

(Hebrews) 4-Repentance

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the urgent call to repentance and the necessity of true spiritual transformation through Jesus Christ.

Duration: 1:09:24

Scripture: John 7:37

Topics: "Repentance", "Spiritual Awakening"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the urgency of repentance in his sermon on Hebrews 4, focusing on Jesus' declaration during the last day of the feast, where He invites the thirsty to come to Him for living water. He reflects on the historical significance of the feast and the spiritual blindness of the people who, despite witnessing miracles, rejected Jesus. Ravenhill laments the state of the modern church, calling for a return to genuine repentance and a deep relationship with God, warning that time is running out for those who remain unrepentant. He passionately urges believers to seek the Holy Spirit and to live lives that reflect the glory of God, rather than being complacent in their faith. The sermon serves as a call to action for Christians to awaken from spiritual slumber and embrace the transformative power of repentance.

Transcript

I want us to think just really about this, verse 37. In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried. One version says, Jesus stood and cried with a loud voice, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

I shared some thoughts last Sunday morning about this, but it's been stirring my heart ever since. You know, when we teach children about heroes in the Bible, we usually teach them about David and Goliath, or Samson, or Daniel in the lion's den. I think this chapter is incomparable for courage.

It was the last day, the great day of the feast, and this feast was the last feast in the Jewish calendar. There were seven great feasts. According to Leviticus, in three of them, only men were allowed to go.

But in this last feast, this is the last feast in the year, and this is the last day on the last feast, and this is the last feast that Jesus himself will attend. He says that he went up into the temple. Oh, look at verse 5. For neither did his brethren believe on him.

Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hateth me, because I testify of it, and the works thereof are evil. Go ye up to the feast, I go not up to the feast.

Now verse 14, in the midst of the feast, Jesus went up. Now why does it say he's not going to the feast? And then right in the middle of the feast, he goes to the feast. It seems to me that this is a lesson to us in conserving our time.

The three main feasts, I think, in the Jewish calendar were still celebrated, or still are celebrated, in the Christian calendar. Passover, which is a time of our Lord Jesus Christ, dying for us. And then there's the feast of Pentecost that they had, which we still celebrate, remembering the upper room.

But this third feast we do not keep in our Christian calendar. It's not yet come. It's the time of ingathering.

Again, three of the other feasts, only males were allowed to go up. This final feast of the year, people came in from 70 different countries. As a matter of fact, the Jews previous to this killed 70 bullocks, one representing each country where their people were dispersed.

The last day, the great day of the feast. Now this actually followed immediately after the super day in the Jewish calendar, the day of atonement. Remember the priest went and shed blood for the people? And then he took two goats and he, I don't know how he chose, he chose one goat, that he would lay the blood upon that goat and take it to the wilderness, put the sin of the nation on that goat and send it out into the wilderness so that it was lost forever.

A type of God taking our sins and putting them behind his back never to be remembered against us anymore forever. The other blood was taken in a bowl and it was taken, put into the Holy of Holies and put there on the mercy seat. The Salvation Army used to have a great chorus they sang at their altar calls.

They didn't sing Just As I Am without one plea. They sang, Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel. Here bring your wounded heart, here tell your anguish.

Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot hear. Scores of thousands of people were sung into blessing through that marvelous chorus when I was a boy, which was last century by the way I feel tonight. But anyhow, it's a long way back.

Earth has no sorrow heaven cannot... Okay. Now this is the last day, the great day of the feast. It's estimated, I don't know how, that more than a million people crushed into the city for this last final feast.

If you go into the Old Testament you'll discover that they took branches of trees. I remember seeing a lot of these in India when I was there. Lots of people make homes like that out of branches of trees and then plant leaves in between to protect them from the rain or the heat, whatever it was.

And so there's this celebration. Now Jesus went up in the midst of the feast. And verse 15 says, The Jews marveled saying, How knoweth this man letters? Or maybe there's a marker on that letters which in the margin says, How is it this man has wisdom? He's never learned.

He's never been to the school of the rabbis. Where is he from? We know who he is. He's illegitimate anyhow.

He's the son of Joseph, they actually say. We know his father, we know his mother. But he went into the temple and taught.

Now in the first place I want to know how he got in the temple. He must have had his fight his way through the crowd. And the temple was always guarded by temple police.

But he gets through the crowd, he gets into the temple and he goes and stands in the pulpit. That must have been pretty shocking. How can a man who isn't ordained go in the pulpit? Isn't that beyond reason? But people think it is today even.

When saith this man wisdom, never having sat at the feet of men. But if you turn to the eighth chapter, not now but when you go home, he says, I was taught of my father. So there he had the greatest teacher of all.

You know John that wrote this gospel has been called the Plato of the New Testament. Because it's the most profound chapter maybe ever written. Now you may or may not remember, I guess you do, you wise scholars, was it Plato was the student of Socrates, one of the wisest men who ever lived.

And so they said that this man is as wise as Plato. No, you see poor Plato only had Socrates. He may have been the greatest intelligence in the world at the time.

But he didn't have the Holy Ghost to teach him, so he's still ignorant. We put men in pulpit because they've got degrees. But you can have 32 and still be frozen.

But today there's such an emphasis on scholarship, isn't there? Oh we're getting a new pastor, he's got a B.A. But my sheep used to say that every time I looked at them, B.A. So what's a B.A. or an M.A.? I've got a B.A., I'm born again. And I've got my M.A., I'm marvelously altered. I've got my Ph.D. sometime, I'm a post hole digger.

