

I Have Appeared Unto Thee - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of a personal encounter with Jesus and the urgent call for the church to engage in spiritual warfare and revival.

Duration: 42:41

Scripture: Acts 26:12-20, Acts 26:22-25, Acts 26:29, Acts 26:32, Acts 28:31

Topics: "Spiritual Transformation", "Christian Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the conversion of the apostle Paul on the Damascus road. He emphasizes that Paul's encounter with Jesus was a life-changing experience that transformed him from a persecutor of Christians to a devoted follower of Christ. The preacher highlights the power and authority that Jesus bestowed upon Paul, enabling him to become a powerful minister and witness for the gospel. He also emphasizes the importance of believers presenting their bodies as living sacrifices to God and not conforming to the ways of the world.

Transcript

As we left the sanctuary this morning I heard the pastor thanking David for bringing me this week and so in case I forget David thank you for bringing me. This is the first time we've kind of been a team ministering and it's been refreshing to me and almost thrilling I would say and trust God we'll continue to bless us together. I want to thank the pastor and the session for inviting us for you good folk for coming for the Rowntree and this flock who have been here and others and just ask you to please remember us day by day in prayer.

I've emphasized the fact that the dollar is deteriorating and just recently I sent for some tapes just three of them and they were seven dollars each and mine are selling for a dollar fifty. Just shows how quickly the dollar is going down doesn't it? Reading tonight from the Acts of the Apostles chapter 26. The Acts of the Apostles the 26th chapter.

I read from verse 12 anticipating you know the introduction to this at least if you don't know the exact words you know it historically I'm sure. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests at midday O King I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun shining round about me and them which journeyed with me and when we were all fallen to the earth I heard a voice speaking unto me and saying in the Hebrew tongue Saul Saul why persecutest thou me it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks and I said who art thou Lord and he said I am Jesus whom thou

persecutest but rise and stand upon my feet for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes to turn them from darkness to light from the power of Satan unto God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Somewhere in his letters Paul says that he commands that this letter be read to all the churches and if I had my way this scripture would be read in every Bible school and theological seminary throughout the country every day.

This is the great commission of the Apostle Paul. Somebody quoted tonight about Isaiah's vision and in Isaiah's vision chapter 6 in Isaiah 6 he says there that he in the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord. A bit later in the chapter he says I heard a voice and you have that paralleled here in this chapter again.

He saw the Lord. He heard a voice. We were out in Uvalde in the other side of San Antonio the other week and we had a meeting in a bank and you can always get people to gather there and we had quite a crowd of people and outside was the automobile with a number one on a big gorgeous limousine.

It happened to be I thought it was the governor of the state and I think it was his wife and somebody said she's a devout Christian and her crisis experience was when she prayed one day and Jesus appeared to her in all his majesty in all his resurrection splendor. Be that as it may this is what happened to this amazing man Paul or Saul as he was on the Damascus Road. You know it's a very simple thing that's said to him here.

If the Lord said I've appeared unto thee for this purpose to make you the most dramatic minister in history you're going to have all the gifts of the Spirit. You're going to write unparalleled epistles. You're going to raise the dead, cast out demons.

The fruits of the Spirit will all be all over your life and instead of that he says I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister and I suggest to you that men can ordain men but nobody can unctonize men except God. And there on that Damascus Road he had his personal encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. You know as I look over his life I think sometimes well I just love all that the Apostle had.

Oh let me withdraw that. I like a lot of things the Apostle had. I'd like his power because he could raise the dead.

I'd like his peace because he said none of these things move me. I'd like his poise because he was able to take everything that came along. I would like his purpose.

This one thing I do. I would like his passion because he says for me to live is Christ. But having now absorbed the things that I would like, his peace, his power, his passion, his purpose, the other side of the coin is this.

He had prisons and persecutions and privations and punishments. But if one goes with the other you can't separate them. Jesus said way back before the Apostle well my peace I leave you but in the world you shall have tribulation.

You'll need that peace to balance all that the world is going to put on you. My that's a great hymn. David said he hadn't heard it sung so he sang it for you David tonight.

