

Go Hide Thyself - Elijah, God's Man

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon calls for a spiritual awakening within the church through targeted prayer and a renewed vision of God.

Duration: 1:19:24

Scripture: Psalm 84:10, Psalm 119:105, John 4:14, 1 Corinthians 15:57, Philippians 2:9-11, Hebrews 10:12, Hebrews 11:6, 1 Peter 1:4-5, 2 Peter 1:21, Revelation 3:18

Topics: "Elijah"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of seeking eternal things rather than being consumed by the temporal. He expresses gratitude for the holy men of God who were inspired by the Holy Ghost to write the Bible. The preacher highlights the need for spiritual nourishment, stating that it cannot be bought but must come from God. He encourages the congregation to have faith and believe that it is possible to enter heaven and bring heaven into their own lives. The sermon also references hymns and quotes from Isaac Watts and Wesley, emphasizing the power and significance of God's word and the victory of Jesus over sin and the devil.

Transcript

nor descend into the abyss to bring thee up. We're very grateful we have not to build an altar of stone, that we have not to chase an unwilling animal and drag it to sacrifice, that we haven't to seek a priest, a mediator. We bless you for that one offering he made once, ending all the other sacrifices, showing how invaluable all the blood of bulls and goats was.

We thank you that he came, the perfect offering, the spotless Lamb of God. Lifted up was he to die. It is finished was his cry.

Now in heaven, exalted high, hallelujah, what a Savior. We rejoice, our Father, that the head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now. And a royal diadem adorns the mighty victor's brow.

Lord, we do not have to ask you to conquer the devil, you've already conquered him. We ask you to lead us by your Spirit to explore the possibilities of grace. Show us what treasures there are that we have not yet mined.

Show us how miserably satisfied we are with our attainments. Show us how dwarfed we are in spirituality compared with the giants we could be if we'd really followed on to know the Lord. While we know, Lord,

that there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, yet we do know also that there's much land to be possessed.

We want to buy them. Follow the way and buy those things you've told us to buy. Buy of you gold tried in the fire, and buy of you white raiment.

We thank you for the privilege of meeting in your name. We will say with the hymn writer, Beyond the sacred page we seek thee, Lord. Our spirits pant for thee.

There's no store in town or anywhere else that has food that we can buy to feed our spiritual life. It must come from thee. I think of Wesley's hymn when he said, Freely let me take of thee.

Spring thou up within my heart and rise to all eternity. We believe, Lord, it's possible by a little faith to enter into heaven. It's possible with a little more faith to bring heaven down into our own lives.

And to know what Isaac Watts said when he wrote, The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred streets before we reach the heavenly fields or what the golden streets. We pray that your word may be a lamp to our feet afresh tonight. May we live this room not spiritually wiser than when we came in, spiritually stronger, spiritually richer.

After all, everything else we see with our eyes is corruptible. We seek the things that are incorruptible. Everything around us is temporal and we seek the things that are eternal.

We thank you for this word. We thank you for the holy men of God. You told us holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

They were not dreaming dreams. They were taking dictation from heaven. The Holy Ghost steadied their hands, inspired their minds.

We thank you for those who gave us this book. We've thought about the men in it. Sandinistas and bullets are whizzed by his ears.

He's a precious man. And he came in my office and with tears he said, Mr. Rainer, I've been away. And he said, well, I've been away.

He said, I went to the Sandinistas. I went where the Nicaraguans were. There were no TVs.

There were no telephones. There were no radios. Guess what they were talking about? Well, one of two things, either sports or politics.

No, they were talking about the sin of preachers in America. But he said, look. He said, this last year in 1988, number one, we had a national day of prayer.

Number two, we had Washington for Jesus. Number three, I understand the Rock Church in Dallas says they have at least 100,000 people that pray 15 minutes a day for America. So you have a national day of prayer.

You have Washington for Jesus. They prayed from midnight till 3 o'clock. You have 100,000 people in America praying 15 minutes a day.

What did it do? Nothing. We've had a drought. The greatest drought in a hundred years.

Why? Oh, there's a hole in the sky. Forget it. God says that when he's angry with the people, he says, I'll send, I'll lock up heaven.

And you know what? The drought this coming year may be even greater because there's no snowfall. Where the snow usually melts and fills up, there's no snowfall there. So despite our so-called praying, we have the greatest drought in a hundred years.

We have the greatest fires on the West Coast in a hundred years. We have AIDS devastating us. We have a little fellow there in Panama thumbing his nose at us.

He doesn't care if it's 50 million airplanes. He doesn't care if it's 10,000 atom bombs. He's getting his millions of dollars, drugs, and pushing them in this country.

And he sits and laughs at us. Prayer didn't move him. I think every day, I hope you Americans do.

I think about 10 young men locked up in Lebanon in rotten, dark cells. And they talk about it in the United Nations. And they talk about and have their fun up in Washington.

Do they care if those men, the men can go to hell for all they care. I'm not only embarrassed at the politicians, I'm embarrassed at the church. I want to suggest to you people in this church, start some target praying.

Say, this month we're going to pray about prostitution in this town. Next month we're going to pray about drugs. And believe God will give us some of the leaders.

Why in God's name don't we go to some big things. We're always praying for money for a new rug or something. I'd like to see some people that are full of the Holy Ghost.

I don't know if there's a dozen in America. Get together and say, like Rachel said when she discovered the barrenness, which David emphasized this morning. She says, give me children or I die.

Listen, the most expensive thing in America today, and you know spends the most money, the mafia. And I'll make a guess, there isn't one evangelical in the mafia. Think about the rest.

Sure we've had our sins and our failures. Why don't we pray? Oh I go to conferences, a lot of talk, doctor this, doctor so and so, this fellow founded so many churches, so. Do you know the hardest mission field in the world today is America? We've less real genuine new births than anybody else.

We have people coming forward. Dear Lord I looked at a TV about two years ago and they said this has been a wonderful conference. 2,000 people have been filled with the Holy Ghost in two days.

Forget it. Were there 2,000 in the upper room? I read and read and read. That book, Seven Pentecostal Pioneers.

