

Laodicean Church

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon on the Laodicean Church warns against spiritual complacency and emphasizes the need for true righteousness and fervent faith.

Duration: 1:05:30

Scripture: Psalm 15:2, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, repentance, and overcoming the world to be part of the bride of Christ. It delves into the need for clean hands and a pure heart in prayer, the danger of idols and worldliness in hindering spiritual growth, and the call to be fully surrendered to God. The speaker challenges the audience to seek God's presence, overcome obstacles, and prioritize a deep, intimate relationship with Jesus.

Transcript

Good to see you tonight. Praise the Lord for the privilege of being here. Revelation, the book of the Revelation.

I find the book of the Revelation a book of majesty, a book of mystery, and a book of misery. The misery part is because it shows me the final doom of the wicked. It shows me what God's dump heap is like, where all the sewage of the world is going to gather, moral and spiritual sewage, in a place called hell.

It's certainly a very inspiring book. It not only deals with the last days, that's not just the ministry, but all the last days. It's not only the end of the book, it's the end of time, it's not only the end of time, it reveals the beginning of eternity.

Revelation 3, verse 14, unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works, that thou art neither hot or cold. I would thou art either cold or hot.

So then, because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. I can give you a very ugly caption for this, when God gets sick. Notice he's not talking about the world, he's talking about those who profess his name.

The church he spews out of his mouth, I would think, would be the cold church. It's not the cold church, it's not the hot church, it's the one that's halfway up and halfway down. It's always vacillating.

It never is in a state of what God wants, constant victory. Verse 17, because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods. Now come on, you folk that preach prosperity, if prosperity is God's order, why does he rebuke this country, this church? Why doesn't he compliment them and say, you're living exactly where I want you to live? There's nothing wrong in being rich, the fact is they were contented with it.

They were satisfied. I've told you so often, for myself, for you, the danger is going uphill, struggling uphill, reaching a plateau and camping on that plateau, as though there's no other height to be gained. Keep this in mind from an old man, there's no finality to the Christian life this side of eternity.

Nobody knows it all. We know in part, and we prophesy in part, but one day the veil will be taken away. And do you know what we will be? To discover how stupid we've been all our lives.

To discover how little of God's possessions we've really reached out for. We're so easily satisfied. Let me go on here, I won't go any further.

Because thou say'st I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing. A young man was in my office last Saturday, a bright young American man with his wife and nearly three children, two another one coming. I said, are you American? Yes.

Where are you living? I've given my life to Germany, he said. The youngsters started chatting in German. I'm sure they were correct in what they said, but anyhow.

It was interesting to see them. He was so eager to get back. He said, in my country it's so different from America.

You can't get out of America without realizing that you're neither hot nor cold. You're in a state of lukewarmness and indifference. In Germany, he says, you're going to church, it's either sizzling hot or freezing cold.

There's no middle class. As soon as you get in that church, you sense the awesome presence of God or else there's a vacuum there. In America, he says, I sense almost nothing.

Thou say'st I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire. You know, this is the last of the seven churches.

In the other six churches, Jesus Christ has some word of commendation for each church. In this church, he has no commendation, it's all condemnation. You may remember you've read in the epistle to the Colossians where Paul says, see that this epistle is read to the church at Laodicea.

So they had light, they had revelation, they had knowledge, and yet it was totally indifferent. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire. Oh, so God has some things on sale.

Yes, he has. Do you want to buy some? Read through the seven churches. I counsel thee to buy of me white raiment.

So God said, yeah, God opens his markets every morning you live. Do you remember what Isaiah says? Come and buy wine and milk without money and without price. I counsel thee to buy of me.

You know, this city of Laodicea was one of the greatest cities in the world at that time. I guess you've read some of the great classics. You may remember Cicero went on a vast journey halfway around the world, and he said he cashed his credentials for money in the great banks of Laodicea.

There's irony here, there's cynicism here almost, there's scorn here, holy scorn, which is the most awful scorn ever, from the lips of the holy son of God. I counsel thee to buy, you're naked, buy some clothing. Well, one of the main industries of Laodicea was they made the best clothing in the world, and in essence he says it's rubbish, it won't cover you, it's timeless, materialistic, it's selfish.

