

Jonah and Paul

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon highlights the contrast between Jonah, who prayed after getting in trouble, and Paul, who prayed before getting in trouble, and emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's sovereignty and control.

Duration: 59:14

Scripture: Jonah 1:1

Topics: "Jonah", "Faith in Trials", "Prayer"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill contrasts the lives of Jonah and Paul, emphasizing that Jonah prayed only after getting into trouble, while Paul prayed beforehand, demonstrating the importance of being spiritually prepared. Jonah's disobedience led to chaos not only for himself but also for those around him, while Paul's unwavering faith in the midst of storms showcases the power of prayer and trust in God. Ravenhill highlights that both men faced significant challenges, but their responses to those challenges reveal their relationship with God. Ultimately, the sermon calls believers to be proactive in their faith, praying before trials rather than waiting until they are in distress.

Transcript

I've been meditating and I haven't, you know, finalized all I'd like to say. I'm sure you're glad about that because I might get home for two or three days. But, I've been thinking, in terms of a contrast, we used to say, when we were kids in England, we used to say a piece of poetry about three men in a boat.

I don't know if you'd say that classic over here. I think your classic is with Lord Manning. But, there's a study in the Bible about two men in a boat.

One man, Jonah, and the other man, the apostle Paul. The story of Jonah, in case you don't know, is in the Book of Jonah. And, to help you, that's in the Old Testament.

And, it's a very, very interesting story. I've summarized the thing, or reduced the two stories to this, that Jonah is the man who prayed after he got in trouble, and the apostle Paul is the man who prayed before he got in trouble. Now, you know the story about Jonah, he got a commission from God to go to Nineveh.

He didn't want to go. They were the, as Mayfield would say in his Everlasting Mercy, they were the lesser breeds without the law. They were, you know, the real good old Jews without a monopoly on God.

And, therefore, he didn't want to go. And, so, he got a one-way ticket. He was going to go to Tarshish.

The thing I want to emphasize in this first simple analysis of this story is this. Notice how it's the Lord dealing in his life. You know, the challenge, it was not the challenge of Satan to God.

It was a challenge of God to Satan. Hath thou considered my servant Job? There's nobody like him in the earth. Oh, Satan says, well, that's very easy.

Do you know I love you? Do you know his piety is tied up with his, tied up with his prosperity. And, if you take his prosperity away, he'll curse you like anybody else. He's the richest man in the world.

And, Satan says, put forth your hand. The Lord says, I'm too busy holding the water. You have him with your hand.

Isn't that nice? But, the Lord engaged Satan to boo one of his choices. Maybe the greatest. The Lord said he was perfect.

He walked before me perfectly. You pull the rug from under him and see if he's perfect. The Lord says, well, you strike him.

And, you remember, in that situation he got into, the first blow, I reminded you before, the first blow was bankruptcy. He lost everything he had. The second blow was bereavement.

Buried all his children in one day. There have been some days you wish you could do that, Mary. But, I mean, you know, when they were rough and upsetting you.

Not as bad as that. But, if they get out of the way a little while. But, he buried them all in one day.

The first stroke was bankruptcy. The second stroke bereavement. And, you remember what he said.

I'm putting pressure on him. Is he squealing? No. What did he say the first time? Well, the Lord's got everything in hand.

What did he say the second time? The Lord gave. And, the devil gave it all away. Did he say that? Not in the Amplified, are you? Well, that's the way we say it very often.

Oh, we were doing so well, and then the devil came in. Now, look. If you want to be a fair weather Christian, you're in trouble.

Because, God is the God of the storm, as well as the fair weather. Aren't you glad that people can't control the weather? You know, if you get all sunshine, you get a desert. If you get all rain, you get a swamp.

We live down in Louisiana, and it's all swamps. Just swamps. Mosquitoes, we can give you a pile of them.

Why? Because they get such a heavy rainfall. Now, all sunshine makes a desert. All rain makes a swamp.

But, if you get rain and sunshine, you get a garden. And, most of us are so constituted, if we are, then we doubt we'd live in these streets all our lives. Let's face it.

Who wants to face hardship? Who wants to carry a load heavier than they've got to carry? Oh yes, it's nice to sing and pour contempt on all my pride. That's not the problem. Your problem is when somebody else pours contempt on your pride.

Isn't that it? Because, when you pour it on, you put it on gradually. Little by little, little by little. And, somebody comes and gives you the whole bucket full at once.

Oh Lord, what's happening here? That's when it hurts. The Lord gave, he said. And, the Lord has taken away.

Bless the Lord. Now, that's victory. As I said the other day, it's easy to sit in nice, like, I mean, the people on the front pew, they cost you more sitting on that comfortable seat tonight, you know.

But, it's easy to sit there and count the victory, isn't it? Huh? As I say in a little phrase, I like to write little phrases, I keep a book of them. It's easy to shout the victory in a pew. It's another thing to get the victory in a pew.

Huh? Oh, you people, now, I'm not saying to you, my way down is getting blessed and you get excited in a meeting. Fine. You get as excited at home.

If you only get blessed in meetings, there's something wrong with you. I get more blessed out of them than in them, usually. Oh, I get blessed in meetings.

