

I Beseech Thee (Cd Quality)

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon calls believers to a life of sacrificial praise and unwavering commitment to God's mission of redemption.

Duration: 1:04:38

Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13, Romans 12:1, Revelation 22:13

Topics: "Mercy Of God", "Eternal Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the urgency and importance of embracing the mercy of God. He urges the audience to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. The preacher compares Christians who wither in the world to roses that die when taken out of the sunshine. He highlights the need for cleansing and anointing, drawing parallels to the Old Testament priests. The sermon also touches on the consequences of judgment and the unchangeable nature of eternity.

Transcript

Father, we thank you tonight for our hearts to praise our God. Once we listen to the tinsel and jangles of this world, we thank you, Lord, you, as a psalmist says, you lifted us up from a horrible pit. You set us up on a rock and you tuned us up because you put a praise in our mouths unto our God.

We remember the last stanza, almost, of the last psalm that says, let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Then we remember over in the book of the Revelation, thousands of years afterwards, in that fifth chapter, John says that everything on earth and under the earth, in the sea and in the air, everything is going to raise a hallelujah chorus. Beyond all the hallelujah choruses put together, they've been sung ever since Handel wrote it.

Lord, we sing so often in our hand, then in a nobler, sweeter song, I'll sing thy power to save. When these poor lisping, stammering tongues shout victory o'er the grave, we thank you today that in something like a thousand tongues, the word of God has been translated. We pray for the translators, at least another thousand languages to go.

Lord, there are some people in jungles in Africa tonight, there are some people being butchered in Afghanistan, there are some people bound to gods of wood and stone in China and other countries, and they're to be part of the bride, and therefore the church needs to get busy and declare this glorious message of redemption, that he is able to save to the utmost. If a man is carnal, a man is cannibal, it

makes no difference. We bless you that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, can cleanse from all sin.

We thank you for that hand that was nailed to the cross, that arm is long enough to reach us and strong enough to lift us, and powerful enough to keep us against the world, the flesh, the devil, against temptation, against discouragement, against all the threatenings of men and of demons. We thank you for this uttermost salvation. It's a fountain full and free, pure, exhaustless, ever-flowing, wondrous grace it reaches me.

Lord God, we pray that somehow you'll detach us from our inadequacies, from our imperfections, from our indifference. Lord, I think of the matchless hymns that Charles Wesley wrote. I think two of the hymns, some of the great hymns of the Salvation Army, so full of dynamic faith and expectation.

I recall now, Lord, that hymn of Wesley's, I want to pray for myself and for all of us tonight. Enlarge in flame and fill my heart with boundless charity divine, so shall I all my strength exert, and love them with a zeal like thine, and turn them to a pardoning God, and quench their brands in Jesus' blood. But Lord, we want to come to that place where we can honestly say, as that dear lady before Wesley wrote, nothing on earth do I desire.

No fame of men, no positions, no possessions, no territory, nothing on earth do I desire. Jesus Christ, not being first in my life, but all that is in my life, not only in the Bible, but in my life to be the first and the last, the alpha, the omega, the beginning and the end, the center and the circumference. Lord, let me be able to sing with Wesley again, thou, O Christ, art all I want, and more than all in thee I find.

Lord, we recognize tonight in our feeble faith, there's no way we can put any strain on you, there's no problem too big for you, there's no situation too difficult. And Lord, we bless you again for your holy word. We thank you for the holy men of God, and some of them lived in a hell of a world, some of them went into the lion's den, others faced trials, persecutions, hardships beyond our comprehension, and yet holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Whether it was the king of Israel moved by the Holy Ghost, whether it was a man who climbed a sycamore tree, he was moved by the Holy Ghost. Lord, I thank you tonight for men with scholarship that you use. I thank you for men without scholarship.

I thank you for the men you're raising up in Africa, in England, in other countries. Lord God, give them their apostles. We've had our light in this country, we've shunned it, we've pushed it on one side.

God give them a chance, and in mercy give us a chance. Lord, we sing rapturously about your coming. But Lord, I wonder how many of us tonight have so lived today, that if you came ten minutes from now we'd not be ashamed that you're appearing.

We've lived in close fellowship with you today, driving, or walking, or sitting, or standing, or cooking, whatever we've done. There's been that deep inner communion. We bless you for this.

What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms. That's where we want to be. Okay.

I just want to make some comments tonight on one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, though every chapter is big as far as I'm concerned. The epistle of Paul to the Romans, in chapter 12. My dear wife and I were in a place a while ago, and the lady asked me about some teaching I'd done on Hebrews.

I said, I love to teach on Hebrews. She said, we don't teach that in our church. I said, why? She said, well it was written to Jews, it was written to Hebrews.

I said, you don't read Romans do you? Oh, especially. I said, it's written to Romans. You don't read Ephesians do you? That's the Ephesians.

You don't read all the epistles, surely, not to Thessalonica. That was written 2,000 years ago. You know, this book is so wonderful.

It's fresh every day. It's even better than the manna that came from heaven, because that decayed, but this never decays. But we need to read it every day.

Now let me tell you again, I'm reading from a living Bible, King James Version. David was here a few months ago. He'll be back next month, I think, hopefully.

And he said one night, remember there are 10 versions, five are wise and five are foolish. Okay, you can laugh at the wedding tomorrow, it's all right. You know, most of our congregation hears some nice things Friday night, and they laugh on Mondays, and people don't understand that.

Okay, thank you. Hebrews 12, no Hebrews, I mean Romans. You're getting me tied up now.

Romans 12 and verse 1, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God. Paul uses this wonderful word, I beseech you, at least three times, and always in this epistle. I beseech you therefore.