A mighty fortress is our God. My that really put some something in my blood when I sing it. I heard a man say to somebody recently who the devil are you? And I thought that's the thing to ask the devil.

Who the devil are you? Because that word, that hymn that we sang says that we've got power over him. Maybe the most unused power. Jesus says you know you'll get by with a little bit of my energy.

You won't sit down and set your finger because somebody hurt you. He doesn't say that. He says I delegate to you the Church of the Living God I give you power over all the power of the enemy.

And maybe that's the most unused power in the whole world. Not the water that slips over Niagara Falls. The Canadians were smarter than us.

They harnessed the Niagara Falls years ago. And their electric rates are no higher because somebody says it doesn't cost any more for the water to go over the Niagara Falls now than it did 50 years ago. We let it all waste.

Typical of America isn't it? But always wasting. Well I mustn't waste time I must get on here. That this amazing man going down that Damascus Road again I remind you breathing out threatenings.

My my my shall we ever see another man like this man? He didn't bring a lot of rotten sins and crusty theology to Jesus. He met the Lord Jesus Christ on that Damascus Road. Many times you've read a letter or you've heard about a person and you said I I'd like to meet them.

People have said that often about me. And every time they meet me they say oh my. Nearly everybody says I thought you'd be about six feet high and have a big powerful voice and here I am a little squirt getting less as I get older I'm shrinking away.

But to hear of someone. Even to hear the voice on the phone maybe. And I don't know whether Jesus had been Paul had met Jesus at all.

One school of theology says he was a rich young ruler that Jesus met. Again you remember in the 15th of that upon me of 1st Corinthians where he runs down that amazing post resurrection list of people who saw Jesus. Last of all he appeared to me also.

But I think that means the Damascus Road. Now you can listen to a thousand sermons and you can agree or disagree but if ever there is a revelation of Jesus Christ to you you'll never forget that revelation. And so on that Damascus Road he didn't really exchange his sins.

He exchanged his life because he said for me to live his Christ. It was not only an exchange life it was an exciting life. He wrestled with wild beasts at Ephesus.

Not only an exciting life an extensive life because you have benefited from him today. I wonder what would have happened speaking outside of divine inspiration if he had not met or met Jesus Christ on that road. Supposing he had gone with a death sentence of the church under his shirt which he had.

Signed and sealed and he may put the Christian church to death. What would have happened if that day when he prayed and he was going to North Galatia to Bithynia and halfway there he had a revelation he

turned and came to Europe. What in the world will people think I've sent out letters and you know my usual monthly budget letter asking people to pray for me in Bithynia and he did not go to Bithynia.

He went to three or four women wash doing something at the side of the river. Why in the world didn't he put a healing crusade on? There was an auditorium there pardon me there was a there was a bull ring there a sports palace if you like there was a circus that would seat maybe a hundred thousand people. Why didn't he rent it? Why didn't he strut like our preachers do on TV? You know what everything Jesus did I did.

He raised the dead I raised the dead. He prophesied I prophesied. He cast out demons I cast out demons.

But this man made up his mind one day that if there was any man outside of hell that ought to be full of gratitude he was that man. He would have died with a terrible slur upon his name as a persecutor and a murderer. And Jesus came and revealed himself to him and from that day he has an intoxication with Jesus Christ.

You know the trouble with the church today? It's sober and it won't do anything till it gets drunk. That's what they said about the men coming out of the upper room didn't they? They said of them these men are drunk. And Paul said be not drunk with wine but be drunk or be filled with the spirit.

Be intoxicated. He's God's intoxicated man. An intoxicated man will talk when he shouldn't and he'll fight when he shouldn't and he fears nothing and nobody.

And when the church gets really intoxicated with the power of God she fears neither men nor demons nor devils nor hell itself. So he goes down Damascus Road he says the Lord said I've appeared unto thee for this purpose but wait a minute. He says the Lord said rise and stand upon my feet.

And here is his second dramatic encounter with a king. Twenty-fourth chapter you have in there before Felix and he reasoned of righteousness temperance and judgment to come and Felix trembled. Isn't that something? People say there's no humor in the Bible.