They were rich in money, and yet he says you buy gold from me. The gold is divine truth. The garment of this is a garment of righteousness.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold, stride in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed. How do we buy from God? How many times have we sung in our fellowship here, particularly when we were at Browns, that lovely old house we were in, we used to sing the Dying Thief, Cowper's hymn, an English hymn of course, the Dying Thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day, and there have I, not may I, have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away. There is a fountain, the Dying Thief, he got into heaven on the last gasp.

I expect to see him in heaven, I do not expect to see him as part of the bride. I don't believe for a minute everybody's part of the bride because they're saved. If they were, why didn't all the ten virgins get straight in to see the bridegroom? The door was shut.

You know, everybody thinks heaven is going to be an eternal picnic. When you get in the door, Peter's going to be there and say, would you try this on for size, this is a special crown for you. And you can try this one on, this has rubies, this has diamonds, this has amethyst, this has something else, forget it.

Are you saying I have to work for my salvation? No, I'm saying you have to work for your reward. You're not going to collect crowns in heaven as souvenirs. The Dying Thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day.

One of the great heroes of America, two books moved me to God, I think that's why God brought me here. When I got to college, a minister wrote and said he was giving his library away. That's for mailing.

So I sent for three books, one on prayer, one on holiness, and one on the second coming. I got a beautiful book. It's never been published like that since.

It had a fantastic cover. It was brilliant red and it had big gold letters on the back, Power Through Prayer by E.M. Bounds. And I made up my mind in the lunchtime when other boys were fooling around, I don't read that book on my knees.

I read it through in a week. I went through it? No, it went through me. It changed my life about prayer.

When I was 17, my Sunday school teacher gave me the bridge life of David Brainerd, one of the greatest saints ever. Brainerd died at 28. Wesley died at 88.

Is Wesley going to have a bigger reward? No, he's not. Why not? Because God doesn't reward us just for the size of our accomplishments. He rewards us for faithfulness.

He was faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in much. Some people are going to rule over five cities. Some are going to rule over ten cities.

There's going to be some very strange things in heaven. I believe every day that you obey God, and particularly in the simple things or the inner things of your life, you're weaving a garment that you're going to wear in eternity. John Wesley was converted at 35, so in that round it makes 53.

Isn't that wonderful? Add them together, it makes 88, the time he died. When he died, he left six English pound notes, six silver spoons, a handful of books, a Geneva gown, and what was the other thing Wilfredo? Oh, I know, the Methodist church. I knew there was something.

He made a lot of money. He built a lot of institutions. He built orphanages.

I preached in one of them to the British Admiralty once, a gorgeous, fantastic building in the town of Bath in England. And as I walked up that aisle, I said, and John Wesley walked through this magnificent building. He paid for it.

He printed Bibles. He printed hymn books. He financed missionaries to go across the earth.

That's the way to use your money. You think of the reward. Why in God's name do you think it says don't lay up treasure enough? Lay up treasure in heaven.

You can tell how spiritual you are. I'll tell you this will shatter some of you, and you deserve it. When you're more interested in your bank book than you are in God's book.

When I get to heaven, I'm sure I'll make it. I'll be looking to see if Calvin made it, but there you are, that's another thing. What a day in heaven will be like.

Mercy, won't it be wonderful? John Wesley buried a man that he said was the holiest man since the days of the Apostle Paul. I have a life on him. John Fletcher, the saint of Maidley.

The drunks at the side of the road would be standing there, not able to stand up, and they'd take their caps off and say, here comes the man that loves our souls. John Wesley said he was the holiest man that ever lived. He said, when I die and leave Methodism, I want to hand over my office to this amazing man.

He is the only man in the world that can take Methodism as it is now and rule it spiritually. That's what he said of John Fletcher. John Wesley buried John Fletcher and lived 30 years after he buried him.

Wesley invested his time, invested his money. I read David Brennan. I lived at that time on the edge of Sherwood Forest in England.

So at night, I went in the forest and took my mother's little dog and tied it to a tree, and I prayed. We have some ferns in England that don't grow out that way. They grow like a bowl.