If you go back to the, let me see, the fifth chapter. Fifth chapter and verse 1, he says, therefore being justified. What's the therefore then? Because of all that's happened in chapters 1, 2, and 3, and 4. But he's talking here about being justified by faith.

What does he say we have if we're justified by faith? We quit fighting against God. We have peace with God, that's justification. We have the peace of God, that's sanctification.

The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost is justification. But the love of God made perfect is sanctification. You see, the trouble with the church today, she's stuck, deeply stuck as far as I'm concerned, in not declaring the whole counsel of God.

I believe, I'm trying to write a book, I've been on it 20 years, I'm getting nearer, I have no option. But anyhow, I want to write on three things, the judgment for the sinner, the judgment of the believer, and the judgment of the preachers. I believe millions of preachers will be charged at the judgment seat of Christ with criminal negligence, not preaching the whole counsel of God because it's offensive.

Maybe I reminded you last week, and if I did, I have to tell you again, some of you weren't here. Remember Paul, battle scarred, I'm sure he limped, he'd been battered with stones, he'd been whipped 195 times, that would kill most of us. And yet with all that he has, he's still triumphing.

He doesn't get under the weather, he triumphs continuously. He knew not only the peace with God, but the peace of God that passeth all understanding. He knew something that we don't seem to know any very much about anymore, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and all misunderstanding.

No, we get all confused. Somehow God becomes very hazy when you're under pressure, when everything breaks down round about us. But listen, he says here, I beseech you, I entreat you, you can change that a

dozen ways, but it's got vitality and it's got vigor in it, I beseech you.

He's not just saying, you know what, it would be nice if you really embraced the mercies of God, and were gracious enough to give your body a living sacrifice. He doesn't say that, he said, I urge you. You know, we say so often, only one life shall soon be passed, only what's done for God will last.

That's not what the poet wrote. The poet said, only one life will soon be passed, only what's done for God will last, and when I am dying, how glad I shall be if the lamp of my life has been burned out for thee. It's only once round for any of us.

You know, when you go to judgment, I go to judgment, it's not, it's not judgment by jury, it's judgment by deity. It's not somebody with ability, it's somebody with infallibility. And you know, once you slip over the edge of time into eternity, whether you're on the road, or the broad road, or a narrow road, there's no u-turn on the road.

For the sin of it, straight to the awesome white throne. So terrible that even the earth flees away from the face of him on the throne. You see, in the sixth chapter of Revelation, where it says, the rich men, the potentates of the world, the industrialists, the bankers, the wealthiest men, the brainiest men, the greatest military men, when they see his face, what do they do? They cry, rocks and hills fall on us.

You see, there are times when God will not answer prayer, he won't answer that prayer. But they see, you see, the man in the street, or you if you're unsaved, here's your option, tonight to accept the blood of the lamb, or tomorrow receive the wrath of the lamb. There's been no anger till you see the anger of God.

We don't talk on that. It's all love, sloppy love stuff today. But the word of God talks about the goodness and what? Severity of God.

When you go last to a full gospel businessmen's breakfast and hear about the severity of God, or hear a message on the second death, that's all pie in the sky when you die. You know, to be a true soldier of Jesus Christ takes character. There's no character around anymore.

Where is, where's fidelity? Where is honesty? Where is integrity? It isn't there if you read the first chapter of Romans. Boy, it makes a shambles of all our stated living. It corresponds with the, it corresponds with the first chapter there in Isaiah.

It shows human corruption in its totality. Thank you. But let me get to this chapter, and I'll be, we'll be here till tomorrow night.

I beseech you, I entreat you, I urge you. You know, when we were children in England, we used to see these old-fashioned pictures of a young man kneeling in front of a an older man, begging for the hand of his daughter, you know. He'd call, he'd make an appointment with the father, say his name is Robert Brown.

He writes a letter, Mr. Robert Brown, I'd like a day, an evening, I want to come and talk with you. I think your daughter is just the ideal person for me, I want to marry her. And so he goes on.

Well, we don't do that anymore. Well, he gets an appointment, when he goes in, he's all shaky, he doesn't know what the old man will say, because anybody knows there's never been a man on earth worthy of your daughter, we know that. Never will be.

So he goes in, and there he is, trembling and nervous before the fellow. They don't do that today. He says to the girl, Peggy, what's your dad's name? Robert.

So he gets on the phone, hey Bob, is that you? I like this cute little girl of yours. Oh, she's sweet, I think she's wonderful. I'm coming around tomorrow night, I'm going to tell you I want to marry her.

By the way, does she have any money? But anyhow, you know, we do it so easy. No entreat, she begs, I must have this girl. I heard a smart thing recently, where a woman said I'd been talking to my daughter.

She said, you don't like this boy I'm courting. Mother, mother, I can't live without him. She said, that's not the problem.

She said, what is it, can you live with him? The trouble is, you don't find out after, you know what it is? Love is blind, marriage is an eye-opener. But often it's too late, you know. If I asked you, are you single, you'd say yes.

But you know, really, if you enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ, you're married to him. You have as much right to be loyal and pure to Christ, as a man has to his wife, or a wife to her husband. I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice.

We say that so often, don't we? You hear people say, present your body a living sacrifice. But listen what it says, holy, acceptable unto God. You see, we don't all pay the same price to come to Christ.

He paid the same price for all of us. The other night, I, because I wake up in the night and go in my office, you know, because nobody comes to mess with, you know, we had 17 visitors at the house yesterday. I wouldn't care if they came for tea and brought their own cookies, but they eat all Martha's cookies.

17 visitors from all over the world, famous personalities and whatnot, there they came. Sonny is nodding his head, because he was one of the world famous personalities. But isn't it, do you know what I thought of? I thought, you know what, with very rare exceptions, God will pardon anyone.