I get blessed under my own preaching. I don't think there's any better. But, there are times when I, in fact, the other week I was preaching, and, you know, I nearly took off.

There's a message I preached last night, or the night before, which, it's more difficult sitting behind a table than in a pulpit, when you can kind of, you know, that you feel more urgent, to some degree more anxious. But, preaching about the fact again, of Jesus taking the scroll out of the hymn that sat on the throne, is the most exciting thing in history, because no man was found worthy. No angel, no seraphim, no cherubim, nobody in the earth, under the earth, on the earth, nobody but Jesus could do it.

And the scripture there that says there was only, there's one. The Greek actually says there is only one. Only one in all the created universe.

No apostle, no prophet, no Jeremiah, no Isaiah, only Jesus. Well, that excites me. Because, again, he is the only one.

He is the bright and the morning star. He is the only one. No one else could redeem us.

Nobody else could bear our sins. Nobody else could rise from the dead. Nobody could reverse.

Jesus reversed every law in nature. Came into the world reversing the law of birth. Went out of the world reversing the law of gravity.

He's going to come back again reversing it. He's going to stand on a cloud. Nobody else can do that.

Evil can evil. Tried it but missed it. But the Lord is going to do it.

You see. He has all things under his control. And I find this very exciting.

All right, come down to the story of Nineveh. Jonah and Nineveh. What is the story? It's the story of God having everything under control.

And he tries to run away. It says in verse 4. But the Lord sent a great wind into the sea. And the result was that.

That they started, you know, getting nervous. And they threw everything they had into the sea. But the secret of this is this.

That Jonah was gone down into the side of the ship. And there he was lost. Fast asleep.

Fast asleep in the middle of the storm. Exactly where the church is tonight. Fast asleep in the biggest storm that's come on humanity in all history.

Now what did it mean that he was fast asleep? Number one. He was in danger himself. Number two.

He endangered the crew. Number three. He endangered the Ninevites.

Disobeying God brought penalty to him. Disobeying God brought penalty to the crew on the ship. And if he persisted in disobeying God.

The people in Nineveh would never, never, never. Have got the message that God wanted them to have. Now he comes to the conclusion in verse 12.

That I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. So they took up Jonah and cast him forth into the sea. And the sea ceased its raging.

Do you think that the church is going to have to be pitched out by the world? We're in a storm. There was a lady in the meeting here last night. Said well tomorrow we've got a problem in San Antonio.

They have a law there. And it's going to creep up on us and everywhere else. They have a house meeting like this.

It's against the law to have a house meeting like this. Not in communist Russia. In America.

Why? Because it's a residential area. And you're meeting regularly. And therefore you've established the church.

And by law. A church must have 10,000 square feet of territory. And you must have parking space.

For a car for every four people that come to church. Which I don't believe any church in America has. But you see they're pushing down on them.

This is a residential area. We don't want you down here. Singing and praising God.

And having a fellowship. So they're going to contest this. The only way to get out of it is buy the house next door.

Knock it down. And use it as a parking lot. But who wants to buy a \$50,000 house for a parking lot.

When you've done that. The neighbors next door will object to you singing. So you'll have to knock that down.

And so you've put \$100,000 and \$150,000 in parking lots. Plus your own house may be worth another \$100,000. You could build a nice church for that.

But these are the days where the firemen fall. And the pressure is getting on. More and more and more.

You cannot have worship in a home. The only way to dodge it would be to have it, I suppose, in a different home every night. You'd forget where you were going to probably.

But it's part of the storm that's breaking in on us. Now John has said the only way for you to get peace is to pick yourself. You see again the church brings trouble wherever it goes.

As I've reminded you the first thing Jesus did before he could walk or talk. He divided Jerusalem. Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.

And there's an old lady about 100 years of age. The father of Jesus, Joseph, and Mary, and Elizabeth, and Zacharias, and Simeon, and about a dozen others. And they were the minority.

When Dr. Carl F. Henry, before he retired from Christianity today, sent out a questionnaire to 20 distinguished so-called distinguished priests in America. I didn't know we had so many. But anyhow, he sent them out and asked them, What do you think is going to happen to the church by the year 2000? And there's a very good writer, I don't agree with his theology too much, but the Quaker philosopher Elton Trueblood replied like this, By the year 2000 the Christians will be a conscious minority surrounded by an arrogant militant paganism.

Do you disagree with him? I don't. But he got his date wrong. Right now Christianity is a, what? Conscious minority surrounded by an arrogant militant paganism.

And you know what? Christianity has always been a conscious minority surrounded by an arrogant militant paganism. Christianity wasn't served up to the world on a silver platter. Christianity was born in a totalitarian sophisticated world.

When the greatest military machine in the world had spread over it, the Roman Empire. When the greatest intellectual power was at its zenith, the Greek. And when the Jews had a monopoly on God.

Well what chance does Christianity have? Born up a back alley with a bunch of backsliders that failed Jesus, after he trained them for three years they didn't know what they were talking about. That encourages me to keep preaching to you. But anyhow, after three years they still didn't know what he was talking about.