I read the latest version of Azusa Street. On the first page, Bartleman who wrote the book says, there are 70 million Pentecostals in the world. I had a Pentecostal theologian in my office and I said would you answer a question, just one.

He said I'll try. I said here's Bartleman's book. And Bartleman says there are 70,000 classical Pentecostals.

I almost touched him with my finger. I said brother you're a theologian, tell me this. I have a stack of his books on my shelf.

I said tell me this. There are 70,000 people in the world, classical Pentecostals filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues. He said no there aren't.

I said well I'm sorry, it says so here. No, no, no, no. That book isn't updated.

Mr. Raynall at this moment he said, this is six months ago in my office, this brilliant theologian, a solid 100 cent Pentecostal. He said there are not 70 million Pentecostals in the world Mr. Raynall. There are 120 million.

I said God in heaven. Are you serious? Yes, there are 120 million people speaking in tongues filled with the Holy Ghost. My anger was stirred.

I moved to him. I almost hit him in the eye. I said brother tell me this.

Were there 120 million in the upper room? Well of course not. Well then what's the difference between the Pentecostals and ours? The scripture says from everlasting to everlasting now our God. God doesn't get tired.

God doesn't run out of resources. The Holy Ghost is the same. God loves this sinful world as much as ever he did.

The shortage is not on God's side. It's on our side. I wanted to preach on vision to all and I don't have a chance.

But the greatest need that we have today, again in this day, is vision. We need a vision of deity. We need a vision of depravity.

We need a vision of duty. We need a vision of height. I saw the Lord high and lifted up.

We need a vision of depth into the abyss of our old nature. We need a vision of deity. And then upward vision of deity.

And inward vision of depravity. And outward vision of duty. We need a vision of holiness.

You know I'm praying for this with all my heart. I don't know where I'll go to find it. I want to find the people.

I don't care if there's 50. That are so pure in heart. That when you worship on the Lord's day.

The Lord walks in the midst of us that we were visible. And you walk out of that room and you can't say a word. You're so awed with the majesty of God.

The holiness of God. We've lost sight of the holiness of God. And because of that we've lost sight of the lostness of men.

This man says I'll go out at other times. You see if he'd been 15 feet high and God shrunk him to 6 feet. Or 10 feet or 8 feet.

He'd say what's happened to me. But when he lost his hair. He was the same man.

His muscle was the same. His eyes were as good as ever. Until again they came and they bound him.

And then they put out his eyes. You see there are three pictures here. There's the story of Samson himself.

His miraculous birth. He was born of a woman who was barren. Like so many of the great heroes of faith.

And the church of Jesus Christ is more barren tonight in America. Than she's been for 100 years. So he says I'll go out at other times.

And he wished not that the spirit of God had departed from him. I know nothing more tragic than that. I was reminded today of World War I. And we were on a vacation on the east coast of England.

And my daddy took me to see the wreck of a big sailing ship. One of those things with four massive masts. And there were tons and tons of wood on the rocks.

This ship had crashed in the night. And there it was. And people sighed too.

I think it's terrible when a man has had sight for years. And he loses his sight. I think it's terrible when somebody for some reason or other loses their sanity.

The most awesome thing in the world. Is a man who has had the anointing of the Holy Ghost. And he loses it.

And he tries to carry on in the flesh. He goes through a gesticulation. Says all the things.

Turns the watch on and weeps. And yet the anointing isn't there. I was in Australia a few years ago.

And looking up there brother. I always forget names now brother. Noel, Noel.

Good old Noel. I was in an audience not as large as this. And the pastor nudged me.

He says, you see that man up there. You know. All these intelligent men have big bald heads.

Like Noel and Socrates. And this man over in Australia. And he said, listen to me, listen to me.

You see that man there with a bald head. I said yes. And the more I preached the man's head went down and down and down.

He said you know 20 years ago that man could go to any city in Australia. And get crowds of 20 and 30 thousand people. And then after trivia.

He lost his anointing. And you can't give him any consolation. You can say to him you're the greatest preacher in Australia that ever had.

It doesn't make any difference. And that anointing does not come back. There are some of you preachers here tonight.

You remember a time when you had more anointing than you have now. You had more compassion. You had more tears.

You had more authority. You had more love. You were married to the will of God.

And something spoiled you. Maybe business. Unless there's a new anointing in the pulpit we're sunk.

Samson surely is a supreme example again. That it's not by might. It's not by power.

But as a good book says it's by my spirit. Says the Lord of hosts. Can you imagine the rejoicing in the camp of the Philistines when they spread the news.

They said you know what. You know that fellow that's always made a joke of us. The man that one day took the jawbone of an ass and slew some of the best men that we had.

Made everybody laugh at us. They don't. They're not a very warlike people.

They're not a very rich people. They're nomads. And yet they've one man and he's a terror.

You see I've said to preachers all over. I don't care a hill of beans where you're known. I don't care if you were the top three preachers in the Baptist denomination.

Or the top three in the Nazarene denomination. Or the top three in the Assemblies of God. Doesn't matter hill of beans.

Tell me this. Are you known in hell. I've only one ambition of my old age.

Getting into my 83rd year. My one ambition. I'd like the devil to put a notice up 10 feet high in hell.

Beware of Ravenhill's moving. Beware of Ravenhill. Some women in our town were talking.

And one woman said to the other. I go and hear Ravenhill. I won't go and hear Ravenhill.

Well she said we've invited him to our church. She said you have. Well let me warn you.

Let him go in your pulpit but don't let him pray. Boy that was a lovely thing to say. Boy I want to know how to tie the devil up.

I'm sick of the devil embarrassing the church. It's time we embarrass the devil. It doesn't say the people that do know their God should be best at drawing a crowd.

It says the people that do know their God should be strong and to exploit. Samson says if you tie me up I shall be weak. Samson says if you take my hair I shall be weak.

But God is a merciful God. Can you imagine the people saying you know the latest exploits of Samson. You know that lion down the road that tore two people up and ate up two or three children.

Samson went down the other day and took it by the jaw and ripped it apart. The devil doesn't get a hell of beans about this. You can have all your organizations.