But he never asks pardon of anyone. He'll be your counselor and your guide, but he won't take advice. And very often our praying isn't much more than giving God advice.

And he doesn't even hear it. Present your body a living sacrifice. In the Old Testament, it was a sacrifice that was killed.

You know, I'd love to read the Apostle Paul, do you know why? Because he's a hundred percent behind what he says. One of my cliches in the open air when I used to do so much open air preaching was this, a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument. You can't say to Paul that's too tough, he says I've done it, that's unreasonable, I've done it.

Ask what you like, sacrifice, suffering, hardship, weariness, painfulness, the whole gamut. Oh, I'll answer to the Lord for saying this, I'll answer the Lord for everything I say, as a matter of fact. Do you know what, I think the devil gave all hell a day off when Paul died.

He won't do that when you die, I'm sure, but anyhow. He said there'll never be another crazy man like this. This man, preaching to him was not a profession, it was an obsession.

This one thing I do, you know, we sing that hymn out there, Indian Brothers Love, I lay in dust life's glory dead. And you know what, if you really lay in dust life's glory dead, you don't go around saying, do you know, if I'd really gone on with the Lord, I'd have been so wealthy now, I'd have been the head of a corporation, I'd have done this. Listen, get dead and don't take flowers to your grave.

If you're dead, let the flowers die. Don't kill your neighbours while you're talking about being dead. But this man says, present your body a living sacrifice.

You talk about going the second mile, man dear, he goes a hundred and twenty second miles. What does he say later, autobiographical, he said, I die daily. How can you die daily if you died once? He died to self once, he died to sin once, but he died to opportunities, he died to privileges, he died to advantages, he had them all.

He's a colossal intellect, he's of the tribe of Benjamin, the seed of Abraham, a Pharisee of the Pharisee, his father was a Pharisee. Remember when he was talking to a big, rich, powerful Roman soldier, and the Roman soldier said, with great price obtained I this freedom. And this little squirt of a Jew there with a hunchback says, I was free born.

And he staggered. You say where he was born, he was born in Tarsus, the oldest city in the world, the historic city of the world, Tarsus, where he was born. He went to the intellectual city of the world, in the 16th, is it 16th of Acts, Athens.

He went to the religious capital of the world, Jerusalem. He goes to most of the capitals of the world, but he ends up in the Roman capital of the world, the hardest capital in Rome. You see, this man is so smart, he won't give the devil a bit of credit.

I think the demon said, you know what, we got the apostle Paul in prison, boy we'll keep his mouth shut for a while. So he writes a letter while he's in prison, he says, smuggle this out, send it to my friends. What does he say? Paul, the prisoner of Caesar.

No? Have I got the wrong version? What did he say? Prisoner of Jesus Christ. What are you doing in here? He said, Jesus put me here. Oh, I thought he liberated you.

The only time I'm free is when I'm bound in the will of Jesus Christ. My freedom is thy grand control. Again, it's the train on the railroad track, it can go a hundred miles an hour.

I went one in Japan, I thought it was going to take off and go airborne, speeding down the road. I was so busy watching, somebody picked my pocket. I hate the Japanese ever since, but anyhow.

But that really happened, and they even took my Bible with 10 years of notes in it. You know, the trouble is that people can read Hebrew and Greek, they can't even read my writing. Isn't that awful? But Paul says, I die daily.

I have advantages. I forget them all. And he doesn't go mourning every day, he rejoices every day for the liberty that he has in Jesus Christ.

He presented his intellect, his body, his soul, his spirit, his mind, his faculty, his wills. There wasn't one frantic millionth part of one percent of Paul left. You see, this awesome epistle, he says here, I beseech you therefore.

The therefore says all these things that's been referred to. Actually, the doctrinal part, I believe, ends in the end of the 11th chapter with a doxology. Listen to him.

He says, all the depth of the riches of wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out who knows the mind of the Lord. In verse 33 he says, the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, how unfathomable is his mind, his ways are past finding out. Friend, you'll never find out what God's trying to do in your life.

Again, I can't explain God, but I can experience him. I get as baffled as anybody sometimes about certain things. But then we rest in the Lord.

And a little thing came on my desk, I don't know, about three o'clock, four o'clock, a couple of mornings ago. The wind was blowing and a tiny insect, it wasn't as big as a pinhead, the tiniest little thing I've ever seen. I thought, well, what are you coming at this hour for? No music to play to you.

It wasn't as big as a pinhead. And you know, suddenly the little thing started trekking across my book. I thought, boy, what mechanism is in it? Look at my glass, I can't even see the legs on it, but it was going.

And that was made by God. As I say, that wonderful last part of Psalm 100, everything that hath breath. If you get under the weather, if the stock market goes down, if everything goes down, forget it.

Read that fifth chapter. Some of your Bibles are worn out at Romans 8.28, I guess. Everything is troubled.

Oh dearie, you're there. Well, remember Mary, Romans 8.28 says, all things work together for good. Is that all Paul wrote? He says, stick your chin up in there, glory in tribulation, in necessities, in repulses.

Everything that other people run away from, Lord, don't let this come to me, he says, it's all grist to my mill. I triumph over everything. That reminds me of the great old preacher when we were in England there at Westminster Chapel.

Right around the corner from Westminster Abbey, no, across from the corner. The Westminster Central Hall, the Methodist Hall. And the preacher there was Dr. Dinsdale Young.

He was a fantastic man, like most Methodists. But anyhow, he's about six foot two, a great bald head with two big puffs of white hair at each side, you know. I think they copied him from Mickey Mouse's hat.