They said, oh he's going to restore the kingdom this time to Israel. He's going to do this, do that for us. You see, they were still materialistically minded.

He'd been trying to drive it out of them for three years. Did you ever realize that Jesus never said to the disciples, sit down and get your pencils and papers out and take notes. He never said that.

He taught them by example, he taught them by precept. He didn't say write a new book, I'm going to lead you in three years, I've got it all down. If you haven't asked Mary Jane what I said a few minutes ago, get your tape recorders set.

No, no, no, no. I told the preachers not long ago, preaching in a preacher's corner, you better watch out because you can be replaced by a tape recorder. You know.

They used to say, didn't they, they used to say, you be careful, you can be replaced by a button. Well now some of the preachers should be replaced by buttons too, as far as I'm concerned, most of them, many of them, maybe most of them. But we've come into the storm.

Now listen, I like this, you know. He got pitched out, thrown down into the sea. That's the way to treat some preachers, they should be thrown in the sea.

And verse 17 says, Now the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. Isn't that great? Verse 10 of the second chapter says, The Lord spake unto the fish. Verse 6 of the next chapter says, The Lord prepared a gourd.

Verse 7 says, And God prepared a worm. And verse 8 says, And God prepared a vehement east wind. Listen, if God's told you to do something, you better do it.

Because you know what you'll do? You'll cry from the belly of hell if you don't obey him. He'll scare you to death. This man didn't think there was much to it.

He thought, well I'll get by. I go to sleep, they won't know I'm here. And when the ship docks, I'll get off.

But everything went wrong. Well, who among us is in trouble? And the preacher says, Well, I loved it earlier. I should have really gone with him.

Well, what do we do? Throw me out. Oh, you're such a nice gentleman. What are we going to do? Throw your seminary diploma with you as well? Yes, throw the whole baggage out.

And so they threw him out. But you know, preachers are hard. Even the fish couldn't swallow him.

It made him sick. And I think most of our preachers make the fish sick these days. But anyhow, it had a stomach cramp and it got rid of him, you know.

But you know what it says? That the Lord prepared the fish. The Lord prepared the gourd. The Lord prepared a worm to destroy the gourd.

And then the Lord prepared a vehement east wind. And it beat on Jonah's head and he wished he could die. But you know, there are so many similarities in this story.

It says that when the... You see, the first thing the man of God did, when he disobeyed God, he brought trouble to the ship. The trouble increased, so they threw the cargo out. Now again he says, From the belly of hell I cried.

Verse 4 of chapter 2 says, Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight. Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. Boy, that's a bit difficult when you're down there.

Do you think form rubber mattresses were invented in America? This guy had one before you were born. He'd blubber, blubber in the belly of the whale. He slept in the belly of the whale.

That was the softest place you'd ever find in the whole world. You'd get a bit seasick, but anyhow. And he says, I went to the bottom of the mountains.

Well, that's all the ocean is. You go out to the Caribbean, what do you see? You see a peak like that. Well, it is the top of a mountain.

Do you think it floats on the water? It doesn't. All you have to do is scuba dive. You can walk down the side of that mountain maybe 10,000, 12,000 feet.

It's the peak of a mountain. So he says, from the bottom of the mountains, and the earth without bars was about me forever. Verse 5, the waters compassed me about, even to the soul.

The depths closed round about me. The weeds were wrapped about my head. The mountain.

Boy, you couldn't be much more of a prisoner than that, could you? In the belly of the whale. He's no can opener to get out. He didn't have his scalp knife with him.

He's shut up in this awful, smelly, stinking black place. I don't think he had a flashlight with him. It must have been as black as hell itself.

And here are the old things rolling around. And so he's in the belly of the whale. And he's got the weeds over the whale.

And he's got the mountains over the top. And he's got the seas boiling over that. Couldn't be much worse.

But there's one comforting thing about it. He says, from the belly of hell I cried, and the Lord heard me. I wouldn't know, but could be tonight.

Somebody hears in the belly of hell. Never been darker. Never been rougher.

Never been more despairing. And so the Lord says, well, cheer up. Because I'm the God of circumstances like that, as well as I am when you're cutting roses in the garden.

Huh? It's easy, again, to shout for victory when we're sitting around like this and say, you know, God will give you grace in anything. I have two classes. I don't have a church.

Not Churchill only. But I do have two classes. I'm trying to get the Amway people straight.

And so I have a class with Amway people on a Sunday. And I have another class on a Tuesday night. And we have some very fine, nice people come there.

But there's a lady who started coming, and she's quite a singer. She's a nice person. And after speaking the other night, she nudged me and said, Brother Rayfield, I know what you're talking about.

She says, I've been married seven years to an alcoholic, and I'm a knight running like hell. But, you know, if you watched her sitting there, she sang with a radiant face. She walks with me and she talks with me.

And she'll raise her hand and praise the Lord. And she's, you know, vibrant and victorious and vital. But she lives in hell most of the time.

And she proves God right in a tight-up circumstance like that the whole time. Huh? Well, that's one side of the story. This man is down in the deep, but that's when he prayed.