And what's wrong with it? You can't laugh at that. After all they've gathered all the dignitaries there and little Paul is supposed to shrink and hope somebody will be very careful and tolerable and kind to him and instead of that the big powers are trembling before him. And now we find him again in this 26th chapter.

Eve before Agrippa. The 23rd verse of the previous chapter which is 25 said on the morrow when Agrippa was come and Bernice with great pomp and they entered into the place of hearing with the chief captains and principal men of the city and Festus's command Paul was brought forth. And he says at the end of the next verse the whole population is crying with one voice.

Put him to death! Well that's enough to scare anybody isn't it? You think anybody will howl for your blood for preaching Jesus? They may do before too long. He better watch his P's and Q's. He better be careful.

This man has power over him. You remember once a man tried that on Jesus and he said you watch your step I've power over you. Well Jesus said no you don't forget it.

He said no man taketh my life from me I lay down when I want and I'll take it up when I want. I think that's beautiful. I guess the devil got mad when he heard that but anyhow that was exactly what Jesus says I lay my life down I'll take it up again.

Paul has no fear of man or fear of demons. He says the Lord told me to stand on my feet. I can imagine him saying and I'm standing before you as I stood before Hephaestus I stand before you Agrippa because if you kneel before God you can stand before men.

He has a mandate. I don't remember anybody ever ordained him. I know he went to Bible school.

He went to the Bible school of silence. The University of silence where God takes where God trained Moses for 40 years. Where he trained John Baptist for 30, where he trained his own son for 30 years.

My people today feel that all you have to do is get filled with the spirit immediately and become an apostle Paul or a worker of miracles. I suggest after a crisis experience a person needs a quiet time in the wilderness to find out what God has come into his life to do and what God's gonna do through him. And this Paul had and he says after he'd fallen to the earth well we're not too keen on that business are we? We want to stand on our feet and have authority but he says I fell to the earth I kissed the dust.

And then the Lord said rise and stand upon my feet for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose. To make thee a minister. No only God can do that.

And a witness both of the things which thou hast seen and those in the which I will appear unto thee. Do you think that he ever dreamed? Do you think he ever had a kind of a shadow of anticipation in his life? That one day he and God just as Moses had those days on the Mount with God the Mount of Revelation. Do you think he ever dreamed he would be caught away and he would spend a period of I don't know how long.

That somewhere there God would show him some of the mysteries of redemption. Do you think God rolled a plan of the ages and said listen there's the there's the incarnation there's the consummation this is what's going to happen to the kingdoms of the earth. This is what I'm going to do I'm going to birth churches through you.

I'm going to give you a spiritual pregnancy. I'm going to birth epistles in you. You see Moses brought one lot of people out of captivity in one nation and took them to liberty.

The Apostle Paul by his writings has brought millions of people out of nearly every nation into a higher state of grace than perhaps Moses ever knew. Think of the wonder of it. All happening on that Damascus road when he heard a voice and nobody else heard it.

That that's that's a bit rough isn't it? He said there shone round about me and them that journeyed with me a light from heaven. I heard the voice. I've come to this conclusion that I can preach sometimes to hundreds of thousands of people and God only wants to speak to one person in our congregation and that makes me happy.

They may all get light. They may all say I never saw it like that but one man hears the voice and the revolution takes place. He saw the Christ the risen Christ he heard the voice he went forth and he says that God had made him a minister.

You know the preacher is not a descendant of the Greek orator nor of the Roman orator. The Roman orator stirred the intellect, stirred the emotions. The Greek orator stirred the intellect.

The preacher doesn't have to do either of those. Actually he is a if he is a true minister of God if he has the ordination that Jesus promised in the 15th of John I ordain you. He's not a descendant of an orator of either breed.

He's a descendant of the Hebrew prophet. He says thus saith the Lord because he has something that even the orator doesn't have. He has authority.

Somebody mentioned that word today and I'm going to work on that a bit later. For Paul says in Ephesians 6 17 18 19 there pray for me. Would you ever think a man of that caliber needed prayer? A man with this expansive intellect that he had? A man with revelation second to none? A man who had an intimacy with God like no other man that ever walked that he would dare to say to some ordinary people pray for me that utterance may be given me.