He's a fantastic preacher. I remember he opened a book one day and he began to read. He put the, I don't know what he was reading, he had the book up to his nose, big stentorian voice, three thousand people listening.

He says, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. So I shouted hallelujah, and everybody went, you know, poor lunatic in the gallery. Then he said, all that is within me.

Now listen, if you've got indwelling sin in your heart, you shouldn't have it. Indwelling sin can't glorify God. That's a proof you can have a pure heart.

All that is within me, bless his holy name, who forgiveth all iniquities and healeth all diseases. Anyhow, that dear old man walked with God for about 60 years. He had a pretty lengthy illness, but the doctor said he won't last 24 hours.

And there he was in bed, in the big old canopy bed, you know they have in England. I don't know why they have a wooden roof, it's not going to rain, but anyhow. And then they packed him up with pillars.

And they said, it's getting nearer, it's getting nearer. The dear old man leaned back on his elbow, and he pointed to the skies, and he just said this, I triumph still, and fell back dead. What was he going to quote? From Francis Henry Light's hymn, Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.

The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide. When other helpers fail and comforts flee, O thou who changest not, abide with me. Then he just said, I triumph still, looking with the radiance on his face, and passed into eternity.

You see, this man had such an experience of God, 195 lashes, couldn't whip it out of him. A day and a night in the Mediterranean, a night and a day in the deep, couldn't wash it out of him. They threatened him, they couldn't threaten it out of him.

It wasn't just pretty poetry like we sang tonight, On Christ the solid rock I stand. He was there, every storm that could break on a person, broke on him. What did he care? You see, that's why he says to young Timothy, the marvellous things that he said, remember again, you fellows that aspire to preach.

I think of this every day of my life. Paul says to this young man, listen, number one, preach the word. Dear Lord, we're preaching everything but the word these days.

We're preaching about abortion, and we should preach it, but people say, well, look at Finney, how much he preached against slavery. Is he remembered for fighting slavery? Sure he's not. He's remembered for whipping the devil.

He's remembering for emptying hell in some parts. This precious man of God had such vision, and God wants you and preach the word, be instant in season out of season. Then what does he say? Study, not just read the word, not just memorize it, study to show thyself approved to the deacons.

No? I must have a bad version here. What did he say? Study to show thyself approved to the church members, to the district superintendent, to your headquarters. One of the best known men in the world called me a couple of hours ago from Springfield.

I thought he was asking advice, but anyhow, he didn't ask too much. But I don't have to show myself approved to you or anybody else. I have to preach the word in season and out of season.

Reprove if need be, there's not much of that done anymore. Let people become hostile. There's nothing makes me more happy than when people go out to meeting mad.

I used to think they had to go out glad, but now either I want no God, either sad or mad, the glad doesn't matter. You know, if we really were in the presence of a holy God every time we go to the sanctuary, and I mean this with all my heart, I believe we go out of every meeting with tears running down our eyes, the tears of joy that we've been illuminated and emancipated, delivered from bondage, delivered from the cults, delivered from all satanic oppression. I don't read out tears for a world again that is doomed and damned.

Every tick of the clock the church is sleeping. I wrote a few letters this week, and I put right across the back sh the big dash, quiet please, the church is sleeping. Maybe you'd like to make me a rubber stamp

for that.

People say the church is dead, she can't be dead. There's a remnant within a remnant, she's not dead but she's sleeping. But when a person is sleeping, their powers are suspended as though they were dead.

Anyhow they can't hear, they can't see, and they can be robbed, you can do anything with them. But this man is alert the whole moment, living every moment of his life, not just gliding on, he has intention, he has purpose. This one thing I do, he was consumed.

You see that's what God wants. He doesn't want you to just be a disciple. Oh you know Jesus wants to be a partner in your business, forget it he doesn't, he doesn't get a hill of beans about your business.

But he wants partnership, he doesn't, he wants ownership. If he has partnership, you'll dictate some policy. If he's owner, you'll have to ask what you do with your own money.

Take my silver and my gold, how often have we sung it here? But has he done it? I said there's only yesterday a bunch of these smart men that came. I said you know Christians are very careful how they spend their money, not very careful how they spend their time. If you lose your money you can get it back, but once time has gone it's gone.

John Wesley was standing with some men on the hillside, I don't know what they were after, but a man suddenly drew the bows and arrows. We don't use those now, we're civilized, we just barbecue cities. Those terrible Indians used to shoot arrows.

Now the white men are geniuses, we can wipe a thousand years of civilization out in five minutes. John Wesley saw this arrow going in the air and he said to a man, who shot that? He said the man behind the bush. And he saw the arrow go up to the ark and then it began to drop.

And he said to the man, I'm that arrow. Mr. Wesley what do you mean? He said I'm that arrow. I go so high in life, I lose momentum and I drop into eternity.

Is there a book on that? He said yes there is. Well get me that book. It's true that Wesley at one period said he was a man of one book.

Well I would be like him, he'd read about 10,000 up to that point. We should have sung the hymn tonight. I thought about that, forget afterwards.

That lovely hymn we've learned and we don't sing too well, we will get used to it. And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood? Remember this was written by a scholar, a gentleman, a man who knew his Hebrew, knew his Greek, had the best family in England after the royal family. Not John Wesley but Charles Wesley.

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood? Died he for me who caused his pain? Did that ever get hold of you? Died he for me who caused his pain? For me who him to death pursued amazing love? The second standard says, what does it say? Oh I'm getting the, I get the line now. Oh thank you, long my imprisoned spirit. Listen this man has no drug culture, this man has no hideous crime records, this man is not a drunken, he's an impeccable gentleman, he's a scholar.