Now, the other story is in the 27th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Great story. One of the most exciting in the Bible, I think.

Paul, let me just outline as we go on. That's all it is. There's an awful lot to read.

There's about, what, 40-some verses here. Forty-four. That might take too much time.

Paul is going on a journey. He got a free ticket. They've taken him to jail.

And... Have you ever noticed that Paul never gave Satan any credit at all? He never said he was a prisoner of... of Caesar. Do you know what he says? Even when he's in jail, he says, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ. You see? Who got you there? Oh, he says, Jesus got me here.

You'd have said the Romans got him there. You'd have said Caesar. He's appalling.

He's got one system against another system. And I'm sure that this is the result of it. But that's not what the Apostles says.

The Apostles says, I'm a prisoner of Jesus Christ. If you've gone looking at... Say you've gone down to Ephesus looking for the preacher. And they say, sorry, he's not here.

Where is he? Well, as a matter of fact, he's in jail. See that little island out there? That little peak? Well, that's where he is. It's the isle called Patmos.

Well, I'd like to see him. Well, rent a boat and go over and see him. And you go and there's John meditating.

And you go up and touch him and say, Well, John, I never expected to find you here. Here you are. I thought I'd find you in your pulpit.

And here you are in the isle of Patmos. He says, no, I'm not. What do you mean you're not? You're in the isle of Patmos.

He says, no, I'm not. I'm in the Spirit. You know, these men wouldn't give the devil any credit for anything.

Poor guy. He likes to get it, but they wouldn't give it him. I'm a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

I'm in the Spirit. Not in the isle of Patmos. I'm not a captive.

The Lord has designed this. If he's the one that lifts me up, he's the one that casts me down. If he's the one that gives me my freedom, he's the one that takes me into bondage.

Madam Guillaume said, my freedom is thy grand control. I remember going down when... I'm old, you know. I can remember you used to come in the house and say, what's cooking? Now you come in and say, what's freedom? But I'm so old I've even ridden on trains.

And I remember going down from Minneapolis down to Chicago on that beautiful northern train, the Vepr. It was a gorgeous train. And we were ripping along the line.

And I said to the conductor, I said, sir... He was talking about there. He said, tell me this, what speed are we doing now? He said, well, this is the fastest stretch between here and Chicago. It's a 400 mile run.

And I looked out and there was a village at the side. And I said, sir, I hope this thing stays on the track. Well, he said, I do too.

And I said, it's an awful speed. He said, it's doing 80 or more. He said, that's right.

Now, where was the freedom of that train? I don't know what a train weighs. It could weigh 15,000 tons. I don't know.

But here the thing is hurtling down. Where is its freedom? Its freedom is by staying in Bombay. It stays on the track.

If it gets off the track, it becomes a menace. It would rip the whole town up. My freedom is God's control.

If I take myself out of God's control, I get into bondage, not freedom. And when I get out of my own control into his bondage, then I'm free. I'm only free when I'm a slave.

I'm a slave when I'm not free. I become a slave to men's opinions. I become slaves to this and slaves to that.

But not when I'm under his control. My freedom is that God has me under his control. My bondage is when I get out of his control and I start thinking and planning and scheming and doing other things.

Then I bring the whole wreckage back to him and say, Lord, I made a mess of it. Could you straighten this out? And all the people said, sugar, all right. You know it's true.

Isn't that true? Good, thank you, sir. I got one hallelujah there. It wasn't too bright, but it's better than nothing.

So here is Paul. He's a prisoner of Jesus Christ. Now he's on the ship.

It must have been quite a ship. You know, it was a kind of, I think, Queen Elizabeth of its day, verse 37 of the 27th chapter says, We were all in the ship, two hundred, three score and sixteen souls. Two hundred and seventy-six people.

Did you ever dream they had boats like that in those days? I'm not sure what kind of a canteen service they had on them or what kind of sleeping they had. I know this, that George Whitefield, when he came to this country, said he was able to get a best part of the ship. And he said, I was only soaked through six times crossing the Atlantic.

Because it took him about three months to cross. And his bed was just a corner in the ship. And he had a buffalo hide around his body.

And he was soaked through six times. And by the way, when he had revival, he came to Boston. And you remember the old bar, who was the old guy that came to hear him there? The man that became a president? Franklin, was it? That went to hear him and said he could hear him a mile away? But you know when he came to Boston, he was 22 years of age.

And the population of Boston was 12,000 people. And 14,000 people a night came to hear him. How do you figure that out? No Blacktop Road.

No Howard Johnson. No relief at MacDonald. And nowhere to sleep.

None of the modern conveniences. No press to advertise it. No publicity.

And yet people walked. One man says, I got the old mare out. And I put the wife on its back.

And I got on its back. And when he got too tired to carry both of us, I got off. And I was up to my knees in snow.

You can't get people to jerk now with wall to wall. God, they did hardly. And rubber pews, I don't know what we'll need next.

Lollipops or something. You get them at some churches anyhow. But those were the days, you see.

Now, Paul here is on a ship. Big ship. 276 passengers.

Now come on, use your imagination. Don't imagine that when they're going up, this is a big ship. It's carrying a heavy cargo and a lot of wealthy people.