You can have your little tea parties for profits. What does he care? I'm suspicious of this profit business. I was going to preach on it tomorrow night.

I won't get the chance now. I think the pastor got nervous. Oh it's nice to say you come out.

I know your name and I know you and I know you'll listen. Why can't we put up a barrier that the devil can't get through. Don't tell me greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

I won't listen to you falling. You faint in the way. He's not greater in your prayer life.

He's not greater vision to you. He's not greater compassion to you. Everybody laughs and makes fun of this.

The Philistines took him and put out his eyes. Samson begins in the miraculous. His life dips.

It finishes in the miraculous. With greater miracles than we had at the beginning. The stories about Samson.

The stories about Israel. Israel began. She was born in the miraculous.

Dear God what a time. Every morning he got up. Serial came down from heaven.

They called it manna. Their shoes were 40 years old and they didn't wear through. They didn't send their clothes to the dry cleaners.

Sweat didn't have any trouble with them. And they had all this miraculous stuff and yet they forgot their God. God has to keep saying to them remember, remember, remember.

Particularly remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Remember my mercy. Remember when I intervened on your behalf.

And we forget. The hymn writes at Calvary. I think it was said when all my mercies.

Oh my God my rising soul surveys. Transported with a view I'm lost in wonder, love and praise. But we forgot now to worship.

We forgot now to render the glory that's due to his name. The Philistines took hold. Let me say this quickly as I think.

I said last night. I'm dreadfully sorry. I'm embarrassed to death.

When people tell me last night on TV or somewhere. The comedians were making jokes about P.T.F. and about shrugging. About them running off with women.

All this muck. What the world says about the church. We deserve it.

But listen when the Holy One. The Lord Jesus Christ who died to redeem us. When he said in the last days.

These troublesome days. These terrible days. Before he comes.

The church will be the Laodicean church laid back. And he says. It's not a critic.

It's not a liberal. It's not an atheist. It's not an agnostic.

It's not a Mohammedan. It's not a J.W. or somewhere. It's Christ himself as his church is poor.

Wretched. Naked. Blind and miserable.

We're blind. And preach if you're blind to a lost world. Your congregation will be lost.

Blind to a lost world. I had the privilege of praying a number of times. With one of the great giants of modern life.

Who had revival in 1949 and 50 in Scotland. Dr. Duncan Campbell. And I said to him one day.

Well listen. Tell me one thing. I know you had revival.

It was the first day of World War II. And I had the privilege of having some tea and cakes with him. In a little church in Glasgow Scotland.

And afterwards I had the privilege of praying with him. In the morning between five and six. I said to him one day.

Listen. You had revival. Fifteen years.

You told me. Before the first day of World War II. You had revival.

OK. Whole communities were moved. Yes.

And then you lost the anointing. Yes. What happened? He said I came home one night.

And my beautiful daughter was about 18. A student at the university. As you would say an A student.

A clever girl. And he said. She just looked across the table and said.

Daddy. Please. Could I ask you one question? He had his clerical collar on.

And his three quarter coat. That the Presbyterian preachers wear. He said.

Darling. What is it? She said. Daddy.

There was a teenage girl. Looking a brilliant daddy in the eye. And she said.

Daddy. You don't have the anointing you used to have. Why are you so different? He said.

I said. Good night. I went into a room.

Took off my coat. Took off my clothes. Collar.

Threw them down. And got down to pray at midnight. I heard the clock strike one and two and three and four and five.

About six o'clock. I heard some footsteps. Coming across the room.

And I knew it was my daughter. And he said. She didn't know a thing that was going on.

But at that moment. She put her hand on my head. And just prayed.

Oh God. I don't know what's wrong with my daddy. But something's wrong.

Lord. Will you touch him. Please.

Please don't let him go mad. There's no sign of insanity. She waited a few minutes again.

How many times do you pat a prostitute who don't think she's going to live forever in the presence of God or in hell? Of course you know the youngsters are going crazy about drugs. How often do you shut the door and say, now we're going to have a prayer meeting for the youth. This church is going to spend a month praying for teenagers.

That's our goal for this month. Drunkards is our goal for next month. Prostitutes for next month.

And get some targets. And believe God. And make hell get terrified.

Again, when Napoleon says, there is China, let it alone. And the devil says, there's a church, let it sleep. After all you're not dead, your eyes are just closed.

But you might as well be blind. But they took Samson, he couldn't see anything. And then they put him down in the basement.

Boy the humiliation. He can't see anyone. He can't reach out to help anybody.

If any more lions to destroy, he can't see them. There he is down in the basement grinding corn for the Philistines. And he's pushing there, going round and round and round, day by day.

Do you know why? Because one day the humorist, the joke, he not only destroyed a lion, he not only destroyed 200 people, but one day he set fire to the corn. And he destroyed the crops of the Philistines. And so they in turn said, we'll make him grind corn for us.

He stole it, now we'll make him grind and make bread for us. And he's going round. Can you imagine it? A man with a thing like this, pushing it day by day, day by day, year after year.

The man who once took a lion and ripped it apart. The man who once left the gates of a city. The man who once took the jawbone of an ass and threw a thousand of his enemies.

And here he is now a serf. He's in bondage to that machine. Okay, see him going round and round.

Suddenly he hears some footsteps. He has acute hearing. And he says, who art thou? And this boy said, I'm a boy.

I'm just a boy. I'm just a Philistine boy. What are you here for? Well, you know the National Auditorium is packed with people, and I have to take you up there.

And he takes him by the hand and brings him up the steps and all the crowd roars. Is this him? This crippled, blind, bound man? Is this the man that terrified our fathers? Is this the man that delivered us from our enemies? Is this the man that delivered us from the lions? Can this be the same man? And it says they mocked him. But there's one thing they didn't notice.

And this, I think, is one of the most merciful things in the Word of God. You see, when his enemies took him and cut off his hair, then the next thing says his hair began to grow again. Can you imagine him putting his hand up and saying, well praise God.

God favoured me again. My hair is coming. I'll never make that mistake again.