He's accepted with the society. But he says, long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night, thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke the dungeon flame with light, my chains fell off, my heart

was free, I rose went forth and followed thee. No condemnation now I dread, Jesus and all in him is mine.

You know five minutes inside of heaven every one of us will be in tears. People say, oh I'm going to heaven there's no tears. Well the book I have here in Revelation says there are tears, he wipes away tears from our eyes.

What tears? Tears of regret, tears about failure, tears about when God said do this we didn't do it. There are going to be tears in heaven, sure there are. We're going to be embarrassed to death as we say when we get there.

When God shows me the possibilities of grace that I could have had, if I'd really walked as close to him as I should, I'm going to be embarrassed. You know there's going to be super millionaires in heaven, not dollar millionaires. Paul talks about forgetting all the stuff, he says but be sure about the true riches.

Oh do you know what it would cost me if I became a Christian? Yes sure I do. What would it cost me? Nothing. What does Paul say? All these things that you and I treasure, we label them as precious and whatever adjectives you want to say about them, what do you say about them? He says all these little things that look so big, they're weighing up, they're really preparing for us a place in glory, an eternal waiting, our life's a fleeting bitches but for a moment, it's a moment.

How do you explain eternity? Suppose your little boys ask you when you go home, how do you explain eternity? One of the old Greeks said eternity is a block of granite, a mile that way, a mile that way, a mile that way. And a sparrow comes on the corner of that block of granite and wipes his beak and flies away and comes back after 10,000 years. And by the time he's worn that solid block of granite away, that will be one moment in eternity.

That's not enough. There's no way to comprehend it. Then you wind up, I mentioned last week again, you know if somebody criticizes the church, I listen to it because I'm part of it.

But when Jesus criticizes the church, he's right. Sometimes they're not, they're blind with prejudice and so forth. Jesus says at the last stretch of the church, the Laodicean church, she's rich and has need of nothing, and knows not she's wretched and naked and poor and blind.

We're blind. I'm having to arouse myself, Lord God today, don't let me blind to eternity, don't let me blind to the condition of lost millions, don't let me be blind to the judgment. Some of you that are super Christians, go ahead, and I'm not scornful.

Would you like to step on the dais for your reward right after the Apostle Paul? Huh? Oh and Mr. Amiel, in Revelation 20 it says the books are open, yes. It doesn't say anything about books being open for the believer, doesn't it? What does it say in Malachi? A book of remembrance. God's book is not a book like this, I'd say it's chapters, it's a roll actually.

What about the chapter on praying? This good brother's been interested for years in what they call the praying patient of Portland. They're going to publish his diary, I think, in three volumes. These men who prayed, praying patient of Portland, he went to bed, the floor was like this, no rug, and when he prayed, he prayed like this going forward, so that he wore big caps on his knees like a camel, but he wore grooves at the side of his bed, about six inches long with his knees, with his intercession.

And am I going to be judged for my prayer life right after that man? I've got a new definitive study of Jonathan Edwards, of course I don't read it at the wrong place or the right place, I open it and the heading says, this man prayed and studied his Bible 13 hours every day. He didn't have the most quietness because he had 13 children too. But you see, it's this one thing I do, it's not something I go to church, something when I get I'm blessed and what, because you're an exhibitionist, do you do that in a secret place? Do you dance for joy in the presence of God? Oh David danced, he didn't dance before a congregation, he danced before God.

Do you get lost in wonder, love and praise until you're speechless? You can't even pray in tongues? There's something craving in there. It's like Paul says in Romans chapter 8 again, he talks about groanings which cannot be uttered. There's no vocabulary.

String all the vocabularies of the world together, they're no good. God doesn't just listen to my words, he listens to my heartbeat. I was thinking again of a statement that was made by Spurgeon many years ago.

He said God doesn't measure, he doesn't measure prayers by their length, he doesn't measure prayers, he said he weighs them, he weighs them. What depth have they? Why are they created? As I say, prayer is preoccupation with my needs, either private needs or my national needs or the church's needs. Prayer is preoccupation with my needs.

Praise is preoccupation with my blessings. Worship is preoccupation with God. My goal is God himself, not joy, not peace, not even blessing.

I like the old hymn that says, I'll praise my maker while I breath, and should my eyes be closed in death, praise shall employ my nobler powers. My days of praise shall ne'er be past, while life and thought and being last, all immortality endures. Let me skip down this chapter quickly with you, in case you forgot we're in Romans chapter 12.

Let me tell you what I thought about this chapter, how I see it. You know what, this first verse is like a bud. We have a lot of nice roses in our garden and Martha brings them in almost every day.

You know they change though, they're so used to sunshine, when they come in the house and the air condition is on, they die, they can't put up with it, they're used to the sunshine. Some Christians are alright in church, when they get out to a hell of a world, they wither. What does it say here? I say this is a bud, I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, you present your body a living sacrifice, holy.

Remember the priest in the old testament could not minister until he was cleansed, and even after he was cleansed he couldn't minister, he had to be anointed. And so he says present your body a living sacrifice, which is only a reasonable service. It's also translated, it's your only intelligent thing to do.

That great American hymn, my faith looks up to thee, as thou hast died for me, so may my love to thee, pure, warm and changeless be, a living fire. Wouldn't it be terrible if God was erratic as we are? You know he went some days and he was in a mood and you say oh, you know some people don't get mad, they just soak. I know you're guilty but that's okay.

Let me tell you how this flower opens out. The bud is the first verse, then it begins to open out. Let's jump down to verse 10.

You see if you haven't presented your body a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable, if it isn't on the altar, and remember in the old testament when you put anything on the altar you couldn't take it off. A man stopped me on a street, I can see it now in England, in 1935. He said Mr. Renwick, you know my favorite scripture? No, tell me.