And I believe that word utterance is authority because he knew very well that this was no just easygoing thing he had to do. He's up against principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. He has seen as it were the depth of redemption and he's seen the breadth of devilry because he says if we're the true church of the living God we're against principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world here they are just above this world and they're operating and then he says to the Ephesians but remember this he is seated above all principalities and powers.

You can tell me the power of communism every other devilish ism you like but when you said it all you waste your breath because I've come to this conclusion that after the power of an omnipotent God the next great power is not the combined power of devils and demons inspired by Lucifer in God's order. The supreme power is his. He's maker of heaven and earth.

He sustains all things by the word of his power. There's a horrible system. A system that if God dare unveil it to us most of us would go white overnight.

We'd never be interested in making another dollar hardly. We'd say you mean to say that all these forces are combining to come and crush the world in which I live before Jesus comes? Yes sir. And then the Apostle says when you've thought about that just get this to relieve your your feelings that however vast the infernal kingdom is his kingdom we sang it tonight his kingdom cannot fail.

He rules our earth and hell. The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given. Try and stuff me that they're on the skirt of the Pope forget it.

He died he didn't have any keys. The keys are on the on the skirt on the girdle of the Lord Jesus Christ. He hath the keys of death and of hell.

And I'm convinced in my own spirit when people say to me do you think at present the church is having revival? No I don't think it's wakened up yet. It's having a reviving it's a little richer in gifts and it was a little part. Do you know any bunch of people that dare go to a city and stay there until all the captives are released? We don't have anybody like Finney that will go and preach until the heavens break.

They go now and have a crusade or they humble God by begging every day. A lot of this apostolic power is pure nonsense. Doesn't correspond at all with the Word of God.

Finney could go to a city and stay there till the heavens broke. Preach 28 nights without making an altar call. Preach until the taverns and the dance halls were closed.

That was old-time revival in America. You can't tell me the name of a man in the country that can preach like that anymore. But disagree if you will.

And you notice this where you disagree with me. You're wrong but whatever you agree with me or disagree I don't care. I believe that we haven't seen the anointing that God is going to give in this last hour before Jesus comes.

And he's not going to do it for our fun. And he's not going to do it to revive our denominations. He's going to do it for his namesake.

He's going to do it for his glory. He's going to do it because he's tired of seeing the devil have monopoly in the world. Man, you think of this man how he went out.

This little Jew. Notice he never begged for money. If he ran out of it he took a job mending tents.

Just like our big evangelists do. But he took a job repairing tents if he hadn't enough money. If you tried to feed him so too much he fasted.

And sometimes he just said well I don't have enough to live on but you know what? It's glorious. There's one thing I never understand in Paul's writings. He says I know how to be abased and I know how to abound and I can't find where he abounded.

Except maybe he stayed a bit longer out of prison this time than last time. But where does he abound? Oh he is abounding in the work and in the power and in the anointing of God. And so he, he has no second thoughts about his calling.

Have you noticed he never attacked the Roman Empire though all the people he wrote to are in slavery. He doesn't talk about social conditions and slavery. No no no he's got a bigger job than that.

He sees men bound who should conquer and their slaves who should be kings. They're viewing their one hope with an empty wonder. If ever you can find it by a poem by F. W. H. Meyer.

It's almost impossible to get. It's the greatest thing outside of the Bible I think. It has, my particular version, David has an original copy signed by the author and by his wife.

And it's a marvelous poem. It has 74 stanzas. And he says as he views the world of lost men, then with a rush the intolerable craving shivers throughout me like a thunder roll.

All to save these, to perish for their saving, to die for their life and be offered for them all. You see there came a day when he did, you see, what I like about Paul he's the best evidence of his own theology. A man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

And Paul says in Romans 12, you present your body a living sacrifice wholly acceptable to God. And don't think it's wonderful, it's on your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world or as Dr. Phillips translates, don't let the world press you into its mold.