I'm going to be a faithful Nazarite. And his hair grew again. And he began to rejoice in the Lord.

It came to pass that when the hearts of the people were married, they sent for Samson and made sport of him. They took him out of the prison house and they set him between the pillars. Now they should have had more sense than to do that.

They put him before the pillars once before. All he did was breathe and push the whole thing out. And they thought, well, now he's lost his power.

We'll put him here. So what did he do? He said in verse 26, Samson said unto the people, the man that led him by the hand, suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereon the house of standard, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women and all the Lords of the Philistines were there.

Do you see? Here's a gathering of all the celebrities. This is a national event. They're going to ridicule and mock and scorn the God of Israel.

And this man still has a heart for his nation. The priest can't do anything. Nobody else can do anything.

And here's a man who's been afflicted. He's blind. What does he pray for? It says there are 3,000 men in the gallery.

I guarantee there were 10,000 people there all laughing at this man. The poor, blind, helpless, idiot of a fellow. And God has left him.

The people have left him. What does he pray for? Does he fall down and say, oh God have mercy, give me my eyesight back again? No. Does he say, Lord give me power of the Philistines, give me freedom again? No he doesn't.

He prays an awesome prayer. We very seldom classify Samson as a man of prayer. But here it says that he prayed.

Verse 28, Samson called on the Lord and said, oh Lord God remember me. I pray thee and strengthen me. Notice he doesn't say give me six more years to live and I'll recover my backsliding.

I'll make up for my lack of prayer. I'll make up my lack of devotion. I'll make up for my lack of giving.

He doesn't say that. He doesn't say give me a year. He's so embarrassed that the enemies of God are having fun, that the God of Israel is rejected and scorned, that he cries this prayer, Lord strengthen me just once.

And he says then as he finishes that prayer in verse 30, okay, verse 28. Strengthen me I pray thee just once, that I may be avenged of the Philistines from my two eyes. For Samson took hold of the two pillars on which the house was.

And he pushed one with his right hand and the other with his left. And Samson prayed, well let me be strengthened just once. He meant that.

Why did he mean it? Because he said, listen let me die in victory. Strengthen me just once even if I die. I can't die miserable like this, defeated.

I can't die in the camp of the enemy, blind, bound, useless. They'll build a memorial to the greatest failure among the judges that the Chimney's ever had. I can't do that.

Dear God please come just once. I've failed you so often. Give me one chance.

Listen there are 50 men here tonight I believe. And years ago you had an anointing in prayer. You love to pray.

You love to seek the lost. You love to weep for the dying. And your anointing's gone.

Dear God what good are you? You're no good as a preacher. You're no good as a deacon. Come on.

It's time for us to get so desperately angry about the devil destroying our youth. That we've more millions of people ever in America as slaves than ever we had when slavery was legal. We've slaves to drink.

We've slaves to lust. We've slaves, slaves to money. We've millions of slaves.

And the only thing that will happen to deliver us is that we come in humility. I know you've made vows at conferences. Made vows here and vows here and vows there.

But as David spoke this morning and he spoke about the lost blessing, the lost anointing, the lost vision. Well God had said that to me early this morning. I've never put that emphasis on this message before.

That there are those in the congregation who have lost their anointing, lost their compassion, lost their tears, lost their love for Christ. Are you jealous for the Lord God of hosts? Are you more jealous for your local football team? Do you watch them every Sunday afternoon or do you agonize in prayer for a lost generation? Samson says give me this. Let me die with the Philistines.

And he fell upon the Lord and upon all the people that were there. So the dead he slew in his death were more than those that he slew in his life. That's why I believe he's a type not only of Israel that's going to return in glory.

He's a type himself of the believer that lost his power. I believe the church of Christ is going to end in a blaze of revival. A Pentecost, a loud Pentecost.

Pentecost. It won't have a name on it. It won't be a denominational revival.

It will be a revival of everybody who's ever breathed the holy name in prayer. Samson doesn't offer a tribute. He doesn't say Lord you see let me go out.

I'll do this. I'll do that. He's done that before.

He says Lord take away my reproach. He didn't say take away my blindness. Show me your glory.

Don't prove my strength. Prove your strength. Prove you're the great deliverer.

You know this has happened over and over. I won't take any more time. This has happened over and over and over in history.

God has found men who got to the end of their resources. God has used some men who were total failures. I guarantee there's a dozen, there's 20 preachers here at one time.

You used to pray that the lost were saved. You rejoiced in prayer. You knew victory in your life.

And tonight you have to say with Samson Lord God that anointing has gone. People mock, scorn, ridicule me. Lord give me one more chance.

Dare you do that? Let me tell you something. All hell is looking on this meeting. And Satan wants to keep you in defeat.

You're no good to yourself. You're a disappointment to yourself. You're a disappointment to your church.

You're a disappointment to God. Have you the courage to say God almighty I don't care what it is? He didn't say pull the house down. He said strengthen me just once.

Let me feel that holy anointing. Let me feel that divine compassion. Lord let the enemies of God know.

Strengthen me just once. Even if I die. And God answered both his prayers.

He died on the crest of revival. He killed more in his dying than in his living. Right now the whole world is watching on.

Because the only revival in the world at this moment, religious revival, is a revival of Mohammedanism. They say it's the most rapidly growing religion even in England. The land that gave us the Bible.

The land that birthed the Salvation Army revival. The land that birthed the Western Revival. And a glorious God.

The whole key is this. I'm through with this. The key is our hunger after God.

Are you dissatisfied that your denomination, your church, nobody bothers about it. People go past it every day to hell. Your preacher doesn't get broken.

So why should you be broken? I've been asking God, and I'm a stranger here in one sense, I've been asking God this last two, three days, to make a womb here in Kansas where something will be born that will not just bless the community but go to the very ends of the earth. This morning as I prayed I saw like a wheel and the roads coming down from every direction. And I saw people converging, coming here into this city for what? To fill this place? No.

To see the magic power of God. I believe we're going to see something so great no man will dare put his name on it. People say this is God.