My favorite scripture is Romans chapter 12, one and two. He said every morning when I get up, I present my body to the Lord, a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable. Do you do that? I said no.

He said I do every morning. I said I don't. I said why not? I said the only way, if that's the altar and this is your body, and you put your body on the altar this morning, how can you put it on the altar tomorrow morning? The only way, you've taken it off the altar during the day.

You put it there once and for all. This is in the Aorist tense, it's something that's done perfectly, it's done without regret. Present my body, here you're the owner of the thing.

But if he's going to work through me, he's going to do it this way. Verse 10, be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another, not slothful in business. Verse 12, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation.

Did that work out today? I do get irritated. You know when the Lord, I think He treats with people according to their nature. There's a lady called Lydia, her heart open to the Lord like a flower opens in the sun noiselessly.

Saul is going down the Damascus road on a horse, he must have been to go to Damascus, he sure didn't walk, there wasn't a stagecoach, and the Lord picks him off his horse into the dust. He didn't say why me, what did he say? He didn't say, well yeah that's right, I couldn't get hold of it. He didn't say why me, Lord, look at the rest of these men, I'm the apostle, I'm the anointed one, look at that man on his horse, look at this man coming up, and look at this friend of Caesar's coming up, why me in the dust? He didn't say that.

He says, who art thou? Not as we really often, who art thou, who art thou Lord? No. He says, who art thou? Lord, are you the Lord? And he never turned back from that moment. I heard a popular preacher, I won't give you his name, he's an Englishman, very popular in this country.

I went to hear him in Manchester, and he preached, and he scorned the baptism of the Spirit, he scorned the second blessing, he went down the line, boy he had a great time. Then at the end he said, you know what, the trouble with many of you, your Christian life is so rugged, for the simple reason you took Christ as your Saviour, and never took him as your Lord, that's bunkum. He has to be your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there cannot be a Saviour without being Lordship.

Again he doesn't want your lousy sins, he wants you, he wants your personality, he wants your will. He wants every part of your being, he wants to play on it, like our dear sister plays on the piano. Play on your personality.

Verse 12, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer, distributing to the necessity of the saints, and given to hospitality. Bless them which curse you, bless and curse not. Listen, you can't.

If God hasn't got hold of that tongue of yours, boy, we'll be soon spitting, and spitting fire, and spitting accusations out, and you'll give more than you get. But you see, when he says, beseech you therefore by the blood, he's talking about all things that's gone before. What does it say in the 8th chapter, there's a

place where he says, uh, it is God that justifieth.

I can't take care of myself, I'm not smart enough. It is God that justifieth. I don't have to take care of myself.

You say, well I have to take care of my reputation, take it to the cross like Jesus did, get rid of it. I've got to watch my reputation. Do you know what? You won't find this in Webster's dictionary, it's out of my dictionary.

You know what reputation is? Reputation is what men think of me. Character is what God knows I am. That doesn't mean I live any old how, I'm not.

I want to walk in the light. I don't want to be a stumbling block to anybody. If you're so busy looking after yourself, somebody will fall over you anyhow.

You'll forget self-interest, self-seeking, self-glory, self-promotion. It's Christ. Verse 14, bless them which persecute you, bless and curse not, rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Be of the same mind, one to another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Recompense to no man evil for evil, providing things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as life in you live peaceably with all men. Beloved, dearly beloved, verse 19, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath.

Let somebody get blazing mad with you, just back off, don't answer. If you don't answer, they'll get more mad. They're trying to get you mad, trying to get to stir you up.

Forget it. It's God that justifies. We sing a hymn often here, hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand.

Never folk and follow, never stray. If you vote me the greatest Christian you've ever met, and the Lord says, well that's wonderful, I didn't know that, and he puts my name at the top of the list, then next year you vote me the worst Christian you've ever seen, it won't change God's mind. The only person who can change God's mind about me, is me.

Again, we don't all pay the same price to come to the Lord. Some man has to give up a career. I talked with a man just a few days ago, and his daddy's mad with him.

His daddy's the head of a big corporation, and he wants the young man to take the job. He's been to college, he has a degree, and he says, daddy I can't do it, the Lord has called me. What are you going to do when you get to be an old man? Well, the Lord won't be old.

The Lord will be just as rich, you know, a billion years from now, as he is now. You know, he'll love us. You know, it's a strange thing, if you love the Lord, he'll love you more.

And if you don't, he'll weep you, till he loves you more. Because whom the Lord loveth, he wraps in a cocoon, and he puts on Satan, don't touch my darling child. Don't trespass on her emotions.

Don't hurt her inner feelings. She'll have to go to Dallas to get them healed. I guess you didn't know this was all in this chapter, did you? Verse 19, dearly beloved avenge not yourself, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written vengeance is mine.

Listen, God's keeping the time signals, and when he wants to vindicate you, he'll vindicate you. When you've forgotten about it, it will come up just like a flower in your yard tomorrow morning that you didn't know was there. Vengeance is his.

If you're your property, it's your business. If you're God's property, it's his business. And either you abandon yourself to God, or you paddle your own canoe.

Lean on the flesh, you'll fall down on the flesh. You know God has a lovely record, did you know that? He has a wonderful record of success. He's never failed all the billions of people in history.

So cheer up if he fails you, you'll be in something better than the Guinness Book of Records. You'll be in the eternal book of records. You're the only person God ever failed.

You know he's pretty expert at handling human personality, isn't he? Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. It is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if I enemy hunger, starve him to death.

Isn't that what we do? You think it's easy living in a Christian life? Come on, when you have a party at Christmas, why did you have one? Well you all come to our house one day, and we'll come to your house the next day. That's just what the Lord says is wrong. When you have a party, call in somebody that can't return the favor.