I used to get into one of them and pray in the night, in the darkness, yell my head off. One old lady said, God's not deaf. And a friend of mine said, no, he's not nervous either.

I don't care how you pray as long as you pray with the power of anointing and wisdom of the Spirit. That's all that matters. I got up early Sunday morning and walked across the golf course, tied the dog up to a tree, and had another session of prayer.

And gradually, gradually, gradually, I got to know something about the heart and passion and fervor of a young man who died a ripe old age of what, 28? After the revival in Methodism, just like most revivals, it began to dip and get colder. And Wesley wrote to his brother Charles and said, Charles, see that every minister in the Methodist church gets a copy of the diary of David Brennan. And they got an edition specially made and sent it to every Methodist preacher.

I counsel thee to buy me gold. He's writing to bankers. And he never had a gold coin, bless his heart.

He had to borrow a penny. And he said one day, whose is a superscription? Render to Caesar the things of the Caesars. If half the Christians in America were as interested in the kingdom of God as they are in the Dow Jones averages with every Bible, we never talk about gold gluttons.

We talk about money. We talk about gluttonous people who get too fat with eating. What about the gold gluttons? Is it possible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven? Yes, but hardly, Jesus says.

There's a little gate there in Jerusalem, if you've been, where they try and get a camel through. They take everything off it and push the poor old beast through without its burden. And he said, you'll get to heaven as easy as that with your wealth.

James says, your wealth cries out against you. Listen, dear friend, I came to this conclusion this week. There's no good you praying to God and expecting him to hear your voice, if you walk this week and underbid his voice.

He's not your lackey. He's not your servant. He's not there to pull every mountain down.

He's there to give you strength to get over the mountain, not to ease your burden. We pray like infants, Lord, give me strength for this burden. No, most of us, Lord, give me burdens according to my strength.

That's why I didn't do it. Break our backs and our hearts. You switch from saying, Lord, give me a burden equal to my strength, to saying, God, give me strength equal to the burden that's in front of me.

I'm sure of this again, as I pondered it this week. You cannot live wrong and pray right. You may get away with it in a prayer meeting, but when it gets to the great auditor up there, he says, but you didn't do right this week.

You did the wrong business deal. You did the wrong action. You said the wrong word.

We think that prayer is the easiest thing in the world. All you do is get down on your knees and gabble away something. Prayer is the most difficult ministry in the world.

I had three ministers in my office last Monday, one of them almost in tears. Pastors, a charismatic church on the West Coast, and he says, my church is frustrated. I'm frustrated.

What's wrong? I said, you don't pray. You're not disciplined. You don't pray.

You don't know a thing about worship. Come on, shoot back. What did he say? Nothing.

Then he said, you're right. I'm not a disciplined man. I'm not a praying man.

I don't know that much about worship. Do you know why we have so many pygmies in our pews? Because we have so many puppets in our pulpits. If Jesus came back, he wouldn't cleanse the temple, he'd cleanse

the pulpit.

This week, I'm reading for the third time David Wilkerson's new book, and it's a scorcher. I'll make you happy. I'm going to try and get you all a free copy as a Christmas gift.

Won't that make you happy? Maybe I'll mail it from myself so you'll think I sent it, but anyhow. I'll tell you what, you won't dare to get through it without brokenness. If you do, you're beyond help.

Does he scorch the church? Does he scorch the pulpit? Yes, but he quotes all the time the scriptures and shows how far we've drifted from the holiness of God and the authority of God. It would cost a lot of us something to buy from God, wouldn't it? The scripture that says, redeem the time, actually is from the Greek, buy up the opportunities. You set off every day saying, Lord, I want a new opportunity to prove your grace today, improve your strength today, improve your wisdom today.

I want to be so low that nobody can crush me. I'm going to get a rubber stamp made for my letters. You know what it would say on? I am a worm and no man.

I don't have anything else but a worm, because a worm is the only creature that can go in at one side of a mountain and come out at the other side. There's only another creature that can do that. Read the 41st chapter of Isaiah, which is fantastic about the worm.

The context is, fear not thou worm Jacob, but God called him a prince. But you see, God never flatters us. He flattens us sometimes.