And Paul is down in the cheapest part of the boat. They bring him up on deck every day. Let him have a walk in his chain.

People say, oh, there's that little squirt there. We've nothing definite, except tradition is very uncertain. But tradition says Paul was less than 15 high.

And he had a bit of a hunch on his back. And he had a big nose. Take courage.

And a few other defects he had. Didn't worry him. He was the biggest dwarf the world ever saw him.

That was his height. What do you expect him to do? Go running down the deck like an athlete? He'd been blasted with stones outside of Lystra till he'd hardly a hole grown in his body. One eye was dropping more than the other.

Hit him with a rock. His nose was broken. His jaw had been broken.

There wasn't much about him that hadn't been broken. He'd been tied to a whipping post and lashed 195 times. That's what he says.

45 times. I was lashed 40 times. 40 striped table and 540s a lot.

200 minus 540. 195 times. He took his shirt off.

His toga. His back was like a ploughed field. And you know what he did? He wouldn't give the devil any credit.

He talked about weariness and painfulness and fastings and tribulation and distress in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils of the deep, in perils of the robbers. And he goes on. And he gives you enough suffering for a hundred men.

Do you know what he does? He's a great sense of humour. He made a joke out of it. Well, how did he make a joke out of it? Because he says, Our life's affliction which is but for a moment.

That's enough persecution for us for a hundred years, most of us. But he says it's our life. Well, what's this compared to eternity? Our life's affliction which is but for a moment, in the light of eternity.

So here they bring him on deck. Who's this little guy? Guess he must be a bad man. Boys are faced like a criminal, aren't they? Look at his body.

Limbs pinning in his legs. Oh, he's a mess. Yes, so he was.

They cracked their jokes about him. They took him down and chained him up and brought him out next day. I used to see them do that with the pet dogs on crossing the Atlantic on the United States or the Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary.

People would go out after meals, you know, and go down and they'd bring their dogs and allow them to take them on the rear end of the deck, just walk them around. They showed their beautiful dogs. That's how they took Paul around, showed him off.

Poor fool of a man. After all, he had the greatest brain, I think, of any man that ever lived, apart from Jesus. I think he would have been a greater Hebrew scholar than Gamaliel or Hillel or anybody else.

But he did what we sing about, don't get too far with, you know, my richest gain I count but loss. I don't think any man ever had a richer intellect. You can have Socrates and anybody else you want thrown in the bargain.

Here is the man of men. Somebody said that Paul's mind was so steeped in dogma that it was a mere machine for grinding out metaphysics. Now that's not true.

He was a preacher, he was a pragmatist, he was a poet. But supremely, he was an idolater, if you like, of Jesus Christ. He loved Jesus with all that he had.

He said, let no man trouble me, I bear in my body the brands. That's how Moffat, I rather like that. In the Temple of Heracles, according to Herodotus, who is considered the father of history, really the father of historians, I think.

But he says in the Temple of Heracles, the temple was open 24 hours a day. The temple fires were kept burning all day and all night. They had branding irons, what you'd brand your cattle with.

And if a man escaped from his master, a slave escaped, he would run into the temple brethren and say, brand me, brand me, brand me quickly. Choose, choose, which god do you want to be branded with? Well this one. They'd take the branding iron and he'd put his hand out and he'd put that hot iron on his hand and he'd dance when they burned his hand.

Then he'd slip his toga down, they'd brand the base of his neck and he'd lift his foot up and they'd brand the instep of his feet. Why? Because after this he's going to walk in the way that that god demands him to walk. He's going to serve as that god demands.

He's going to think. You see, this was a dedication of his mind, his hands, his feet. And when Paul says, I bear in my body the owner's mark, that's what he says, I'm branded for Jesus Christ.

There came a day when I lost all my right. And ever since that I've only thought of him, I've walked in his ways, I've served him with my hands, even if he had to make penance. Boy, if they heard on some of our evangelists, they'd rather be dishonest than beg from you.

So many of the guys that talk most about faith beg the most for money. They talk about the highest in spirituality, they're the biggest frauds going. Paul didn't worry about that, he says, alright, nothing's come, got a pair of good hands, I'll work, I'll serve.

He didn't know anything about raising money in more sense than that. But the fact is here you've got this man, this pocket edition, this reproduction. Do you know what he says? He says, you follow me as I followed Christ, and in the day of judgment, I'm prepared to take the responsibility for the way you walk.

Do you know any preachers who would say that? Would you say that? Isn't it nice when daddy can say, I've tried to say to my boys, I don't know how far I've got with the job, but I say what daddies and you do by the grace of God. They're ahead of me now, I'm not ashamed of that, I'm glad. But you see, this is the pattern man, and what did he get for it? After all, he wrote 14 epistles, if you include Hebrews, and he never got any royalties.

Isn't that rough? He could have retired by the Sea of Galilee and written them up a book. Oh he's going to get them, don't worry, he's going to get them up there one day, you know. Yes sirree, he's going to get his reward.

No doubt about that. I don't think he labored like that for that reason just to get a big reward. That's like saying you should marry that girl because she has a lot of money, that's not right.