Don't get fooled with its customs. Don't get stupid enough to say you're well-off because you're this, that or the other. Keep your eyes on heavenly things not earthly.

Paul is the completely sold-out man. Again he is the love slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore he can go to others and he can say what he's done in my life he can do in your life too.

He made me a minister of the gospel he said. And this is the job of a minister to open their eyes, to open their eyes, to preach with such revelation that the scales fall from men and women's eyes and they see their own corruption and maybe they see the corruption of the world outside. And he says if you really preach in the anointing of the Spirit this will happen.

Their eyes being open. There is a blind man walking, he doesn't know he's going to put his foot on a necklace that had just been sounded over radio that some lady lost a necklace worth a million dollars and he's going to tread it underfoot he's going to crush it with his feet he doesn't know he's so near to that disaster. Or he comes to the edge of a precipice in his blindness he may fall.

And the Apostle says men outside all they've colossal intellects look at the things they did. We think that that generation was dumb because they didn't make airplanes and they didn't have computers and other things. Why they had some scientific knowledge that surpassed ours.

That's what the Rogers about the architectural splendors that they had in those days. And go see some of the paintings that they had. And go back even to the days of Abraham where they made exquisite things in gold.

You can see them if you go see the exhibition of King Tut or King Tutankhamen if you wonder his name or Amenhotep the second his other name. But I think it's still on tour in the States. Oh they had their treasures and yet Paul is not concerned they see those treasures obviously.

He says here are treasures to open their eyes lest they tread underfoot the pearl of great price the Son of God. They were blinded with religion they were blinded with their own good works they thought because they kept the ritual of Abraham that everything was in order. And he isn't going to a pagan society so much.

First of all he's going to the Jews with acres of culture with a pedigree way back to Abraham. The people with a priority on God. Was there ever a prophet who wasn't a Jew about one? And he has to go to that people and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ until their eyes are open.

And then to turn them from darkness into light. Oh my what darkness they were in. Think of the darkness of the Corinthians here for a minute.

The corruption that they had and he goes to Corinth he's not a bit nervous about the awesome power of that people. They live for lust licentiousness. Everything unclean was fashionable.

He steps down from the intellectuals in Corinth pardon me in Athens where they worship the brain to this bunch that worship the body where they were mad on learning there and mad on lust here. And he says I tried a lot of philosophical stuff up there I'm coming back and I'm determined to know nothing amongst you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He loved the old rugged cross when that cross was stretched out it points to a topless heaven and a bottomless hell and it reaches round the whole world.

When you lie it on the floor it points north south east and west. If you study the languages of the world you'll discover some people right to the cross that way and some people start here and right this way and some right down and some right up. If you put the point of a compass on the on Israel as we call it today

and street the world you'll find it's the center of the world.

In this part of the world we're fortunate we can see the stars you can't see those if you live in Hollywood. Too much smoke and dirt all comes out of Hollywood. You can't see because of the filth in the sky.

Oh it's beautiful to be able to look at those stars and their majesty and their beauty and their glory. Paul looks through the clouds of time he sees eternity there. Paul is not concerned about the vastness of man's sin he has seen the old rugged cross so despised even in this day by the world.

And he writes in his second letter to the Corinthians and says you know the Christ I serve or in Hebrews 7 25 rather he says he is able to save to the uttermost. He says in 2 Corinthians 5 17 what I think is one of the greatest the most daring expressions he ever made. He says if any man anywhere at any time be in Christ he's a new creation.

He may be bound by fetters of religion he may be bound by fetters of lust it makes no difference. He sees the cross as a center and circumference of everything. When you do look at the stars they're divided by what? Space.

When you look at the continents they're divided by water. When you see men they're divided by religions. When you come to a country like this or any other there's a division between the rich and the poor.

There's a chasm between the intellectual and the dumb. There is division in space there is division in water there is division in religion there is division in social standings. But he makes it abundantly clear there is a division in time too.

We didn't change the calendar when we invented the atom bomb. Time is divided by a little babe coming into the world and we say BC before Christ and A Domini the year of our Lord. Christ divided men he always did he always will.