He flattens me pretty often. Do that where you would carry, you're not in your head. We must be on the same wavelength.

He rubs my nose in the dust sometimes, and it doesn't have to go down too far if you're a worm to get your nose rubbed in the dust. Isn't that good? Fear not thou worm, but Jacob was changed to have his name called Israel. A prince with God, but a nobody in the eyes of the world.

Oh boy, how we want to be esteemed, how we want to be respected, how people should realize what precious gifts of the Spirit I've given. Do you know why they don't? Because you stink with pride, that's why. Am I doing pretty good right now? Nobody uncomfortable, I can't be chewing too.

I counsel thee, I'm giving you advice, thy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed. And the shame of thy nakedness. Isn't it amazing this church thought she was wearing the most gorgeous garments, and God looked right through them and said, you're stark naked.

You're trusting in your works, in your positions, in your possessions, in your creature comforts, in your spiritual stature. I've said before, let me say again, which I often do of course, we're in grave danger when we let our accomplishments become the ground of our confidence. If you feel stronger in God, if I feel stronger in God tonight because I've been preaching 60 years, I'm a fool.

I've pushed Jesus on one side, my confidence is in the flesh. The longer I live, the more I find I don't know. But you know, I'm so happy one day in a factory, Jesus called me to preach.

Remember the first call of Jesus was what? Follow me. Wasn't it? Follow me, I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest unto you. The first call was follow me.

What was the second call? Well, the third was abide in me, and it's not easy. But I remember when I stood on the crack of the ground in that factory and told Jesus, Lord, here I go. I won't, not only will I not go back, I won't even look back.

You know, some of you will feed your kids on such junk. Come on, let me see. How many of you read, how many of you are married? How many wish you were? Anyhow.

How many are married? Raise your hand. Okay, let me see. Okay, put them down.

Thank you. How many of you read to your children Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress? One? Good brother. Where, where's, you have two.

Three? Good for you, dear. What about reading The Holy War? That's a greater book than Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, the second volume. Do you know, I once sat in Bunyan's chair, and I thought, boy, when I get up, I'll write like Bunyan, and it didn't work.

I went to a place where they had Adam Clarke, the great expositor of the Methodist church, had a high back chair. I sat in that, and it didn't help my preaching a bit. I sat in a chair where the King of England had sat, and do you know what? Nobody noticed.

Can't life be discouraging? Well, he says, buy, buy garments that you're naked. No, he doesn't say that. He says, buy of me garments that the shame of thy nakedness.

Isn't it awesome to think that one day at the judgment seat of Christ, many of us will be stark naked? Nothing to cover us. Buy of me that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness not appear. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.

Be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. You know, this scripture is so often applied in an evangelistic meeting.

Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart. Correct exegesis is not there. He is not knocking at the door of the heart here, he's knocking at the door of the church.

God Almighty, how can it be? The book of the Revelation is not complete yet, and before the canon of scriptures we call it is sealed, Jesus is outside the church. I sometimes wonder if he ever got back. Do you know one of the great things about the Christian life? You better learn it quickly, or you'll learn it painfully.

Two years ago, God gave me a word for the new year. I don't go scattering through the book to find one, and the Lord gave me a word, rejection. Great.

I had an appointment next month I was looking for in the 17th of April. Today the Bible school found, somehow they crossed their wires, and they didn't throw the other guy out, they threw me out. Good, good.

I'll have less responsibility at the judgment seat. I would have delivered my soul, I knew the message God wanted me to give, but they rejected it. He was born and there's no room for him in the inn.

He got a bit older, there was no room in his family, his family turned on him. He went to the temple, no room in the temple turned on him. And when he died, there was no room to bury him, he died outside of the city.

Well, why in God's name do you expect to be accepted everywhere? How is it the world couldn't get on with the holiest man that ever lived, and it can get on with you and me? Have we compromised? Are we no spiritual stature? Have we no righteousness that reflects on their corruption? I stand at the door and knock. Who is this? Gabriel? No. Who is it? Michael the archangel? No.