Or she'll mend your socks, you should marry her because you love her. And he loved Jesus, he loved Jesus supremely. He never got over it.

Wasn't it, wasn't it, oh who was it, who was it, the great Scottish saint, I forget his name, he might come to me in a moment. But he's the man that said, when the miracle of grace in your life gets dim and something becomes greater than that, you're in trouble. Well this is what Paul said, he believed that God so loved the world and then afterwards he wrote in Aramid, he said Christ loved the church.

And then he says finally, you know the most amazing thing, he loved me and gave himself for me. Hmm? Isn't that the most amazing thing? Oh I can understand he loved you, you look all right, you may be pretty rough inside, but I know he said rotten and then I changed my mind. But you may be rough inside, but I don't know you.

But I know it was wonderful that he loved me and gave himself for me. And so he is, he embraces everything. Tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, you can't get much further than that.

You just sort them all out, separate them, isolate them, what do you say, at the end of Romans 8, who shall separate us from the love of Christ, tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness and so on. Well what are those? Those are things that attack my body. You can't put a sword through my spirit, you can put one through my body.

So he says even my body gets attacked. And tribulation, oh that's something that comes in my mind. And distress, that's something in my spirit.

So the tripartite spirit, soul and body of man is all vulnerable, it can all be attacked. And the devil never spared him if he couldn't move him this way, I'll come the other way. If he couldn't come that way, I'm going to try and shift him that way.

And do you know what he said? He said none of these things move me. Will you notice what he said? Well what did he say? He said what I just said. What is he trying to say? I'm trying to say what he said.

What did he say? He said what I said. What did he say? He said this. He said none of these things move me.

He didn't say none of these things hurt me. Because you'll get hurt. Jesus was hurt.

Paul was hurt. But you can be hurt without being moved. If you don't get hurt you're a stone.

People say oh well you know I'm not emotional. Well I'll tell you in good company, Hitler said exactly the same thing. There was one thing Hitler claimed, he was never moved, he was never disturbed, he was unemotional.

In other words he was a stone, he was like an animal. But here you have this man now, he's done more than any other man that has lived, and maybe never anybody excelled him. And he's on his way to trial, and he's on his way to death.

And he gets on the ship, and one day when he's up there he says, I want to tell you something a minute, just before you put the last of the cargo on. He said in verse 10 of 27, of Acts he said, I perceive this voyage will be with hurt, and much damage. Not only in loading this ship, but also of our lives.

Nevertheless the boss said, mind your own business. And the master and captain of the ship ignored the things that Paul said, but they didn't get very far when suddenly there was a storm. It's called Euroclidon.

It's the storm of storms. We used to sing a little ditty when we were children. A little ship was on the sea, it was a pretty sight.

Do you ever sing that? It sailed along so pleasantly, and all was calm and bright, but soon a storm arose. Oh boy. That changed everything.

You see there's a center of that ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea, just almost like a funnel, and nature seems to drive down that funnel. And this man has said, don't you go, because you're going to be in trouble. Oh shut up.

What does a preacher know about navigating a ship? Well they anticipated it. Isn't it wonderful? They got to a situation where the pilot couldn't do anything, and the captain couldn't do anything, and they handed the ship to a preacher. That's as crazy as anything you could do.

Give a ship to a preacher. What could he do with it? Well he didn't do much, except he saved everybody. But again the point is, you see, that this other man prayed when the storm had broken.

Now Paul's going, he's all prayed up. That's the way to go out every day. Not to come at the end of the day, praying all the problems you wouldn't have had, if you'd been prayed up before you set out.

You see, we're praying at the end of the day about wreckage and problems and disappointments, and if we'd been careful and prayed before we set out, we can do it. I told you the other day about, I think about a little woman that has six children, that they gather the family together every night and spend a whole hour around the table with six children, she and her husband. Then she takes one of the children out of the pack, sends the other to bed, and spends an extra hour with that child.

And she does this every night. She has enough to go around. She's one short, so I think she teaches her husband that night.

But anyhow, she's got six children. But you know what she said? She said, Brother Raymiel, I need an hour with God in the morning before anybody wakes up. So I'm out of bed before the first baby cries, before there's any breakfast to cook, and she's to cook for six, and her husband to get off to work.

I need an hour to be still. No wonder she's such a radiant face, and she was such a bright and successful mother. And I'm insisting these days, motherhood is a career.

You've got a big job. If you're a mother, you've got one of the biggest jobs in the world. My daddy was a hellfire priest, but he never impressed me as much as my mother.

He impressed me sometimes, but that was in other ways. But my mother impressed me with her living. She lived a holy life.

There's no influence in the world like the influence of the mother. All right. You didn't want to take any notice of Paul.

The big wind comes, you rock with them, and they get into trouble, and it says, they began undergirding the ship. In verse 17 and verse 18 says, they began lighting the ship. Notice now what they begin to lose.

As in the case of Jonah, they lost everything. They threw it overboard to make the ship navigable. And here they do the same thing.

They lighted the ship. They began to toss things out in verse 18. In verse 19, they tossed out the tackle of the ship.