How do you explain it? And he comes to the theologians and says we can't explain it. God has just caused this place to shine upon us. As the 80th psalm says, cause thy face to shine upon us and we shall be saved.

Israel knew when God turned his face away they were in darkness. God was angry and they cried over and over and over in that 80th psalm, cause thy face to shine upon us and we shall be saved. We don't need help from Russia.

We don't need to be friendly with other nations. What we need is a favor of God. What I need is a touch of God.

What I want is that love that burns in my heart. The love shed abroad by the Holy Ghost. That I don't care whether I go back and live in Texas or I come to live in Kansas.

Does it matter? I'm not going to die, I'll tell you that. I refuse to die until God rends the heavens. Let me stop there.

After all this, if Isaiah hadn't had a vision of a holy God and a vision of his nation, he'd never have cried, oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens. David said something of the nature this morning. We are trying to rend the heavens.

We're trying to do this. Oh here's a new prophet. Here's a man with a bit more vision.

Here's a man with a bit more wisdom. Forget it. Every problem that we have will be answered when the Holy Ghost comes.

When he came on Azusa Street, who were they? One of the leading men was a Nazarene. What was a black man? As black as my precious brother there. And what did he do? He used to come and sit on the back of the platform and he buried his head in a shoebox.

He didn't come in a smart suit and a nice fancy watch and something. But when that man came in, do you know what they said? It says in that record in Azusa Street that when the Holy Ghost was in that building, people three blocks away got on the conviction of sin before they could see the building. The very presence of God was moving.

The same thing happened in the in the Shangcheng Revival in China. The people up the street, the Holy Ghost in waves was there. Listen, it's hour, it's later than we think tonight.

It's a terribly late hour. Either God comes in tremendous mercy to America in a way we've never known or he'll come in judgment that we've never known before. Listen, you better pray for those children and build them up in the most holy faith.

Because the tribulation coming, we've had more favor, we've had more preaching. Don't tell me the churches are filled, the divorce courts are filled, the churches are filled one hour on Sunday morning, the jails are filled 24 hours every day of the year. People say you get excited.

Excited? What in God's name is to get excited about outside of the will of God. So you think more about the stars and stripes than you think about the cross. The British think more about the Union Jack than they feel about the cross.

But it comes all down to this. Don't keep a record of all you've done. Tonight where are you? Are you spiritually bankrupt? Are you spiritually blind like Samson? Are you bound with fear? Are you bound with a theology that doesn't work? As demons look from that angle, as angels look from this angle, as God looks from his throne tonight, I challenge you, particularly men.

I'm not going to ask the women at this point. You say, Brother Amiel, my spiritual life is stagnant. I'm prepared to lay it on the line physically.

I'm prepared to become an intercessor. I'm prepared to know tears I've never known. I'm prepared to know strength I've never known.

I just want to pray once. Dear God, I'll pray the prayer of Samson. Lord, strengthen me just once.

What should be setting sin? Is it lust? Is it laziness? Is it blindness? What is it? Come on, you fellows. Say, I can't live like this. I'm prepared to come and lay myself at the altar and say, Lord, strengthen me just once.

Give me one more chance. I'm not going to sing to try and move you emotionally. Get up right now and come and admit your bankruptcy.

Lord, strengthen me just once. May take courage while people watch. Everybody will watch you at the judgment.

Millions of eyes will watch you at the judgment. And you'll wish to God you'll come tonight. See, there's no emotion around.

I'm not asking you to intellectually make a decision. I'm going to be God's man. I'm going to die.

I'm going to die to my sports programs. I'm going to die to my own ambitions. I'm going to die even to my ministry.

I want to be alive in Christ tonight. I want the Holy Ghost to possess me as I've never known his divine possession. Let's pray.

Joanne, come on up. I want you to sing a song in a minute, but let's pray. We're going to wait on the Lord a few minutes first.

Father, I ask that you would raise up intercessors right now in the house of God. Lord, I ask that you would mark men right now as intercessors. Lord, I ask that you would mark women across this crowd as intercessors.

I ask that you would come by the hand of God and that you would reveal the intention of the heart right now. I ask that you would expose ambition in the business and ministry and all the things that keep us out of the out of the presence of the Lord. God, I ask you right now to reveal by the hand of God.

Lord, your intention, your destiny to these men. Lord, cause the destiny of the Lord that the Lord Jesus has for each of them to loom before their eyes right now by the power of revelation. Lord, come as they give themselves to you and touch them.

God, we ask you that prophets would be born right now even in this hour. Lord, I ask that there's men that are kneeling that you've marked unto holy things that you would mark this day in heaven as a day of bringing them forth in that holy destiny. And Lord, I ask that the Spirit of God would come and break the hearts of everyone in this auditorium, Lord.

Men and women like those kneeling, those sitting. Come and break the hearts of your people. Lord, that you would give them a new passion, a new vision for yourself, for the glory of the church, for the glory of your of your son, Christ Jesus.

God, I ask that you would come and give your people an undivided heart. Lord, release a vision for an undivided heart, I ask you. I ask that you would open up hell as you did for Duncan Campbell.

Lord, that you would make real to the people the reality of the judgment seat. Lord, come in the name of Jesus. Lord, come and visit.

Joanne's going to sing this song, Make It Your Prayer. This is an anointed song, a prayer before the Lord. Let's turn the piano itself down and turn her voice up.

Yeah, eyes for only you, yeah. Oh Lord, as I dwell in your court forevermore, others call my name and they beg me to come. Oh, but I, I have eyes for only you.

I will always have eyes for only you. I sing this song, but it's said never to be moved. Distractions work me, oh they fight for my desire, but my devotion will only be true.

For I have eyes for only you. I am my beloved, oh and he is mine. Those are the words that echo the angels to say, and through the ages let this story be told.

Forevermore, only you. Yes, we have said forevermore, oh and they beg, we have eyes for only you. Father, we thank you in the name of Jesus that I ask that right now that you begin to speak to these men, these women in this group, you begin to give them a new priority of their schedule, that I ask that you would give clarity about the scheduling of their time.