Who is it? Well, I'll tell you, we read in the previous chapter there, these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. Can you imagine it? I stand at the door, their Redeemer is standing at the door, their Savior is standing at the door, their Sanctifier is standing at the door, their coming King is standing at the door trying to get in. You know, doors are very interesting in the Bible.

Remember Noah built an ark and God let him do everything except one thing, leave it alone, I'll shut the door. And when God shuts the door, no man can open it. Again, what about the virgins that were left outside? They knocked on the door saying, open unto us.

And he said, I never knew you. In the seventh chapter, you have all those men doing miracles and signs and wonders. And when they get to the judgment seat, God puts the torch to all their life, and it's a pile of ash.

They've got nothing for it. It's wood and hay and stubble. Your life can be wood, hay, stubble, or silver, gold, and precious stone.

Wood and hay and stubble are above the ground. It's ministry everybody sees. You flash it on TV to show how big and famous you are.

Poor old Oral, you know what he's going to do now? I got this just after one person that said it from one of his greatest men up there. Told a friend of mine this week, Oral is launching into a 200 million dollar complex. It's got three rings.

I'm tempted to say it's a three ring circus. You know what the first one is? It's an entertainment center for the poor weary Christians that got tired of laughing at night. Johnny Carson.

He's going to have an entertainment section, you know. I think they're going to call it the upper room. No, the supper room.

Can you think of a man putting 200 million dollars of God's money in a thing like that? But the second circle is Bible lands with the, what is it, six stations of the cross? How many is it? Ten or twelve? Twelve. The twelve stations of the cross animated. The third is Oral Robert land.

Showing me, showing him as a boy, and who do you think's going to animate all the things? Now don't laugh, it's true. Disney. After all, they animated Mickey Mouse and Minnie.

So why not do it for Oral? I'm angry. You send your ties to that stupid thing. You're agreeing with the condemnation.

You'll be condemned with it. You're agreeing with the worldliness of it. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

You know what? He's still outside the door. Go to town, you see a church with a family center next to it. You've got a hundred people crushing in there every night.

A hundred and fifteen, twenty in the prayer meeting, if that. Do you think Jesus is standing in the midst of a show? There's only one place for Jesus Christ. And what did he say? Where two or three are gathered together, there am I where? In the midst.

Read the 21st of Revelation. There are thrones. There are four and twenty elders, and he's in the midst.

And there's a lamb upon the throne, and he's in the midst. That's the only place where Jesus is comfortable, where he's the center, where he's the master of ceremonies. I stand at the door and knock.

If any man will hear my voice. Yeah, this people sold clothing through the world. The historic record is they had a breed of sheep that were never known anywhere else, and they produced black silky wool that made the most precious garments that people could buy.

Kings used to buy it. But the other great export was eye salve. Look at the irony.

I can't lead to buy of me eye salve. That stuff you have is no good. They had a little block.

They bought a little block, and they crushed it and mixed it with water and put it in their sore eyes. After all, they had no sunshades. And they went over burning deserts where the sand would blow in their eyes, and they had tremendous discomfort.

And he said, I'll give you eye salve. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and repent.

I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice. I like that phrase.

I like the defiance when the apostle Paul says it. I like it when Jesus stood in a crowded place with maybe 5,000 people standing around. And he stood there where the priesthood stood every day for six days and poured out water from a golden vessel on his shoulder brought up from the pool of Siloam.

And a big orchestra singing. And Jesus stood there exactly in the same place and said, If any man thirst. That was a smack in the eye for the Jews.

They said, We have a monopoly of God. Jesus says, If any man thirst. Paul does better than that.

Well, 1 Corinthians 5, 17, I think he says, If any man being Christ. I love that. Any man anywhere at any time being Christ.

God doesn't plug you up where you're leaking. He makes you a new creature. If you didn't get a new heart and a new mind and a new hope and a new appetite for God's word and a new appetite for prayer, you may have changed your moral standard, but you're still dead in trespasses and in sin.

I don't believe that 5% of the Christians in America are even born again, never mind if you're with the Holy Ghost. And that goes for England, it goes for Australia. The most radical thing in the world is the new birth.