In verse 32, they cut the rope off, but they were going to escape it. And then down in verse 38, they lighten the ship, and they cast out the wheat into the sea. You see what they did? First of all, they undergirded the ship to try and hold it together.

They were fighting desperately. They were going to beat the storm. Then they threw out the tackle.

Then they threw out the baggage. Guess who had least to go overboard? You're right. You didn't wake up on that one, eh? All right.

The apostle Paul had less baggage than anybody else. He didn't have to go looking around and say, well, how many suitcases did you have? He didn't have any. He had his toothpaste with him, and that's about all, and his Bible.

He had no problem. They threw everything out of the boat. They threw the baggage overboard.

They threw the tackling overboard. They threw the things they thought were most desperate. But here they are now.

Oh, we're in trouble. Are they in trouble? Well, I'll tell you how much in trouble they were. They were not only in a storm, but they hid it as black as hell itself.

Do you know what it says? That the sun didn't shine for 14 days, and the moon and the stars didn't appear for 14 nights. Now, if you get a load of women on a boat like that, and a load of children and scared men, and the seas are boiling, and the skies are frowning, and the winds are howling, and the spars are breaking, and the sails are ripping, and the seas are boiling, you couldn't have much more, could you? No

hope. Oh, that's the nice part, you see.

It comes to verse 20, when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, and all hope that we would be saved had been taken away. Right. Oh, isn't it nice? What are you going to do now? The poor old fellow that was navigating the ship, he's lost his hair, he's lost everything.

Everybody screamed, wait till we get back, if we ever get back to land, I'll tell them, take your license away, you couldn't manage this ship, you shouldn't have come into this. Paul told them all that, but they ignored him. And everybody, they were taking all the pet pills they could take, and everything else, and trying to get their courage up, and everything else, and there was one man out of 276, and he hadn't got a hair out of place.

Well, he had, but you know what I mean? He wasn't a bit disturbed. He was walking around, as though it was Sunday afternoon, and he was pulling daisies, or eating strawberries or something. And everybody wondered what on earth was wrong.

And when all hope had gone, 14 days, 14 nights, winds blowing seas, tossing ships, breaking, spars breaking, sails ripping, and suddenly the little man comes on deck, and he says, well, come on, you backsliders. Do you know what he said? In the middle of all that mess, he says, be of good cheer. Oh, brother, that's like telling a joke in a funeral parlor.

Be of good cheer. What do you mean, be of good cheer? What's wrong with you? Aren't you human? The ship's going down. They've torn everything overboard.

They've just cut the lifeboat off. What are we going to do? He says, well, there's one thing you can do. Be of good cheer.

Well, why should we be of good cheer? Because he said, in this long night, 14 nights you've had like this, and you've been scared. I want to tell you something. There stood by me this night an angel of God.

Isn't it great when an angel can find you in the middle of the Mediterranean? Huh? You know, I've watched those boats, the things you have, when you get an aircraft, carry out at sea, and those boys come down, he says, two or three hundred miles an hour, come on the landing, you go, you know, from the air, those landing strips look about like the parking in your hair. You wonder how they hit it. But I'll tell you this, this angel didn't have much to go on.

The ship was a lot narrower than that, maybe not a third as wide as that, but he hit it all right. He didn't miss it. There stood by me this night an angel of God, whose I am, saying, fear not.

I've never counted them, but somebody told me there's three hundred and sixty-five fear nots in the Bible. So you've got one for every day. And leap year, you just remember the fact all the others didn't fail, so you've still got it made.

Fear not. Isn't that nice? What would Paul say to Timothy? God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of love, and of power, and of a sound mind. Everybody else was full of fear.

Isn't that, isn't that, oh, it's really bad, you know. Everybody's full of fear, and here's a man full of joy. That's just ridiculous.

I mean, at least you should weep with them, but weep, shouldn't you? And sit down under a cloud. He says, no sir, not on this occasion, he goes. Because you're all scared to death, you're all panic stricken, and you know, I've got, there's a deep settled peace in my soul.

Do you ever sing that song? Though the billows of sin ne'er be rolled, there's a deep settled peace in my soul. This all sufficient shall be thy supply. The flames come and harm thee, I only design thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

A brother wrote me the other day, and he said, why do people sing that hymn, Some Through the Water? I'd better not sing it, because I don't have any records with me tonight, but anyhow. What was that song saying? Some Through the Water? Some Through the Flood? Some Through the Fire? You know that one? But All Through the Blood? And he says, that's wrong. We should sing it this way, All Through the Water, All Through the Flood, All Through the Fire, All Through the Blood.

But somewhere on the journey you're going to run into it. What do you read the lives of? You read the life of the first deacon in the first Baptist? Sure, sure. You don't care who was the first deacon there in 1895.

You pick up a life like C.T. Studd or somebody else. Because you want to see how God made a man. How he put him through the fire, and how he knocked him apart, and put him together again, and imbued him, and inspired him, and sent him out, not just to save his own life, but to be a rock in a weary land.

To be a shelf in a time of storm. To be a hiding place when everything's falling apart. A man could mean a woman.

There's no sex in souls. You see. And this is the reason God gets us together.

