don't want publicity, don't want to get on the platform, they've got a commission.

It's their job to travel, that Christ may be formed. Somebody else's job to deliver the baby. Did you hear about Spencer, did they have a good time? I asked Sonny yesterday, he hadn't got home yesterday.

I don't, anyhow, Jacob's going to preach this weekend at Rose Heights, what's the hall Sunday? Coldwell Hall, Sunday morning, Sunday night, then Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, he's preaching in the big church. Let's pray for these dear folk at Zimbabwe, they have great need, they need a tremendous

awakening. How is America going to face up to 600 million Bibles that we don't read? Hundreds of churches that have no prayer meetings.

All that matters, we have a nice fellowship, we teach the kids to play volleyball. That stupid, sinful woman, what's her name now, Shirley McLean, is opening a sanctuary for quietude, where every morning from two, from ten in the morning till twelve, it's solid meditation. From two to four, solid meditation.

Six to eight, the youngsters are flocking, they're sick to death of hearing jungle music. Talked with a man today, and he said, boy we had a group in our church, boy they made a noise, they beat the ears off us. We were disgusted, we walked out.

And yet the world is telling people to be still, and God tells us to be still, and that, that's not us. We're always active, we have so much energy, we have so many plans. God will have to wreck some of those things, and take us alone.

He doesn't make John the Baptist by the dozen, he doesn't make prophets by the dozen, he makes individual men. And that same God is our God. So, we're going to have a time of prayer now.

I hope you can stay, and if you have to go, slip in.

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