But anyhow, there you are. I would love to know what Jesus taught, wouldn't you, Martin? I'll tell you, it was so sensational that those people, those rabbis and others sat with their mouths open. They marveled at him.

What did he do? Did he unveil the mysteries of Daniel's image? Did he tell them some of the most unheard, well, only unheard of things they'd never heard? But they marveled at this man. Now, it's a wonderful thing that Jesus ever got into this place. Why? Again, I say because he had to push his way through a million people outside.

He had to push his way past the temple guards. And he comes into the temple. Mercy on us, what's he doing here? In the second chapter, he says he went in the temple, he called them a den of thieves.

Well, that's a way to get the welcome mat out, isn't it? Anyhow. You say to a bunch of the most learned men in the world, you're a bunch of thieves. That's what he said.

Not only that, he kicked over the money changers tables. Kind of like the Irishman said, everything that's for me is against me. Don't you think they squinted? That's the man that kicked over our money tables.

Our money went rolling down the street there. This is the man who said we're a bunch of thieves and robbers. We hold truth from men.

We're blind guides leading the blind. Why don't they kill him? Look what the first verse says. After these things, Jesus, after what things? After all these miracles.

You know, if we don't get the background of some of these stories, we miss the majesty of them. You know, between Malachi and Matthew, you've got 400 years of darkness without any prophetic light. And then like Haley's comet streaking over the sky at black midnight, a rugged, ragged man came.

He was an awkward man. He was a Baptist. But anyhow, there's some Baptists here tonight.

Okay. Don't tell your pastor I said that. You see, the amazing thing is the first man that ever preached the baptism of the Holy Ghost was a Baptist.

Why don't they keep up with it? Huh? And why do the Pentecostals run their flag up? They're years behind. The Baptists preached it long before the Pentecostals were ever born. You see, truth is nobody's property.

Isn't that great? No man has a monopoly of wisdom. I'm getting there bit by bit, but anyhow. I've been looking for it for over seven... Somebody asked me out today, how long have you been saved? I think about 65.

What, 65 years? Nearly 65 years. But you know, I still feel I'm an amateur. I still feel I'm groping.

I still think I'm in waters to the ankles, not to the knees or the loins or waters to swim in. You know, the word of God is like an ocean, somebody said. It's so beautiful, a lamb can splash in the water here and an elephant can swim in it up there.

Some of the most intellectual men I know, I know two of them, they're... They're the humblest of men. Oh, I love the hymn we sang tonight, O Worship the King. His wisdoms... When they sing, His robe is the light and his canopy space.

Our scientists are too proud to believe in eternity. They do believe in infinity. They shot a tin can up there two or three years ago into space.

It's already done 250 million miles. Isn't it silly that wise men down in Houston sit down and talk to a tin can up there and tell it turn right, turn left? If I did that, they'd say he's got religious mania. But they're scientists, they're wise, you see.

But there's no wisdom beyond the wisdom of this book. I told somebody today, I do, I think, what one of our sons has done for years. Learn the new proverb every week.

And you'll be smart if you... At the end of the year, you've got 52 proverbs. The most amazing book of wisdom maybe in the world. Jesus came into the place where it said, You're a den of thieves.

He walked into the midst of it, and it says they wanted to kill him. Now it says in verse 19, Did not Moses give you the law? And yet none of you keep the law. Isn't that a nice insult? Huh? Looking right in the eye of the most learned men in religion in the world, Moses gave you the law.

Not one of you keeps it. So he's getting a real scorecard, isn't he? He's kicked the money chambers out of the place. He's called them a den of thieves.

Again, I say, right after that 400 years of stillness, there came this amazing man, John the Baptist. He shot their culture. He upset their theology.

Nobody's going to church. Why? They're all going to hear a man out in the wilderness. What's he doing? Raising the dead? No, he isn't.

He's raising hell. Did he raise the dead? No, he didn't raise a dead man. He raised a dead nation.

Dear Lord, we could do with a John Baptist in every city in the nation tonight. Some of you now are taking it easy. You say, we'll relax and be raptured.

Now we've got Mr. Reagan in. Reagan can't do much for us. Oh, the issue of politics that we went through just now.

People say it wasn't politics. It was something moral. It wasn't something moral.

It was something spiritual. We could have a nation full of Nicodemuses and they'd still be lost. Did not Moses, verse 19, did not Moses give you the law and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? Verse 25, Then said some of them in Jerusalem, It is not this of whom they seek to kill, but he speaketh boldly.

And they say nothing. Now come on, this place, this marvelous temple, there was no little room like this. This wouldn't even go on the platform.

It held at least 6,000 people. There was a day when there was a riot. One of the priests tripped up and spilled the holy water.

And there was a stampede and fighting broke out. And it's estimated that nearly 2,000 people were either seriously injured or killed. Now Jesus goes up into the midst of the feast with the eyes of everybody.

Those frowning Pharisees and those dumb, what were the others, Sadducees. Oh, the Pharisees liked him because he raised the dead. And the Sadducees said, There isn't such a thing as a resurrection.

That's why they were sad, you see. Thank you. I thought the penny might drop after a while.

Oh, they loved to hear him because he believed in, and not only believed it, but he actually raised the dead. The trouble with our theology, it's all on the blackboard. Our theology is all in textbooks.

It has no life. It has no breath. It has no power.

It has no authority. How in the world did Jesus stand in the middle of that crowd of vexed, angry people? He'd antagonize them. He'd reveal their spiritual bankruptcy.

They were just getting over the shock of John Baptist standing there in the wilderness. They couldn't fathom it. Why are people going? Read the third chapter of Luke when you go home.