We try to build ourselves up. That's what the scripture says. It doesn't say God will build you up.

It says you build yourself up in your most holy faith. It says you keep yourself in the love of God. It's not all God's responsibility.

He's given you as big a Bible as I have. I have as big a Bible as Finney had. Finney had as big a Bible as Wesley had.

Wesley had as big a Bible as Luther had. But the thing is, some of us appropriate more than others. We take hold of God better than others.

We believe God more than others. Our faith develops quicker than others. But you see, all the potential is there in your being tonight to get to maturity.

This side of eternity. As mature as a human being can be. And when God thinks he's done with the job, he'll take you up there.

And then we're going to be with him forever and ever. Isn't it going to be great? It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life's trial will seem so small when we see Christ.

One glimpse of his dear face. Shall I tell you the story in one minute? Fanny Crosby. You know, when she was eight years of age, somebody sympathized with her that she was blind.

She wrote a poem. I had it somewhere. I've made it in my other Bible.

It's a beautiful poem. In essence, the little girl of eight says, don't, don't start sympathizing with me because I'm blind and Jesus talks to me. But if you go up to Massachusetts there in a big old cemetery, there's a big oversized statue of a man that did a great thing.

He invented Barnum & Bailey Circus. Isn't that wonderful? And Mr. Barnum stands there about 12 feet high in stone. And a bit further off is a little man 27 years, 27 inches high.

Tom Thumb. He used to act in the, in the theater for Mr. Barnum. And people go and photograph.

This is Barnum. He invented the circus. This is Tom Thumb.

He used to sit on Mr. Barnum's knee and they put him on the back of a monkey or something. And if you go looking around the cemetery, you'll find the stone. It isn't really, I guess it's just about the size.

It's just about that size. That's what it is. Maybe you'd have to kick the grass away and a bit of dust because it isn't very conspicuous.

It isn't 12 feet high like Barnum. But then he doesn't have anybody important on it. Except a little woman who was called Fanny Cosby that wrote Blessed Assurance and most of our lovely hymns.

And it just says here lies, what does it say? Either Fanny Cosby or Auntie Fanny. Just on a little stone, as I say, just as big as a, that's all. Nobody photographs it.

Nobody bothers much about it. Somebody came to her when she was old and said, well, Auntie Fanny, you've done a lot of wonderful things, but I just don't know why the Lord would let a saintly woman, you're such a saint. No, she don't say that.

You're such a saint. Why did God let you be blind? I mean, it's such a disadvantage. Oh, there's such a lovely sunset tonight.

You've missed so many lovely things. She said, well, I have a great advantage in being blind. Well, what's the advantage? You can't read books.

You can't see the sunset. You can't see my face. What's the advantage? My dear, she said, there's a great advantage.

Well, what is it? She said, well, don't you realize that the first face I ever see will be his face? Hmm? And then she went home and wrote a lovely hymn, and I shall see him face to face and tell the story, saved by grace. You see, we say sometimes, and it's true, that what God uses, he never uses anything till he breaks it. This is my body, broken for you.

A woman took an alabaster box of oranges and broke it at his feet. Jesus took bread and broke it. But wait a minute.

We often say that, but we forget the other half of the tale. He broke it, and he blessed it. God isn't capricious.

He doesn't crack jokes. He doesn't do things for fun. If he breaks it, he breaks it because he's going to bless it.

And we want to be blessed without being broken, and there's no such thing exists. Until his body was broken. The church.

Oh, we talk about Pentecost, this and that. But as soon as they had a Holy Ghost revival at Pentecost, the church was scattered. It was broken and persecuted, and they ran here and there.

That was the only way to scatter the church, and get the evangelism going. But you see, God doesn't do that with infants. He does that with people who've been cured, and they've been saved, and so with the Spirit.

And you say, I'm going through the hottest period I've ever gone in my life. Well, let me suggest to you, that's God's confidence in you. Because he says, will the temptation, he makes a way of escape.

You've asked God to give you a diploma, he's given you it. The roughest spot you ever had. Because he knows how to moderate the rough wind in the day of the east wind, he says.

Temper the winds of the shorn lamb. A lot of other scriptures. So in the midst of the storm, cheer up.

Be of good cheer. Jesus said that too, you remember, when they were all discouraged. He says, cheer up, I've overcome the world.

Three cheers for Jesus, eh? He's worthy of them all. Shall we pray? Our Father in heaven, we're so grateful that tonight, you're the same God who delivered the apostle in the storm. We thank you for the unchanging priesthood of the Lord Jesus, that he is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We pray, Lord, that we may maintain our confidence in the hour of tribulation and testing. God is the refuge of his saints. When storms of dark distress invade, before we offer our complaint, behold him present with his aid.

Let mountains from their seats be hurled down to the deeps and buried there. Convulsions shake the solid earth. Our faith shall never yield to fear.

Fear him, ye saints, and you will then have nothing else to fear. Make you his service, your delight. You make your wants his care.

May your word become increasingly precious, and may fellowship with the Father be more wonderful, and with the Son, and with the Saints. And we'll give you praise in his name. Amen.

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