In the name of Jesus, Lord, I ask specifically for the light of the Spirit to speak about two and three hour portions of time in these lives that you're not pleased with, 30 and 40 minute portions of time in a weekly schedule. I ask that you would begin to give wisdom in a structure of a schedule, Lord, that they would be able to hear you, that they would be able to hear your voice, Lord, that you would talk to them. I ask by the ministry of the Spirit right now, Lord, grant a ministry of the Holy Spirit dealing with wisdom in the area of time, in the area of schedule.

Lord, that you would give them a vision to wait before you in the secret place. God, I ask that you would release faith, Lord, that people could touch you in the word of God. Oh, Lord, I just speak against that spirit of unbelief that says I could never ever hear God when I read the word.

I can't feel the presence of the Lord. I ask that the spirit of unbelief that says you can't speak to your own offspring, I break that now over these minds, that evil, lying spirit of unbelief that says they can't make it with God because God doesn't ever draw near to them. Lord, I ask you for an infusion of faith in their spirit, faith to draw near to you, Lord, that you will in fact draw near back to them in due time.

Oh, Lord, release the faith I ask. Oh, God, give faith that you will draw near, that you will reward those that speak to you in due time. Lord, I ask you to speak to them now.

Oh, come and talk to them right now, Lord, as we wait just a few minutes, come and give wisdom, give understanding, Lord, that you really, really can rearrange their schedule and their priorities. Yes, bless you, Lord. We're going to wait just a couple more minutes.

Joanna, I want you to sing a song about come talk to me. How does it work? Just, just receive the ministry of the spirit. Even in this, we'll end up to this.

Lord, give wisdom in this area. Just be talking to the Lord right now, this next three, four minutes. Be in agreement as the Lord gives you wisdom on how to rearrange your schedules right now.

One of the serious handicaps in traveling from one country to another is the, is the problem of languages. And I have been in some countries where I had to have one interpreter, or I prefer to call them interrupters, and sometimes two interpreters. But it's always comfortable to be in America because while you don't

speak English, at least you understand it.

The pastor said this morning that there are some people who have itching ears. I'm sure this is true because there are so many cults that are prosperous right now. But if it is true, and it is true that there are many people with itching ears, I have no commission from God to scratch them.

The text you'll find tonight in the book of Judges, the 16th chapter, and verse 6. Judges, the 16th chapter, verse 6. And Delilah said to Samson, tell me I pray thee wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. Tell me wherein the secret of thy great strength lieth. That added word is in one of the European versions of the scriptures.

The word added is the word secret. It's not there by inspiration, it's there at least by inference. This is a story we like to tell to children.

It lends itself to a great deal of color and excitement. And I think very often we pass this story on to children, like the story of David and Goliath, because it's too big for us to handle. I've seen this colorful picture of Samson, a type of Israel in its glory.

I see a type of the church. I also see a type of the true Spirit anointed believer. The story begins by a series of dramatic events in the life of Samson.

Well isn't that how the history of Israel began? Didn't she move in supernatural power out of Egypt? Wasn't she surrounded with overnatural power, supernatural power? Didn't the church of Jesus Christ begin like that? Before he retired as the brilliant founder editor of Christianity Today, Dr. Carl F. Henry sent a questionnaire out to 20 intellectual preachers in the country. I did not know there were so many, but he sent out this great question to 20 great preachers and he asked them this. What do you see for the church of Jesus Christ by the year 2000? The answers were very interesting.

I remember two of them outstandingly and I'll quote one. One was from the very famous Quaker philosopher, and I know theology sometimes puzzles me, but Elton Trueblood says some very stabbing things. His answer to the question was this, by the year 2000 the church of Jesus Christ will be a conscious minority surrounded by an arrogant militant paganism.

Well I read that and I went to sleep. I woke up about one o'clock in the morning and I turned it over in my mind and turned it over and over. The church by the year 2000 will be a conscious minority surrounded by an arrogant militant paganism.

I began to back up and ask myself, isn't that where the church of Jesus Christ is tonight? Are we not surrounded tonight by an arrogant militant paganism? And let's back it right up to its inception. The church of Jesus was not given to the world on a silver platter. The church of Jesus Christ was born in a sophisticated totalitarian world.

It was born under a slave system. It was born when it was handicapped in every, every possible way. I've crossed the Atlantic about 20 times.

Usually I like to go by boat. I don't like flying. Personally I think that's for the birds.

But I do like to go by boat and many times when we've crossed it I've discussed with others, thought with others about the the situation that the church of Jesus Christ is in today. And I believe that on the

threshold of 1979 the crisis in America is greater than it was in 1776. You can tell me about the deteriorating dollar, we tried to pump life into it and somehow it refuses to go back into life.

You can tell me about the collapse of Cambodia, Laos, those other countries where 50 million people went down the drain overnight. It didn't cost most of us a tear anyhow. You can tell me about the dismantling of those great countries in Africa.

Now I'll try to provoke your thinking. You know good preaching does one of three things. It makes people glad, sad, or mad.

Mine is usually in the last category. But if you're not grown up don't come, you'll waste my time and yours. I'm going to talk to you in the next two weeks by the grace of God as though you're as serious about living your Christian life as anything that you could have this side of eternity.

You see up to this present moment the white man has had the ball. He's fumbled it. If there's a vote in the United Nations tomorrow out of about 52 nations, how many white nations are there? There are no new white nations being born.

Every new nation is a colored nation. I used to go through the United Nations, I was editing a paper in New York at that time, and I would go down the corridors of the United Nations and everybody I met was a very distinguished looking colored man, very often with a beautiful robe and a gold chain around his neck and some fancy thing on his head. And he would salute and speak in good English because of course most of them are educated in America or Oxford or Cambridge.

They've got the ball at their feet. The third world is growing, our world is shrinking. And you can tell me about all the tragedies and there are very many of them right now.

Isn't it strange, isn't it almost indefinable that the nations that won the war are losing the war right now? The two nations that suffered most during World War II, Germany and Japan, have a stronger economy than we have who won the war. Milton Friedman is the greatest living economist I think, he's in Chicago University, and he says, I cannot understand why every nation in the world is rushing to superinflation in 1979. And as a wizard in economics he says, I don't understand it, somebody's sitting on the money bag.