Even the Roman soldiers went. Macefield would call them the lesser breeds outside of the law. They were fascinated when they heard him.

Nothing like this in Rome. Caesar has nothing like this. Here is a little strange man with a leather girdle around his loins, and old camel skin around his neck, and people are swarming from everywhere.

What does he say? Read the four laws. He uses that word nobody likes, repent. Repent.

Not only confess your sin, forsake your sin. Repent. Run away from it.

Then Jesus comes up afterwards. I don't know where all the order is in this, but you know I was reading today the last verses of the 20th chapter and the 21st. Somebody has estimated that if you could take all the events that are mentioned in the gospel recorded by John and put them in a line, they would only give you 21 days out of the three and a half years that Jesus ministered.

I'll go further than that. I say if you took Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and take all these historic events, like this miracle that upset the whole town. Don't you think when the next day after he turned water into wine that everywhere they were saying, did you hear what he did? They ran out of wine last night and he turned water into wine.

This is the man that tosses people out to the synagogue. This is the man that kicks over the extortionist. This is the man that says to learned men, you're the enemies of God.

He's merciless. You know, we are preaching an acceptable gospel today. Make it as painless as we can.

And all we do is give people a shock to put them to sleep so they'll get to hell quicker. We need some hellfire preaching on repentance. One old definition says repentance is to leave the sin I've done before and show that I in earnest grieve by doing it no more.

If a man is genuinely born again, all things pass away, all old things pass away and all things become new. So here we have Jesus right in the center of the crowd. You see for six days what happened, they had a wonderful performance.

What are they thinking of? Jesus stood there where the priest had stood every day for seven days and then the temple orchestra came with their instruments and the temple choir came and they went down the shoulder of the hill to the pool of Siloam and they dipped that golden vessel into the pool and the priest carried it on his shoulder with pomp and circumstance and he went and poured it out. To what? To remind them of what? That when they cried there in the wilderness they had no water and God told Moses to smite the rock and he smote it. Told him to speak to it the second time and he still smote it, he got into habits.

But they were commemorating that tremendous event when that river followed them, that river of life followed them wherever they went and the rock that was smitten that was Christ the word of God says. So for seven days they'd seen this performance everybody stood on one side and bowed when they came back. Oh you think what God did? God that put the stars up there God that one day parted like you part your hair he parted the rivers, the water and over a million people passed through.

This is our God. They're commemorating the miracle. On the last day, the great day of the feast they did not go through that performance and Jesus went and stood there.

If I were an artist I'd want to paint this. I think round the world art galleries I've been I've seen all kinds of pictures about the Lord I've never seen a picture of Jesus standing here in all his moral majesty. Why in God's name don't they go punch him? Why don't somebody do what? They've already put an assassin's threat on him we'll kill him.

The people say well why don't you kill him he's standing there, he's no bodyguards there's no angels round him well actually I think they had a bodyguard of angels. I think he stood there in his moral majesty and they could feel what we call vibes going out of him of the glory of God that they'd then go near him. I say nicely I think this is one of the most gorgeous pictures of Jesus in the whole of the New Testament.

But the last day at the great day of the feast it says Jesus stood and cried. Isaiah says my servant shall not cry in the streets well he's not crying in the street he's not crying in the street at all he's crying in the temple. He's crying to a particular crowd of people.

But he adds insult to injury. I remind you again he'd already called them a den of thieves he'd already tossed the money changers out he'd stunned them with the miracles that he'd done and yet this is what he says to them. These people have a monopoly of God.

Didn't they have ancestry like Jeremiah and Isaiah and these huge enormous characters. But this man comes, this unlettered man this usurper, this man with no backing stands in the middle of the holy of holies as far as they're concerned it's like me rushing into the Vatican and shouting hallelujah and starting to praise the Lord. Wouldn't go down too well I'd like the chance though.

And there he is in the middle of the feast and listen to what he says. If any man, hey hold it a minute you can't say that, Jehovah is the God of the Jews. The ten commandments are given to the Jews all those giants you talk about spiritually who subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness and stopped the mouths of lambs, they're all Jews.

Why do you dare to say to this cosmopolitan crowd here if any man come. I think one of those beautiful things that even Paul said my great favorite preacher, the apostle Paul. Remember what he says in 2, what is it in the second of Corinthians chapter 5 is it 517, don't look now look after and find out I'm wrong but anyhow.

Do you remember what he said, if any man. Didn't he say that? What did he say? Pardon? Right. I'm glad you're not all sleeping that's great.

If any man, anywhere, at any time being Christ he may be the most twisted, perverted, carnal, cruel stinking man in the whole world but if the miracle of regeneration comes in maybe he gets a new heart, a new mind, a new spirit a new in look, a new outlook, new everything. We've forgotten about the majesty of the new birth. People just nod their head and say the sinner's prayer and go straight to hell down the aisle after they've leaned their head on the shoulder of the pastor.

Do you know I doubt if 5% of professing Christians in America are born again. It's true of England. I asked that giant for the man Buck Singh, the man from India Do you ever meet him out there brother? You've got to see him this time, he's getting old.

He's about 86. He is a man. He's a man that's going over the world and he goes to the railway station without a penny and orders his ticket.

I believe in faith but not fanaticism, I mean, you know. I mean, what if you embarrass God but you don't embarrass God. But I asked him one day, of all the professing Christians in India how many have saved? He said about 2.5%. What about the Christians in America brother Singh? He said 2.5%. I'm astounded, bewildered, confused, baffled when people tell me in America we've 75 million people filled with the Holy Ghost and we're the rottenest nation on earth.