He hardly came into the world and he divided the world before he could walk or talk. Because when he was born Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him and they ganged up together and determined to liquidate the Son of God. The last thing he did on the cross was divide men.

He didn't testify to them you know. He wasn't hollering as you and I would do trying to get them saved. He said nothing to them.

After all they'd heard him many times he preached three and a half years and he never gave an utterance to them. One of the most awesome things and I want to think about this again as I've been stirring it in my mind is the silences of God. We're getting desperately near I think as a nation when God is going to cease talking.

In fact I was in a meeting and an old man an old preacher the front said under his breath brother he ceased talking to America a long while ago. We're just keeping up trapping our hands and having a nice time. Where are the prophets? Where are the men that stand against national sin and iniquity? The last thing Jesus did was divide men.

The first thing he did was divide the nation. In the middle there was a division in the synagogue because of him. And I figure maybe the last ministry I see Jesus have will be there on the throne when he says depart from me ye curses.

You think today all you have to do is put a bumper sticker on Jesus loves you. You'll see some of those people cast into eternal flames and lots of preachers and popes and others with them and evangelists. The Word of God says it I didn't say.

They say we did many miracles I never knew you he said. Paul is very sure of his ground. He's very sure that all the redemptive acts all the blood of beasts on Jewish altar slate you could take their carcasses and stack them until they go past the moon for all they've sacrificed over the ages.

But says a hymn writer not all the blood of beasts some Jewish altar slain could give one guilty conscience peace or wash away one stain but Christ the heavenly Lamb takes all our sins away by one simple act not a repetitious act not going to mass every Sunday and seeing the Lord of God God crucified afresh. One simple act there at the end of the age he put away sin he lifted a burden heavier than some never had to lift. He solved the problem Solomon couldn't solve in all his wisdom.

You wonder this man is intoxicated. I think he said you know I wish I had a what was it who was it I forget the great American who said he wished he had more than one life Haley or somebody to lay down his life for his country. Oh a lot of us lay down our lousy sins would you lay down your life for him and before you answer you better watch your step because he may tell you to fast all next week till revival comes.

He may tell you to quit spending so much money on that and put it somewhere not to let somebody build a fancy city in town but to get the gospel to the heathen in distant countries which is the church's commission. Christ will not come until the world has heard the gospel that's what he said. I'm telling you the raging fire in this man he had a fire in his bosom and the waters of persecution and criticism and ridicule never put it out.

They tried to flog it out of him and they couldn't flog it out of him. They tried to threaten it out of him they couldn't threaten it out of him. This man has got a vision of the holiness of God and the sinfulness the exceeding sinfulness of man and he looks around and says every other system in the world fails but here is one Jesus Christ the Son of God my Redeemer my emancipator my Lord my God and he sent me out with this commission to preach called him to be a minister to open their eyes to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan.

Well I sure would like to have heard Paul I'd like to have heard him preach wouldn't you? There's only one thing I'd like better and he wasn't to see him raise the dead I'd love to have heard him pray. Again no man is greater than his prayer life. Intensity marks his life whichever area you get in and writing to the Romans is it about the ninth chapter he says I I could wish myself a curse to my brethren.

He's not pray acting he will say you know the Holy Ghost did this that and the other. Paul says I call the Holy Ghost not my friends who labor with me I call the Holy Ghost to bear witness and brother that's very dangerous. Holy Ghost search this heart of mine.

Am I pray acting? Am I preaching to you tonight for some effect? Not in your life. Does he pray without intensity? I could wish myself a curse maybe to get on the record books and be admired of men? No sir. He has seen the power of sin in individuals.

He sees the colossal malignant power of sin over nations. He has seen what demon powers are waiting to do. Principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world.

I read a statement by a young man about two years ago that I thought was wonderful I wouldn't dispute it. He said it had a revelation in it. He saw that Satan had satellite kingdoms over the earth.

He had appointed rulers of in the darkness and he saw something like this he saw the the demons of greed over Las Vegas. He saw the demons of lust over Hollywood. He saw the demons of something else over and he had these demon powers and maybe he's right I wouldn't dispute it.