He makes us a new creation. The Spirit who brooded over the chaos in the garden in the beginning. The Spirit that brooded over that in the beginning is the same Holy Spirit that brooded over the holy men were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Wherever the Holy Ghost goes, there's movement. It doesn't have to be visible. He came across a man turning a sycamore tree, herdsman of Tikoa, and made him a prophet.

He came over a little woman. People passed her going up the road and looked at her and said, You know, that woman's pregnant. She isn't married.

What are we coming to? Passing the Virgin Mary within touching distance of the Son of God, the Eternal Son of God, the Holy Ghost did it. A bunch of unlettered, unnamed almost, unusual men met in the upper room and what happened? God turned them inside out. Then what happened? They went and turned the world upside down.

He said, If any man hear my voice, when the whole of Europe was as black as night, one man heard God. Of course, you know his name, Martin Luther. What happened? He shook the whole of Europe.

He didn't invent justification by faith. He came to a cemetery. The church was a cemetery full of dead men's bones and he was made alive.

He said, It came one moment when I was browsing over my sins and Satan came in with an inkwell and a pen and he wrote on the wall of my cell the sins of my youth, the sins of my manhood, the sins of the flesh, the sins of the spirit, the sins I remember, the sins I've forgotten. Then he laughed in my face and said, There you are. All your sins that you ever committed.

Martin Luther said, Write one more. There isn't one to write. Well, then, if there's not one to write, write across them all, The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth me from all sin.

I'm a free man. I don't need the priest. I don't need the sacraments.

The doctrine of justification was restored through Martin Luther. At a quarter to nine on the twenty, about a quarter to nine on the 24th of May, 1738, John Wesley says in his diary, I went somewhat unwillingly to a place in Aldersgate Street and a man was reading the preface to the epistle to the Romans. Listen, the preface, not the epistle.

He was reading the preface to the epistle to the Romans by Martin Luther and it was just about quarter to nine on the clock and I did feel my heart strangely warmed and I said, I believe that Jesus died for my sins, even mine. A Roman Catholic theologian said it wasn't anything supernatural. He had epilepsy.

Well, I hope half of you have epileptic fit tonight then. He went a step further than Martin Luther because he raised from the dust the doctrine of sanctification. That not only can our sins be forgiven, but sin can be removed and the Holy Ghost can purify us through the blood and come and indwell us by the Spirit of God.

And Jesus can be made unto us more than a Savior. He can be made wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. There's nothing so majestic.

There's nothing this nation or any nation on earth needs more than a series of messages on the new birth. I said to some preacher in my office the other day, you're always talking about the gifts of the Spirit and sometimes the fruits of the Spirit. There's one thing you miss out.

Tell me the last time you preached on this that when he is come he convicts of sin. You're asking God to fill you with emptied of all your corruption. You're asking him to clothe you before you let him take off the garments that you have of your own righteousness and selfishness.

The new birth is a majestic experience. It takes the blood of the Son. It takes the pardon of God.

It takes the work of the Holy Ghost to regenerate us. I need more than pardon. I need more than justification with God.

I need a spirit in me that I do not have. And that is the blessed Holy Spirit of God to come and take full control of my personality. If any man hear my voice and open the door, there's a classic picture.

The first time I went to London I went to St. Paul's Cathedral. There's a fantastic picture nearly as large as this wall and it shows a door and a lamp that seems to be going out. It's dark outside and there's a vine growing all over the door and there's an owl sitting up there in the bush.

And underneath it says Jesus, the light of the world. Jesus is there with a plummet with a lamp. I forgot the name.

I think Holman painted it. After he had painted it, the critics came and one said, I have seen a mistake on this picture that nobody has found yet. What is that? There's no latch on the door.

He said there is. It's on the inside. The Holy Ghost will never kick down the door.

He'll never abolish your will. He'll never make you a slave to come into a state of grace. He'll make you a slave after.

In fact, he won't take you any less turns than you give him your spirit, not your lousy sins maybe, indeed, but your spirit and your soul and body after he's pardoned you. He wants your body. He wants your mind.

He wants your will. He wants your affections. I think it was Boner, I'm not sure, that wrote him.