Come on! It says here that Jesus stood and cried. One version says with a loud voice. It was not a shriek.

It was not a scream. The Greek word implies that he did it with authority. He did it loudly, he did it emphatically, he did it with emotion.

Why? Well I'll tell you what I discovered last week in this and I've preached on this 40 or 50 years and never found it. Here he is in the temple two or three, four, five thousand people around him and he stands there and he cries with a loud voice. Why? Because time is running out for these people and they're dumb and blind, they don't know it.

They'd had the law, they'd had the prophets, they'd had one of the most amazing men in history previous to Jesus coming and what did they do? They got rid of him too. Chopped his head off. Jesus stood and cried with a loud voice in my judgment for this reason.

That he knew that time was running out. That God's spirit does not always strive with men. There's a cut off point.

I'm trying to think of a verse here I can't remember right at the moment. I believe that Jesus is running in his mind going through history. God gave them a margin of deliverance for the time that John Baptist was there, they still did the same thing.

They'd had the law, they'd had the prophets, they'd had the most amazing men in history. They'd repeatedly got into captivity. This may not be a good definition but my definition of a fool is a man that falls in the same hole twice.

That's exactly what Israel did. They'd been in captivity for 400 years under Pharaoh. Wouldn't you think that they'd shun everything that would in any way defile them in the sight of God? And yet they're just coming here out of 400 years of captivity again.

Let me look at a verse here. What is it? No, that was only another reference. You can put it down if you want to.

Matthew 13, 54. When he came to his own country he taught them. The verse I want is not that verse.

It's Luke 11, 50. Remember he said to them, Which of the prophets of your fathers not killed? Now look what he says here in the 11th chapter of Luke and verse 47. Woe unto you for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets and your fathers killed them.

They're trying to wash away guilt by making memorials to famous men. There's no sign of repentance. Come down in the verse.

Verse 49. Therefore also said the wisdom of God. Who is the wisdom of God? He is.

I will send them prophets and apostles and some of them they shall slay and persecute. Now here it is. I believe this was eating the heart of Jesus Christ when he stood there in the temple and they were going through a death formula that didn't mean a thing.

They had altars but they had no fire. They had preachers but they had no anointing. They had no sign of life or the authority or majesty of the holiest being in the world, God.

So listen to what he says. Verse 50. The blood of all the prophets which were shed from the foundation of the world may be required of what? Of this generation from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias which perished between the altar and the temple.

And verily I say unto you it shall be required of this generation. Do you wonder he was heartbroken? What happened? His prophecy came true. Within a generation Titus invaded Jerusalem in one of the greatest massacres ever and blood flowed to the bridles of the horses.

And Jesus is standing here. Remember the story of the man who had business and he sent his men out into the fields to work. They didn't honor him.

Last of all I'll send my son. God has sent a whole column of prophets. Finally he sends John the Baptist, the firebrand that wakened the nation and they did away with him.

And now they've got the son of God, they're going to do away with him. And Jesus says listen, this generation, all the blood of the prophets that's ever been shed from Abel right down to this day is going to be shed in your day. Before very long they're going to reject him.

What did they do? They turned away from him. But instead of them turning away from them, he turned away from them. Your house is left to you desolate.

The Jews, a remarkable nation, but they've been desolate from that day to this. They've had no power, they've had no prophets. They've been preserved in the mystery of God.

If any other nation in the world asked America for the money the Jews have asked we'd have kicked them in the ocean, but we'd give them everything they asked for. Billions. But as soon as America turns her back on the Jews you can dig the grave for America.

Hitler brought the chief rabbi. In my day 1939 he brought the chief rabbi into his presence. He told him what he was going to do with the Jews.

The old rabbi sat there with his nice long beard and Hitler said you were sitting there pondering, what were you doing? Well, your excellency, he said, my people were almost annihilated years ago by a man called Pharaoh. I know about that. Did you know we have a flat cake, I think they call it matzo.

Matzo. I've eaten yards of it, it's tasteless, but it's better than nothing. That's about it, but anyhow.

It's a memorial to Pharaoh. And then there was a day when somebody decided to liquidate the Jews and a young lady stood in the way, Esther, didn't she? Esther. And the Jews have a little cake memorial of that called a hamantash, I think it is.

A little thing full of seeds. And Hitler said, well, your excellency, I was thinking we made a flat cake to remind us of Pharaoh and we have an oval cake with seeds called a hamantash. I was wondering what kind of cake we could invent to remember you.

And would you believe Hitler showed him the door? They're in for trouble, don't make any mistake about it. But Jesus is standing there weeping. He's stammering out, he cries with a loud commanding voice, he had no amplification.

And five or six thousand, if any man thirst, let him come unto me. He sees her at the end of the line. Surely he had a word of knowledge, if anybody had.

And he knew they were going to be massacred, slaughtered if they didn't repent. But they never repented. I think that broke his heart in that feast.

You dumb blind people, how long are you going to walk here and say, Moses walked here or somebody else walked here. Or maybe before this there was a great marvelous temple that was built by Solomon. And yet you go through your, what does that water mean that you poured out every, not that much.

You just tell your children, well that's something your father's great grandfather saw one day away in the wilderness. It had lost its meaning. As God is my witness, I believe that thousands of people will take communion this Sunday and it doesn't mean that much to them.

They don't think of the blood of Christ. They don't think he turned God's anger away. They don't think he rescued them from eternal hell.