I could give you some names but I won't. Oh well somebody rubs his eyes and says, listen I'm an old man and you know I've seen America get out of situations like this and other nations. Well there's one different thing the Word of God says about this hour that we're entering into.

I'm sure there's been distress of nations. You see, I think we've forgotten if ever we thought about it, that World War I ended at 11 o'clock in the morning on the 11th day of the 11th month, 11 months from the signing of the armistice with Turkey, and 11 months from the time that Allenby entered into Jerusalem. Now there's a series of 5-11s.

Do you think God was knocking on the door of humanity and saying we're entering the midnight hour even in 1930, 1919? I say tell me about the nations. But you see there's one little clause that rather stirs me when I think of our present dilemma, financially, economically, morally. We're lower in the nation morally or immorally now than any period in history.

I believe spiritually we're lower. And when you tell me about the disaster in the economic world, when you tell me about the secret moving of political powers, after all we brought 50 prime young communists into

this country this week. 50 brilliant Chinese scholars, a hundred percent dedicated to communism or they would not be allowed to leave the country.

Do you think they're here only to learn? Don't you think it's a sad chapter that we're really opening new relationships with the most godless society in the world today, China and also with Russia? Do you know the word of God says, it says about the day in which we live, it will be depressive nations, but it adds another little phrase, it says with perplexity. And nobody knows the way out. I want to tell you the answer to our problem in America is not in the White House.

It's in God's house, if we put that house right. And I'm here for nothing less than to share my thinking and prayers with you in the next two weeks, that God will do something that will not only change our individual lives or even the life of this church or community, but somehow that that much-needed overdue revival which is the only way of saving America or our generation may be born in this next two or three weeks. After all with all the disasters that are around.

The greatest disaster in the world at this moment to me is a sick church in a dying world. Is recovery possible? Sure it is. Sure it is.

And the way for the church to recover is to get that supernatural touch of the Spirit of God. I guess if we read it properly, the Word of God is the most exciting book that's ever been written. It's God's last word to man.

And here again we have a wherever he goes he does something no one else can do. Now again he's not a philosopher, there's no like well you have the the the prophecy of Jeremiah, the prophecy of Isaiah and so forth. There are no great prophecies by this wonderful man Samson.

He's a type of the people that do know their God. Now that's what the Word of God says. Not the people that know their Bible.

There's all the difference in the world between knowing the Word of God and knowing the God of the Word. And the scripture says the people that do know their God shall be strong into exploit. Now here is a man who is dazzling and starting everybody by his great achievement.

And so his enemies design on him and they want to find his secret. What's a better way than getting a woman on the job? And so they say to this woman now you'll find out the secret. And she comes up to this man and she says hey I want to ask you a question.

What's the secret of your great strength? What what what what vulnerable spot do you have? How can we bind you and bring you to impotence? Samson said unto her in verse 7 if they bind me with seven green wisps that were never dried then shall I be weak. Oh I wish he'd left that out. I wish he'd just said if you bind me with seven green wisps I'd be like other men.

But he says if you bind me with seven you see this was his secret. He knew he was supernatural. She knew he was supernatural.

His enemies knew he was supernatural. But where's the supernatural in the church of God today? What is the acts of the apostles? The acts of the apostles is the church of Jesus Christ doing everything Jesus did when he was on earth. Apart from walking on the water.

Isn't that exactly what the disciples did? Well Samson said if you bind me with seven green wisps that were never used then shall I be weak like other men. And they tried it and it didn't work. And then it says in verse 9 if you pardon me verse 11 if they bind me fast with new ropes that were never used then shall I be weak like other men.

He emphasizes it again. And then in verse 17 he says the same thing. If I be shaven and my strength go from me I shall become weak.

The great curse in the church of God today is mediocrity. The trouble with our bible students and seminars is we turn men out like they turn automobiles off an assembly line. They're all the same quality.

They all think the same things. They all read the same notes. They all listen to the same old dried up teachers.

Now don't mention that in Dallas because I have to go in a few weeks. But it's there. You know the church today is so subnormal that if ever we become normal we'll think we're abnormal.

What's the secret of that great trend? Oh I suppose it's a blessing for most of us that we settle for mediocrity. After all how many men really want to sit on the circle of the earth? How many men have tried to conquer the world? Centuries ago a young man did it we're told at 27 years of age. Alexander the Great sat down and wept bitter tears because he conquered the world and there were no other worlds to conquer.

He didn't know anything about getting on the moon of course. So a young man at 27 has dominated the world militarily. In the day of many of us there is a man by the name of Hitler.

He had a little Charlie Chaplin moustache and one stripe on his arm. And every move he made was successful except the last one. Because you see he didn't sleep at night like we do.

He stayed up till three, four, five in the morning. He studied astrology. He had a spiritist medium interpreting every move for him.

And he made every move right except the last one. He came within an ace of conquering the world. And between Alexander the Great and Hitler you had a man, a little corpulent Corsican by the name of Napoleon.

Men still study his military strategy. Maybe he was the greatest military strategist in history. And when he was riding the crest of the wave and it seemed as though he was just within reaching for world domination, he gathered together his warlords.

On the wall of his office he had a great map of the world. He snapped these men to attention and said, look at this. And he took his index finger and he ran it round the ragged edge of a great country.

And as they were a bit shifty he commanded them again. He said, look at this. And he plunged his finger in the centre of the country he had outlined.

And he said, there lies a sleeping giant. Let it sleep. He said, if that country ever wakes up with its millions of people and all its hidden mineral power and strength, if they ever combine those forces, if that giant wakes and begins to flex its muscles, let the world look out.

Because, he said, that nation will dominate the world. He said that in 1835, before he went to the Battle of Waterloo. There lies a sleeping giant.

Let it sleep. If it should wake up and harness its manpower to its other secret powers, it will shake the world. Do you know which country it was that he outlined in 1835? China.

China tonight has a million men guarding its border into Russia. China says she can lose ten million men and not miss. Ten million fighting men.