To deliver them from the power of Satan. Not just deliver them from false cults. Not just deliver them from bad habits.

But to recognize there's a cruel hand that has them and they're helpless against that power unless God breaks that power. There's no way I can preach you to the cross. No man on the earth can.

He can have all the logic he likes. He can have weighty theology if you like. But there is one thing and we don't say too much about it these days.

And God knows we sadly need it in a Church of God. And that is where the Word of God talk Jesus says when he is come he will convince the world of sin. And oh we need a plague of that today.

George Whitfield said he used to draw the arrows of God and shoot them in the hearts of people. Let them go home he didn't care. Let them go to sleep.

The trouble was they couldn't sleep. Old WP Nicholson told me about the days of revival he had in Ireland. He was a terrible preacher.

He was a Presbyterian. He was the most powerful preacher that this generation has known. He'd go to a stylish Presbyterian Church with 1,200 people in it and walk in the pulpit and put down his hymn book and his Bible and fold his arms and look up and say my God Nicholson what a task you've got tonight.

This is the biggest gathering of hypocrites in this town in the last hundred years. Now isn't that a nice way to start a Presbyterian meeting. But brother when he preached he preached.

You didn't go home doubting. He wasn't offering you gifts of the Spirit and miracles and signs and wonders just for coming here and somebody laying hands on you whether you repented of your sin or you're living in adultery. No sir.

One of the richest men in Ireland I went to his home. It was very small. The interesting thing about it and it would interest you if you know anything about old-time writings.

There's a couple of books called Holy Living and Holy Dying written by Jeremy Taylor somewhere around the 1600s. And he lived in the house that my old friend had. The house had been burned down but the foundation was the original church and it was, pardon me, the original house.

Big old rocks. And he said you're sitting in a place where Jeremy Taylor sat. He's a very wealthy man.

He said some years ago Nicholson came to town and I went to hear him. Not to hear him preach but to hear him, as he said, scorch the preachers. Every night he spent about 15 minutes blistering preachers that came to hear him.

And he said after he preached one night and sinners were toppling down the aisles of that big Presbyterian church I said I'll go to hell before I'll come in this meeting again. But he said I went the next night and listened. When I came out I was furious.

Why did I go? He only disturbs me. I didn't sleep much last night. But he won't get me there again.

But he said I was there the third night. And he said when he made the appeal I was on the last bench in the gallery way in the top there. And he said I tumbled down to the altar and men were cursing as they went to the altar.

They were so ignorant. The whole town was stirred under the power of God. Nicholson wouldn't go to a meeting unless you invited him for three weeks.

Don't put that one on me but he wouldn't. And he said I prayed for three weeks when I, before I went and I preached three weeks and I prayed for three weeks after. But I'll tell you what when he'd been around you knew God had been there too.

Somehow he's almost able to lift people's hearts out and show them all their corruption. Not merely the rottenness of sins they committed but the cancer spots in their beings. That they were under the dominion of Satan.

Paul says this is my job to open their eyes to turn them from darkness to light from the power of Satan to God. That they may receive forgiveness of sins. Isn't that about the sweetest word in our vocabulary? Forgiveness.

You say to someone will you forgive me? No. And you go away saying he won't forgive me. Spurgeon run orphanages you know.

One day send a little boy across London with a, what they used to carry their money in in those days, he had a wash leather bag with a lot of silver gold coins and he told the boy to go across London. And the boy held on to his coins until he came to a shop and the little fellow looked in it and he had never had any money. And he just couldn't make it.

He went in the shop and bought something. And then he delivered the money and it was short. Spurgeon brought him on the mat the next day and said did you do this that and the other he said yes sir.

And before Spurgeon could say a thing he says please sir I'm sorry. Please forgive me I'm so sorry. I'm sorry I hurt you you've been so good you've been a father to me.

I'm sorry forgive me forgive me. Spurgeon said come here son. And he said you just pray and tell God you're sorry and now I want to tell you I'm sorry.

Later that week the little boy was told to go to Spurgeon's office and Spurgeon said son here's a bag of gold it's about four times more than I gave you last time. Now you go go across London and and it's

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