If they did, they'd either weep for joy or weep for sorrow. But they weep for nothing. This unrepentant crowd.

They're going to turn the sun, no he says you're not rejecting me, I'm rejecting you. There's a fantastic verse in Lamentations. This is hardly a book you read for any fun or joy, is it? If you don't know where it is, it happens to be in your Bible.

It comes right after Jeremiah. Lamentations chapter 2, verse 1. How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in his anger? The Lord hath swallowed up the habitations of Jacob, and he hath not pitied. He hath thrown down in his wrath the strongholds of the daughter of Judah.

He hath brought them down to the ground. He hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof. Verse 4, he hath bent his bow like an enemy.

He stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew all that were pleasant. In the eye of the tabernacle and of the daughter of Zion, he poured out his fury like fire. Here is the people that said God is our God.

Okay, take him for good or ill. Whether he has a smile or he smites you. Look what he says here in verse 5. The Lord was an enemy.

He hath swallowed up Israel. He hath swallowed up all the palaces. He hath destroyed their strongholds.

He hath increased the daughter of Judah with mourning and lamentation. He hath violently taken away his tabernacle. They suddenly realized that God is their adversary.

The God who delivered them over and over again. He sent angels to deliver them. He delivered them in a hundred different ways.

But now his anger is kindled against them. What do they say? Well, of course, maybe God has moods. He'll change.

No. Not on your life. Do you think of anything more devastating than coming down to verse 10 in this chapter? The elders of the daughters of Zion sit upon the ground and keep silence.

Here you have these charming women. This is what they do. They've cast dust upon their heads.

They've girded themselves with sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads. Now here is Jeremiah.

He says, my eyes do fail with tears. He says, my eyes are blinded with tears. I'm choking with grief.

Listen. My bowels are troubled. My liver is poured out for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Because the children of the sucklings are in the streets. They say to their mothers, where is the corn and wine? You see, little children here in a state of destitution, when they know the anger of God is kindled and is destroying their priesthood and destroying every treasure they have, the children say, where is the corn and the wine? Oh, you've told us, mummy, that our grandpas and others, they came out of a barren wilderness and they came into a land flowing with milk and honey. But the glory has departed.

I'm convinced that when Jesus stood in the temple that day, he was thinking of the day when the glory of God filled the temple. Do you remember the time when Solomon stood there and the glory came down and the priest could not minister for the glory of God? In God's name, when are we going to see that? The glory filled the temple and now the temple is a museum. Now the temple is just a place of historic value to us as a nation.

There's no sign of life, our altars have no fire, the glory of God doesn't fill the temple, the priests have no prophecy. How can we be worse? You can hardly find anything more desperate than this. My eyes are blinded with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured out for the destruction of my nation.

Can you imagine a pastor of a nice fashionable church going in next Sunday morning with his nice suit on, feeling on top of the world and suddenly weeping and saying, my bowels, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured out. They'd think he was nuts. The deacons would rush up and escort him out to the vestry.

There's no despair. How many Pentecostals do you think will be beating their breasts this Sunday and saying, oh, we remember the glory of God as a Zeus's tree. We remember when the rivers of God flowed out there from a people who were poverty stricken in material things but rich in God.

Where are the Nazarenes? The days they had of glory when Dr. Brassie founded that organization. And the Pilgrim Holiness people, or the Methodists, or the Salvationists. Do you know why we don't cry and weep and feel our bowels are torn and our livers? Because we've never seen the glory of God, that's why.

We're content to tread a theological doctrinal treadmill until we're weary, we drop into bed tired out. We haven't departed one iota. There isn't an angel, Gabriel or Michael.

Nobody could say we deviated from the truth of Baptist teaching or Pentecostal teaching or somebody else's teaching. We have no passion. We have no brokenness.

Jesus is torn. He knows that the day of rejection is almost over. He knows that outside of that street he's going to walk in a few minutes.

Before long it will be full of blood up to his knees. That those people who have no time for God will be screaming for mercy and it's too late, they're going to be slaughtered by the hundreds of thousands. Maybe a million people were destroyed in the days of Titus when he invaded that city.

Remember the scripture that says, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem thou that killest the prophets. Why don't we change it and put, O America, America thou that killest the prophets. Three thousand radio stations in America today have broadcast something of the gospel.

My country that gave the world the Bible, that gave the world Methodism, that gave the world the Salvation Army, the two greatest revivals since Pentecost, is now as dead as the dodo. We're wanting to make a short-term investment, aren't we, and get the glory of God on one night of prayer, or one evening of prayer, or I've added two, ten more minutes to my praying each day. Do you wonder that the writers of the Hebrews said, we have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin? Every drop of blood from Abel to Zechariah, when they had that row in the temple right down to the very last person, is treasured by God and listed by God.

And everybody who's been martyred in Russia today, every drop of blood was recorded in heaven, or China, or whatever it was. I'll go back in our own history here, some enormous men, some of the greatest preachers since Pentecost, walked these streets or rode the horses. One of the greatest men, the only man that out-rose Mr. Wesley.

Wesley rode 240,000 miles on horseback. Bishop Asbury rode 2,400, I think. Exceeded Wesley, anyhow.

You've had a host of great... What about Jonathan Edwards? Should have been reading that story this week, I think. The man who said, stamp eternity on my eyeball. Not prosperity, God help us.

I pity those poor guys over there in Dallas at the judgment seat, or the leading people down the garden path looking for wealth. When the church is poorest, she's richest in God. The blessed apostle says, I have nothing.