Fill thou my life, O Lord my God, in every part with praise, that my whole being may proclaim thy being and thy ways. Not for the lip of praise alone, nor even a praising heart, I ask, but for a life made up of praise in every part. Praise in the common things of life, its goings out and in.

Praise in each duty and each deed, however small and mean. So shall no part of day or night from sacredness be free, but all my life in every step be fellowship with thee. I guess it's true to say here we have a lot of Sunday Christians here.

You're very pious on Sunday. You carry the Bible with you, a nice edition that you haven't used for years maybe. What about the rest of the week? Are you a Sunday Christian? The measure of your yieldedness to God is the measure of God's yieldedness to you.

He won't drive you into submission. He won't drive you to the place where you have to take a load bigger than the other person. He offers you the opportunity.

I've got through that bit. I want to say this. I mentioned a few minutes ago there where the Lord says of those men that had fabulous ministries.

Oh they'll be on TV Sunday. You know how many miracles we've had? A guy there, his daddy's a famous preacher, so his daddy lets him wear his mantle. And he stands there the other Sunday.

I haven't watched him for three months. He said, Oh I'm so full of the love of God. I'm so full of the love of God.

I thought, well why didn't you go see your wife and the two kids you deserted? He hasn't seen them more than once a year. And he's telling young people, he says we'll pray for your marriage. Go pray for your own.

Where are we living when adulterous can have the front place on TV? My boss has come so I better preach a bit better right here. Now those two nice people are from Bethany Fellowship. You know Bethany Fellowship? And they're two of the co-founders, so it's good to have them.

We've got all the celebrities here tonight. But he says, I stand at the door. He isn't sitting.

The person that stands at your door is waiting for a response and then he's going. You know what stupid evangelists say? Well why don't you settle it with the Lord tonight? Don't leave it till next week. Listen friend, I got past that.

God isn't your errand boy. He doesn't owe you a thing. He could give you the witness that you're to be saved and cast you into hell and he'd still be a loving God.

Don't put it off till tomorrow. The scripture says today if ye will hear his voice. The scripture says now is the accepted time.

There's an old proverb that says what? Procrastination is the thief of time. I believe that procrastination is the recruiting sergeant of hell. You say, but I don't understand.

Jesus says to these miracle workers who've raised the dead and done many. I never knew you. That's what he says.

Notice what he didn't say. He didn't say I never saw you. Of course he saw them.

The eyes of the Lord run to and through. But I never knew you. You did all your works in my name to build up your name, to build up your institution, to bleed people for money.

Of course he saw that they were doing. I talked with a world famous preacher some years ago. He had heard me preach and he said, well you're pretty strong.

I said, well why should I join the weak gang anyhow? Well you were pretty strong. You came on. Yes, I don't know anything else to preach, but what's strong? Well he said, I did something that was pretty bad recently and God hasn't sent judgment to me.

I said, I've got news for you, but he's not going to do either. What? I keep thinking disaster will come up in front of me. Some calamity will.

No, forget it. You go on your way to eternity. Don't worry about it.

Why? I'll tell you why. Because God doesn't judge men like he used to. Immediately Cain slew Abel.

God put a mark on him lest any finding him. Who are the any? His daddy and mommy wouldn't kill him. There must have been a world population anyhow.

Lest any finding him should slay him. Miriam gossiped about her brother. If God sends us white as snow with leprosy tonight for gossip, half of the congregation that we'd have to turn this into a healing meeting.

But you see he doesn't do that. Why? Has God changed his stand? No, he has appointed a day. I don't remember many things dear old Keith said to me.

He said some things that puzzled me. One day we were talking and I said, well Keith, you know all roads lead, and he interrupted me, said to the judgment seat of Christ. Right.

I'd like to make a map of that. All the creation of men, every nation there going right up there to the judgment seat. No matter how lousy and rotten this world is, it doesn't matter how corrupt the religion is, it's still God's world.

He still is going to bring it to account in that great day. Nothing will escape. Kennedy, we wish he didn't get pardon from the Pope for drowning that young woman.

I think Mr. Nixon will be a bit embarrassed when they play the 18 tapes over in eternity, but they're going to do it. And should I be listening, I guess you will. What a day it's going to be.