We have just graciously given it the formula for making atomic weapons and what have we got. There lies a sleeping giant. Let it sleep.

If it wakes up and harnesses its manpower to its mineral powers and other powers, it will shake the world. Dear Francis Schaefer, one of the great thinking men in the Church of God today, says this in his book, *Death in the City*. I would remind you that eight centuries ago, 800 years, every decent sized town and city in China had a thriving New Testament Church.

Now think of it for a second. What was going on in America 800 years ago? 800 years ago in China, they were not only making the most wonderful porcelain and treasuring things from the Ming dynasty and all the rest of it. They are thriving New Testament churches.

Where are they today? All right, change the characters. You see, I didn't come here to hear politics. All right, change the characters.

Instead of seeing Napoleon running his finger around the ragged edge of a great country, you see the devil standing there. Not with a map of the world, but a map of the ages. And he stands his demons there and says, look, see this, watch this.

And he runs his finger around something and says this, there is the Church of Jesus Christ, a freak. Let it freak. Because if the Church of Jesus Christ ever rediscovers the resurrection power of Jesus, and every believer gets filled with the Holy Ghost, they'll shake the world.

For the Church is sleeping. In the little school I went to in England, I had a teacher, she wasn't very bright. I don't think most teachers are, but my teacher wasn't very bright and she was always suspicious I wasn't bright.

And I found out I was right. You see, she told us a story about the most famous character in all the writing, and you can put Hemingway or anybody else you want in the modern writers. The best known story out of all American literature is the story of Rip Van Winkle.

You can go to any country in the world, Russia, China, anywhere, they know the story of Rip Van Winkle. Do you remember he went to sleep up by the Bible school? He didn't go to the Bible school, but he would have gone to sleep anyhow. But anyhow, he went up by the Hudson River and he fell asleep in a sleepy hollow.

Do you remember he came down the hill, he got into controversy with somebody? And all I remember about the story was that, well, he slept 50 years or 100 years ago, according to who tells the story. But that isn't the point of the story, my teacher missed it entirely. The fact is that when he went up the hill to go to sleep, there was a sign hanging outside of the tavern, there it waved in the breeze, and there was a

picture on the sign, it was a picture of George III, the King of England at that time.

And while old Rip Van Winkle was sleeping, they painted out the face of George III, and they painted in the face of another George, by the name of Washington. And surely the secret of the story is not that he went to sleep for 50 years. The moral of the story is he slept through a revolution.

And I'm not suggesting that, I'm telling you that's what the Church of Jesus Christ is doing today. What's the greatest threat to America tonight? Communism now. Financial bankruptcy, we're nearly there now.

The greatest threat to America, or England, or modern life, is God Himself. You see, there comes a period when God quits dealing with men, and there comes a period when God quits dealing with nations. Do you ever think of the fact that God was once married and he got divorced because his wife played the harlot? Don't we get excited about the week before Easter, and we talk about Palm Century, and Jesus made a triumphant entry into Jerusalem? Did he make a triumphant entry, or did he make a tearful exit? They said, we're getting rid of you.

He said, you fools, I'm getting rid of you. Your house is desolate. For 2,000 years God has not bothered with the bride that he had.

For 2,000 years the Jews have been a football for anybody to kick around. Isn't it amazing that a little country that you could gather in your arms and drop in one of the Great Lakes is the most expensive commodity in America today? We give them billions of dollars. We don't give a dime to Northern Ireland, which is the most Protestant country in the world.

We don't talk about peace there. But we fight like mad, not to save Israel, to save our oil reserves, I think. But anyhow, it's a good cover-up.

But the point is, God was once married to Israel. He divorced Israel. For 2,000 years he hasn't bothered.

She's been brutalized. God sits in heaven and watches Hitler liquidate 6 million Jews, we're told. The point is, he walked out on a nation that was rebellious.

Do you think he didn't walk out on America? Or England? Or do you think maybe he's done it and we don't know? We're still keeping up our emotions. You know what? We've got this story pretty messed up, haven't we? I said that this Samson is a type of a church. She moved in supernatural power in the first century or two.

In the first three centuries of Christianity, a Christian could not own a piece of property. A church could not own its own building. But it thrived, it prospered.

Do you know what the breakdown of the failure of the church is? As soon as the church becomes rich and she can be accepted by society, she loses her anointing and she goes down the drain. The church is most healthy in the world tonight where there's persecution. The proof of that will be how many of you will make it back as many nights as you can during the next two weeks.

Because you may be away the night the fire falls and that will be bad. Now do you really love God enough to put everything on one side and say, God if you're going to work I want to be there that night. Do you love God enough to do that? Do you love your spiritual life enough? Do you love the church enough to do that? Do you love America enough to do that? Here is a man doing what nobody else could do.

His enemies say, what's the thinking of his friends? They lock him up in a city and he takes part of the city away. They send men to arrest him and he picks up the jawbone of an ass. And he slew two thousand men with the jawbone of an ass.

Isn't that something? I heard of a preacher saying, God doesn't use the jawbone of an ass anymore. An old lady said he does in our pulpit every week. But apart from that, the jawbone of an ass.

Do you think we're really serious about having in God we trust in our coins? I read a book recently that said we're the only country within God we trust in our coins. Forget it, England had that on a coin before America was born. It's written in Latin, defender of the faith, a protestant faith too.

I mean if in God we trust, do we need armies? Why are we taxed up to our ears? Well we're taxed up to our ears to pay for crime and war machines. Now do a bit of homework. Look back in the in the first book of Kings I guess.

Do you know one night an angel was going home and he was in a hurry and he forgot the 55 mile an hour limit. And he rushed to a city and he dragged one of his wings through a city and the wing of an angel destroyed 185,000 people. The wing of an angel destroyed 185,000 people.

And Jesus said on the cross, I can call 12 legions of angels. That's 12 times 5,000 or 10,000 or however you fix a legion. Make it 120,000 angels each able to destroy 185,000 people.

And I think Jesus is saying in a nice way, look I can not only get off this cross, I can wipe the population of the world out as quick as that. That's all you want. Here is a man who is proving the power of God.

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