I have no home, I have no protection, I have no creature comforts. I have no rights, I have nothing, but I possess all things. And it wasn't some auditory.

It wasn't some sweet saying. He demonstrated he had all things. He'd power over demons, he'd power over death.

He'd power over adversity. He can rejoice in prosperity or in adversity, in season, out of season. Lash him 195 times and he sings hallelujah.

Lock him in a stinking prison in Rome. He writes four of his greatest epistles to the Philippians, and Colossians, and Hebrews, and Ephesians. I think all hell on a day's holiday when Paul died.

But this is the man who says, I travail in birth. This is the man who daringly says, I could wish myself a curse. The literal word is, damned if need be for my brothers.

Now you might say, this is way above our heads. Well, stand up. Grow.

The trouble is we're all locked up. Come on. I may get shot for this.

That's okay. We all live in a little theological playpen. We're scared to death to disagree with someone.

I'm not asking for rebellion. I'm asking you to stretch your soul, not your mind like Mr. Mondale said. He tried it and it didn't work.

So, stretch your soul. Move in the air of this. Come on.

This thing troubled me last Saturday night. I hardly slept a wink. I tossed on my bed.

I cried. I wept. I groaned.

God in heaven, what's my generation doing? We've all the equipment. We have more Bibles. We have more interpretations of the Bible.

We have more tracts. We have more books on the Holy Ghost than any generation ever. But we never had less power.

It's all in print on bookshelves. Like most of our praying is. I'm sure on that great day I'll discover when Jesus stood in the temple.

He's looking backward and remembering the marvelous deliverance of God. And then he's looking forward because he had said already, and I have to wind this up. Time's running off.

Always does. Do you remember he met a woman there in the fourth chapter of John? And he said, give me a drink. And if you knew who it was, you'd ask of him.

And he put in you a well of water springing up to everlasting life. Now he says, I'm that well of water. But wait a minute.

Go back to John 4 a minute here. Pardon me, John 7. 37. In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

And he that believeth on me, listen. As the scripture said, out of his belly shall flow rivers. Out of whose belly? Mine? No.

Well, whose? Well, look at the next verse. This spake he of the Spirit. I like John Wesley's hymn, Jesus, you lover of my soul.

Remember a verse section in it says, thou of life, the fountain art. Freely let me take of thee. Spring thou up within my heart and rise to all eternity.

This spake he of the Spirit who was not yet given life. The Holy Ghost was not yet given life. Told you here.

Because Jesus was not glorified. Look, you can pray your heart out and weep and fast and knock your head on the wall and ask for the Holy Ghost. But if he's not glorified in your life before that, you'll not get the Holy Ghost.

If there's bitterness in your life, if there's strife in your life, if there's anger in your life, if you seek at last, shout to high heaven. Beat your breast, get out in the field and yell your head off. Won't make a bit of difference.

Until Jesus is glorified, till he knows he has full control of your life, your spirit, your soul, your body, your mind, your will, he won't come and take a piece of gold. Now let's get this straight. Remember these men that went to the upper room, they'd already received the Holy Ghost.

Read John, what does John say? That while they were gathered in the upper room, Jesus came and he breathed on them. I always think of Abraham. Remember, A-B-R-A-M, Abraham.

And God breathed on him, Abraham. Never the same. The Holy Ghost is not given because Jesus is not yet glorified.

Jesus has to go through Gethsemane. The hell and agony of being separated from God. He has to descend into the abyss.

He has to go and announce his victory in hell, to demon spirits. And then he ascends on high, like the high priest to present his blood in the holy place. He takes his own precious, priceless blood and presents it to the Father.

The Holy Ghost is the coronation gift of Jesus. If I do not ascend, he will not descend. If you don't do some house cleaning, curse your own habits, list them, tell God what they are, what your failure is, prayerlessness, powerlessness, lack of vision, lack of tears, lack of compassion, lack of love for lost people.

I don't want to be facetious here, but you know, each time I've seen on the TV a little crooked woman there that's made a fortune out of saying three words. Where's the beef? What's it got to do with you, Brother Abraham? They said if I had a church now over my pulpit, I'd have this in big capital letters. Where's the grief? Let people go to hell.

What do we worry? We've got a nice Sunday coming up. We've got it all planned. We've outlined the hymns.

We know when the choir will stand up and sit down and Miss Jones will stand up and sit down when she's sung and something else. And we've given the pastor a little more time now. He has 21 minutes today instead of 20.

I could walk on my knees onto the platform some Sundays, I'll tell you that quite honestly. The biggest job in the world is not running the White House, it's running God's house. Jesus is not glorified.

He's not glorified with the selfishness in the life of so many Christians. Me first, me second, and me last. Does he have priority in everything, in my life, in my eating, in my sleeping, in my social life? Will I push others on one side to give him time? The greatest gift this side of the world is to be filled, anointed, and kept anointed with the Holy Spirit of God.

Do you know what's up with our generation? I'll tell you. The highway of Christian living is strewn with the wreckage of has-beens. I remember preaching in Australia, the pastor, you know what they do on the platform, talk behind his hand.

You see the man over on the right, that big man with the bald head? Do you know that 15 years ago he was the greatest man in Australia? He had an incredible anointing. He was almost as though he had a torch in his hand going through dry grass. Everywhere he went he set cities and towns on fire.

He lost out. He got caught up in money and something else. I believe the only person in God's earth that gives the devil any nerves is a holy ghost man.

I've seen God do all kinds of miracles. People jump out of baths here. Blind people get the sight.