Help the people that won't turn out, do your gift. You see, this is pretty stiff stuff, isn't it? Again it's not for sisters and pansies, it's for men and soldiers. If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst, give him to drink.

For in doing so thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Boy we'd like to heap the coals of fire, wouldn't we? Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good. Again you see, this man is the best example of his own theology.

It works out in his life. Who else? Do you know a preacher in Dallas that dare say to his congregation Sunday morning, I've been meditating on this for a week, I want you all to live my lifestyle. Eat as little as I'll eat, sleep as little as I sleep, love people like I love them, sacrifice as I, weep as I weep, groan as I groan.

That's what Paul says. I'm not telling you about some distant Christ, I'm telling you now, I walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, and you walk in my footsteps, and I'll be responsible for you when I get to the judgment seat. Which is only partly true of course, he couldn't, we're totally responsible ourselves.

But you see what young people are looking for, good Lord, we have more books on what young people should do today, good night, to sink a ship. But where are the examples? Where are the people who say, come on, live as I live, walk as I walk. That's the beauty of men like C.T. Studdard, I heard C.T. Studdard speak or men like Padgett Wilkes that founded the Japan rescue mission, or some of those old warriors that I met 60, 70 years ago.

And there was something about them, when you looked at them, they breathed dignity, they breathed holiness. There's a man in England, my daddy would have gone a hundred miles, though my dad had no money. And yet he's a man, one of the early Pentecostals, as a matter of fact, I guess most of you read somewhere about what do you call ever increasing faith, Smith Wigglesworth, how many of you read about Smith Wigglesworth? Boy, he was a man of faith.

There was a whole body of those men, one was called Donald G., he was a man about six feet one. When that man handed the word of God and read it, it was like spraying the audience with perfume. He brought out of the treasury things new and old.

He just felt there'd been a confrontation with God, with deity, with eternity. And that's what it's going to take to get us through the years ahead of us, it's going to be rough. It will be a supreme miracle if America keeps out of war in the Middle East, and we've no bases there.

And dear Lord, you can't fight all those people having a few helicopters on a ship five miles away. The situation is extremely difficult. I listened to some parts of that fellow Ollie North.

I don't know whether all he said was true, but some things were true. One thing he kept saying, America's in a very, very critical situation. You know what, I wish we were as nervous about God as we are about Russia.

We're not afraid of God, we're afraid of Russia. We're afraid of death, we're afraid of an atomic war, we're afraid of an invasion. Where is fear of God? Where is the fear of God? A holy fear, a reverent fear.

And we don't want to step one degree out of path, the path that he's plotted for us. And you see, it's only as we eat this word and drink this word, we become strong. Again, you've got the throttle in your own hand.

The richest man in town doesn't have 25 hours on his clock, or eight days in his week, or 400 days in his calendar. He knows how to use it better. And that's the secret, one of the secrets of the Puritans.

Men with colossal intellects, but most they had such a concept of the holiness and majesty of God. I say again, I believe that those men, those preachers, they went to heaven for six days in the week, and came down to earth on the seventh day, loaded with revelation, with authority, with power. And they transformed the atmosphere.

Present your body a living sacrifice. There's no installment, I do not believe in departmental sanctification. You can have a sanctified brain, but not a sanctified tongue.

You can't, that's not true. One thing, you know, Paul asked some awesome things in that sixth chapter. Seventh chapter, of course, is a funeral march.

Eighth chapter is a wedding march. Chapter seven is wriggling and squirming, O wretched man that I am. It's wonderful how Christians love to quote that.

Well, you don't need to do that, just keep looking as sad as you are. We all know you're in Romans seven. O wretched man, no, no, he didn't finish up there.

He finished further up the road, in Romans seven he said, it's not I, it's sin that dwelleth in me. Up there he said, it's not I, it's Christ that liveth in me. You can't have Christ on the throne and sin on the throne.

Make up your mind what you're going to do. The Catholic people talk about submission, and sanctification, they preach as, teach sanctification as, what's the word they use? Well, subduing the old nature, keeping it under control. Listen, the old nature's too smart for that.

Take it to the cross. There's a lady in England, I'm through with this, she, she had a dog. A fellow came along, he said, that's a gorgeous dog, but there's something wrong with it.

Oh, I know what it is. He said, you know that dog, it shouldn't have a tail this length. That kind of dog doesn't have a tail.

Oh, she said, oh. He went back about two months after to the farm to sell some stuff, and the dog's tail was cut in half. He said about me, about 15 inches, and about five inches of tail.

And he said, your dog's changed. I told you, it shouldn't have a tail. Well, she said, you know, I thought it was cruel to cut it off at once, so I take a bit off every week.

That's what swimmers are trying to do with the old nature in us. Subdue it. You can't.

Take it to the cross. He's talking here, present your body. Christ presented his body, a living sacrifice, when he went to the cross, but then he died.

And if you read the sixth chapter, he said, if you're really born again, you died with him there on the cross. If you didn't, you're not born. I've used a figure, there it is, a man standing in the water.

I put him under the water, immediately goes under the water, he can't see the world above, he can't talk to it, he can't communicate with it. If you're buried with Christ, you're cut off from the world above. You don't want its interest, its parties, its shows, and all the other junk they have these days.

Somebody told us yesterday about a man that used to live in this area. He's going to open a school in California. Do you know what? Oh, you wouldn't believe it, Pentecostal mimes.

You know, it started in the upper room. It didn't, it started in hell. Can you imagine the apostles coming out of the upper room with white faces and white hands, and everybody falling back and saying, who are these strange men? Boy, all Peter had to do was open his mouth and they knew.