When we prayed, crippled arms. I'm out of that now. You think I lack compassion? Well, you were right to think it.

There's something greater than that. The greatest miracle that God can do is to take an unholy person out of an unholy world, make that unholy person holy, put them back in an unholy world and keep them holy. In the midst of a crooked and perverted and perverse generation.

I spent a little time yesterday with Dave Wilkerson and he said, Len, I've come to this conclusion. Five years from now, I don't think any Christian will dare to have a TV in their home. There's some new invention you can get, put it on the top of the house.

I think he said about a hundred dollars. You can get all the corruption you want from all the stations around this country and if it's powerful enough, other countries. We're saturated with worldliness.

The king of America, there isn't one, yes there is. Tell me his name. Sport.

He has a wife. What's her name? Entertainment. Entertainment.

Think of the billions that they get. Think of the billions that go into the liquor business, the billions that go into pornography. Does it disturb us? I'd like to see every church in the nation shut down for a week at least.

Why should I preach to you? God knows I'm adding condemnation to you tonight. You can't handle the truth you've already got. You've had it for five or ten years.

You can't handle it. Why should I bring you more truth? Why should I give you the challenge of having a spirit-filled life? Out of his inmost being, when he is resident, out of my inmost being will flow rivers, not trickles, rivers of living water. What kind of rivers? Rivers of mercy, rivers of compassion, will melt my eyes to tears.

Rivers of love that will let me go to the most perverted and wicked and crooked people. That helps me to look at the TV and not see a bunch of skeletons. The lady here said the other day she was tremendously moved I was.

It was on last night again. Those million people in Ethiopia, somebody says that's a contrived famine. I could give you names of men who contrived it too.

A million people may die in Ethiopia and more than a million in Africa. There's a woman with a withered breast and little things sucking, sucking, getting melty. She gets some water and that kid's glands are so swollen when she pours the water it goes all over him, down his body.

He can't even take it. Well, I want to tell you today I believe the same thing happens in our churches every Sunday. People are choking and we're trying to pour the water of life into them and the poor souls are so damned and lost they can't take it.

They've listened to the same preacher year after year says the same things in the same way. He hasn't shed a tear since he left his mother's womb. He went to the seminary and got a big fat head and a shrunken soul.

I wonder God Almighty doesn't keep His promise. What's His promise? He keeps His promise. All right then, before long I'll tell you what He's going to do.

He's going to spew most of the, not Christianity, but Christendom, organized, financially backed religion that can't turn this... Why do we send people to other countries? We can't even save our own country. A little guy on TV said, give me more money, my message should go into Japan. Why? They're lost, are they? Do you know how many deaths, how many murders they have in Japan in a year? Twenty.

We have that in a day in New York State. What's the good of taking? They'll turn around and say, go back and clean your own country up. We threw precious men from Poland in our house the other week, Dave Wilkinson brought them.

They were amazed, they said, when they saw people come out of church and light up smoke. Oh, you would never see that in Poland. Poland is wedged between a rock and a hard place.

An inflexible Roman church and the devilish power of communism. But you know what? They have no homosexuality. They have no gay communities.

They have no pornography. Come on, we can't even clean that lousy, stinking stuff out of the nation. Never mind go convert Japanese.

I know they need to be saved, I'm not saying they won't be. Now I can draw a picture as black as anybody, I guess. I believe we're going into the darkest days that humanity has ever known.

So dark they'll make the dark ages look like midday. Doesn't it say that in Joel, before the final break, there's going to be a day of darkness and gloominess? But you know, I got some help today, Brother Ray, when I was pondering that. The story of Egypt, in Egypt.

Do you remember it says there was darkness in Egypt, but light in the houses of the children of Israel? Darkness, doom is going to settle over the capitalist system and every other system. Communism, people are going to scream for light in its darkness. I read a statement here, let me see if I can find it.

So the darkest day in history is coming, but you know what, I believe the most glorious day is coming too. This writer says the dispensation of the law could only end in tribulation and the curse, for it is a ministration of death, but the dispensation of grace must end in glory and victory because it's the ministration of life. Religion continues to patch up that which Christ has declared useless.

Here's a phrase for you. The veil that was rent in the temple was rent in twain. We're trying to stitch it together.

Flesh continues to rule in the place of the spirit. Instead of the blood of Christ, there is the work of man. Instead of the new birth, there's moral rearmament.

Instead of the Holy Spirit, there's fleshly entertainment. The day of the Lord is at hand, it shall be a day of glory, a day of light, a glorious light. The day of the Lord is at hand, even the end of the ages, and great shall be the display of God's glory, it shall be light, glorious light, or it shall be darkness, gross darkness,

and it will depend upon our position before God, just as all the wrath and judgments were due to the preceding generations were heaped together and laid upon the generation of Christ, and laid upon the, pardon me, laid upon the generation of Christ today.

Remember when he said, the blood of all from Abel right down to this day will be upon you. It shall therefore be great tribulation, such as was never known from the foundation of the world, but it shall also be a great glory, such as was never known before from the foundation of the world. One classic shall be a day of darkness and gloominess, to the other, as the morning spread among the mountains.

Then he says, this focal point in history is coming, the glory of Moses' day is for us, the glory of David's kingdom is for us, the glory of Solomon's kingdom is for us, the glory of the restored temple in Ezra's day is for us, and the glory of Elijah's day. Come on, the devil's going to do his worst, but God's going to do his best. As I've used the phrase for years, there's going to be a Pentecost that will out-Pentecost Pentecost.