God, the Holy Ghost is upon him. You know, I don't think, I remember when we had crusades in England. We'd get up at five o'clock in the morning, go to factory gates and sing, give out handbills.

I got convicted one day, because I said to a fellow, he said, what is this? I said, well, we're a party of young men, evangelists. We sleep on the floor, make our own meals, walk from city to city. He wouldn't believe it, eventually he did.

And he said, well, I don't believe in that kind of stuff, because it doesn't last, but it does last. And we went from city to city like that, and those churches are still standing today. But Paul says, I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, and yet it's not I, it's Christ that liveth in me.

I can't do these things, I can't suffer every day, I can't sacrifice every day, I can't be trodden underfoot every day. I'd retaliate, but the Christ in me does it. I'm glorying in tribulation, I don't just grit my teeth, I glory, pour it on me.

Give me a double portion for that man that can't stand it. I glory in necessity, I glory in need, I glory in reproaches. And that's what the world's waiting to see, it's waiting to see people that are completely sold out to Jesus Christ.

We'll never move the world with mimes, dear God, and acting and playing. As soon as a church is bankrupt, it has to start something else. There's no substitute for the holy word of God, quick and powerful, it's confession.

I was going to say, let me finish that. I got to the place, I didn't say to men, come to the meeting, you'll enjoy it tonight. They'd been praying for two or three hours, they'd be in misery.

We pray they'd have such conviction of sin, they'd get up and walk out of the meeting, that God would take the lid off their secret hearts. The last thing, I was in a meeting, I met my precious wife there in Eccles in 1937, quite a way since. I preached on Psalm 51 one Saturday night, I don't, there weren't a hundred people in the tent, they don't come Saturday nights much.

At the end this tall woman, oh boy, boy was she tall, she was about six foot three I think, big shoulders, walked down like a man, as wrinkled as a prune, and as ugly as any woman I've ever seen. And that's saying a lot. I'm not looking round.

She came to the altar, we had a rail and she clung, and I could see her knuckles, she's like this. I said, lady what's your problem? She said, Mr. Raymond, 40 years ago, I was an officer in the Salvation Army, a soul winner. I had a partner, another lady, and we had an argument after a meeting one night.

She said, I went home, I took my straw hat off and tore it, put it on the fire, we have open fires in our houses. I took off my tunic, cut it up, put it on the fire, took my skirt off, tore it up, put it on the fire, then tore my bible up and put it on the fire. I was so angry, I was so disgusted, and I'd seen people rescued from the perishing, from the gutter, harlots and others.

And she said, that night I turned my back on God, and I preached on Psalm 51, restore unto me the joy. You know that woman's face almost cracked, she said, Mr. Raymond, while you were preaching, God put the joy back. She said, after I went the way I went, burned everything, renounced my position as an officer in the Salvation Army, I went to hear William Booth preach, and he preached hellfire.

I heard Colonel Bringle preach, and he preached hellfire. I heard Commissioner Lawley preach, I heard Mrs. Booth preach, I heard the Marashal preach. I went, but never once, never once has God ever, ever spoken to me in 40 years.

I'd been in the wilderness. And she said, you don't know what it means. Suddenly the Lord says, you're forgiven, I'll restore you.

And she said, something burst inside. For the first time in 40 years, I have peace, I have joy. Do you know that, I stayed on after the crusade, and became pastor of that church, and we had meetings every Sunday morning at seven for prayer.

And I'd go in winter, and there was snow outside, she'd be standing there. She was first to the prayer meeting, she never missed a prayer meeting. She became so active afterwards.

She said, there are others like that. The devil has tricked them. They've lost their joy, they've lost their peace.

They don't read this word, it's like a mouthful of sand. I've lost my harmony, I've lost my joy, I've lost my peace. You know, there's no substitute on God's earth for the joy of the Lord.

And if you don't have it, you'll need entertainment from morning till night. Entertainment's the devil's substitute for joy. But when you have the joy of the Lord, you don't need that junk.

You want to be pure as He is pure. You don't want the noise, in case you miss His voice. He asked you to put it all down, spirit, soul, and body.

It has to be cleansed. Cleanse me through the blood, indwell me by the spirit. Now Lord, it's all yours, and who knows what will happen.

I remember I went to an altar. I was a youth leader in the church. I went to an altar one night.

A fellow came with his Bible, he said, I want to pray with you. I said, okay. What are you looking for? I said, Romans chapter 6. And oh, I know, he said, Romans 6.6, knowing this our old man is crucified.

No, no, no, no. I said, Romans 6.7. He said, no, 6.6. I said, no, 6.7. He said, no, it's 6.6. I said, it's 6.7. I don't know what 6.7, I'll tell you. I said, it says this, he that is dead is freed from sin.

I said, I want to die. I've got all my material out to start business. Got my degrees in draftsmanship and so forth.

Everything's lined up. I lay in dust, life's glory dead. I just want Jesus to have all there is of me.

If you told me that night that Christ would take this poor life of mine, I finished school in the eighth grade, came from a very poor home, don't think I read a dozen books in the house. If you told me that God would pick me up and use me and take me around the world to preach and let me write some books and so forth, I'd have said, not me, you've got the wrong guy. You see, it's not what you bring to him, it's what he can bring to you.

All he says, get your hands empty, they're so full. Your hands are full, I can't fill them. Your head is full, I can't fill it.

Your mind is full, I can't fill it. Your heart is full, I can't fill it. Well, get emptied of self, get emptied of ambition, get emptied of your own purposes and say, Lord, I lay in dust, life's glory dead.

I'm going to ask you to sing a verse of that before we pray.

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