I believe the glory of the original Pentecost was greater than the glory in Solomon's temple. I don't know how many were in that temple at that time, I know a bunch of unlearned, uneducated men and women were in that upper room. And they went out, no financial backing, they didn't go out to do miracles.

Tell me a miracle they did after Pentecost they didn't do before Pentecost. Then they run back to Jesus and say, even devils are subject to us, we've done many mighty works, but that's not the greatest thing. The greatest thing is that you that were lost without God, without hope, your names are written in the book of life.

Do you know what I'm sick of? I'm sick of seeing so-called revivals or blessings where men get the glory. I believe there's going to be a visitation of God where no man will get the glory. Men won't dare to open their mouths and try and put a crown on somebody's head because he has a super anointing that this world has never known.

I'm getting older and I'm getting tired tonight physically, but I'll tell you what, I'm not tired in my spirit. I have to wear glasses, but my inward vision's all right. Somebody wrote the other day, said, Brother Rayner, you've been praying more than 50 years for revival.

I believe you're going to live to see it. So do I. Otherwise I'd say, Lord, take me home tonight. Of course, I haven't got a grave plot yet, but anyhow.

What are we going to do, hang our hearts on the willows? You see, when the glory departed and the people lost the majesty of God, what did they do? They were taken captive in Babylon. And they said, sing us the Lord's song in this strange land. They said, we can't.

We can. We can marry Christian words to rock music. They were carried away to Babylon.

But Babylon's good to us. You can give some of your money to Babylon, you get a tax credit for it. Babylon's very kind to us these days.

It doesn't put us in prison. There are some things to pray urgently for. We had a young man here last year who had a revival in Caracas, Venezuela.

By fate, he went and took a great big bull ring that held, I don't know what he got. He got 20,000 a night, I think, 25,000 at the weekends. I had a letter from him today.

Another brother had a letter from him this week. You know Logos has a, who does it belong to? Logos boat. Come on.

Operation Mobilization. That Logos boat went to China, and they had no trouble. They let them dock, and let them take out their Bibles.

They went to Venezuela a few weeks ago, and the police got hold of them. Made them lock up the ship. And then the police bombarded the ship, broke windows, took everybody out of the ship and put them in jail for a while.

They let them go. You see, the Pope is going to Venezuela. So now, for the time being, let's hope it changes, you cannot get a visa to go into Venezuela as a missionary.

They don't want any evangelical activity. They don't want anybody's eyes to be opened. They want to bring the false priest there, who is anti-Christ.

Not the anti-Christ, but he is anti-Christ anyhow. I write this up, listen. Paul says, I tell you, even weeping.

They are enemies of the cross. Not enemies of Christ. Rome isn't enemy of Christ.

He has Him everywhere on a cross. It's an enemy of the cross of Christ, because it says Mary is equal redemptive, in redemptive power. You can pray to Mary or to Jesus, it's optional, not so.

Jehovah's Witnesses talk about Christ, but they are anti-Christ. They are enemies of every denomination. Mormonism, Latter-day Saints, my foot.

Why? Because they reject the blood of Christ. The Mormons reject the blood of Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses reject the blood of Christ.

All the modern so-called religions reject the blood of Christ. We are not too worried about it, are we? I tell you, I told God, I don't care if I never go out of my house or out of this area again. I don't care if I have to weep and groan and fast and travel.

I don't care a hill of beans about that. What the church has had in the last 25 years hasn't moved America to nearer heaven with all the millions of dollars we spent. So God has to do a new thing, and He's going to do a new thing.

And that's why I love to come to Last Day and talk to you folk, and you others that come in from other places. You're the hope. We greyheads had our day.

What are you going to do? Just talk about the history. Oh, Phinney, Phinney, Phinney. Forget Phinney.

Phinney, F-I-N-N-E-Y is Latin for Finnish. So Phinney with Phinney. And get down to the word and read through the apostles and read through the prophets and tread with these men of sorrow.

Here is a man of sorrow standing in the midst of hostility, standing, pardon me, in the midst of, because this feast was a feast of joy and they were happy and laughing and clapping their hands and going to hell at the same time. They were squeezed in, they were slaves. I think Jesus was reaping for that.

The whole nation was in slavery to the Roman Empire. And they were in slavery to godless religion. You know, we have the biggest task on our hands of any generation.

There are more lost people tonight than ever there have been in history. And we sleep. Not just physically.

We sleep spiritually. There's an old, old hymn. I hope it's in here.

I'm going to ask you to sing it. Let me ask you tonight. Here.

How many of us here have lost children or lost parents? Raise your hand, let me see. Is it not enough to drive us to our knees? Drive us to tears? Tell God we don't care. If people think we're insane, so what? I'll tell you what, we won't be embarrassed at the judgment seat that we fasted and prayed and wept and got out of step with some denomination or a bunch of cranks.

The Holy Ghost wants to come in me in His fullness. And you. And pour out rivers.

Not trickles. Not when you just feel like praying. But taking hold of you like a river that you see sometimes on TV.

And the river's in full flood. And it sweeps houses away. It sweeps away cars.

It sweeps away big trees. There's nothing can stand. There is no hope.

This generation will fill hell quicker than any other generation we're so corrupt. Unless God in mercy fills us. Unless you say, Lord, there's nothing I want.

I don't want some new watch for Christmas. I want a new anointing. I want a new revelation.

I want a new quickening. Ah. See if I can find this.

Now, I want you to sing it just not emotionally, but spiritually. It's a tremendous hymn. 207.

Let's stand and sing it. Let's try and see these lost millions at home and abroad as we sing it.

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