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? But then he says, to him that overcometh, to him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne? Well, you don't have a king in America. I wonder God blesses you. You don't have a king.

Don't get angry now. Doesn't the scripture say, what, you have to do what? Do something and honor the king? That shows his mercy that he honors America and you don't have a king, but apart from that. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on, who sits on the throne of the side of the king? The queen.

Who is the queen? The bride. I believe the only people that make up the bride of Jesus Christ are the overcomers. Overcome the world, overcome the flesh, overcome the devil, overcome discouragement, overcome every crazy thing that pulls other people down.

And because of the indwelling, irresistible power of the Holy Ghost, we can be more than conquerors. Not just conquerors. I'm going to preach on that one Sunday morning.

I won't tell you which Sunday morning, but I'll preach on it one Sunday morning. I've got to preach the Sunday after Easter. Then David's preaching next week.

We're going to alternate so you can always stay away when I'm preaching. Keep a good record. But if you do, I'll be at your house the next day, I'll tell you that.

Even if I have to get a chauffeur to drive me around. No, only those who overcome are going to sit with him on his throne. I'm going to condense it to this one thing I woken with this morning about prayer.

Prayer is the most difficult task in the world. The condition is laid down in Psalm 15, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that hath clean hands. And clean hands is our business relationship with the world.

If you've got dirty hands, you've no chance of your prayer being answered. You sabotage. Don't blame the devil.

Don't blame somebody else. Blame yourself. You sabotage it by disobedience.

You sabotage it by shady business deals. You sabotage it by wrong attitudes to other people. God is demanding clean hands, my relationship, and a pure heart, my relationship to God.

The thing that came to me, Dale, this morning early was this. God Almighty runs the universe. I don't know what the world looks like to him.

I remember flying up from Australia once. It was the clearest day I'd ever flown, and I could actually see the circle of the earth. I'm sure of that.

I looked at that, and I thought, there's God. He sits on the circle of the earth. He's the high and lofty one inhabiting eternity.

What must the world be like to him? How small is it? And yet he looks down from heaven on a world about as big as my thumbnail, so to speak, and yet he sees a man praying, this fire-breathing Pharisee. He'd torn families up. He admits that.

He'd driven people to prison. He was blazing mad with holy anger. And you think God doesn't make a man a new creature? How do you get that man who was setting himself on his own confession? I was a blasphemer.

I was a murderer. I did every evil thing to wreck the church of Jesus Christ. And then he writes, I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but if I have no love, and God changed him for a man who's fiery with hatred, to love which is stronger than death, to love which is a fire, and he's the strongest fire in the world.

But there he is. He's crumbled up on the Damascus road. And God in eternity stops creation as it were, and he says, look, there is a man praying.

I don't find him saying after that, there's a man doing miracles, there's a man raising the dead, there's a man in prison singing his praises to me. He says, there is a man. And he got my ear because he's praying.

I'll tell you who prayed. Poor people prayed. Not socially poor, but poor in spirit.

The psalmist says this, poor man. How could he be a poor man? He has a standing army. He's at the top of the charts with his sons, writing the greatest hymns ever written, the psalms.

And then he bows before God and says, this poor man cried. Or he says, bow down thine ear and hear me. I'm poor and needy.

Only the poor have access to the throne of God. You can stink in your riches if you like, and I'm not talking about material riches. I'm talking about the arrogance many people have about their gifts in the spirit.

You go and come to a banquet, a breakfast, a supper or something, there's a man with a word of knowledge. Of course, if the poor guy only has the word of God, he's hardly worth listening to. But he has a word of knowledge.

Or this man did this. When God found him, he was broke and he's prospered and look where he... I've never found a man, and I went to a full gospel businessman in Minneapolis for years, every Saturday morning they had it. You talk about praying.

Do you know who prayed in our group in the little house there? David Duplessis, Harold Bredesen, a man that's done very much in this country, whose name escapes me for the moment. About six of us. I'm not against tongues, but you know what? I only remember one Saturday when anybody prayed in tongues.

But I'll tell you what, they prayed in the Holy Ghost. They prayed until it seemed to me the whole ground was moving. I felt, Lord, let me make a leap into eternity, get hold of the horns of the altar, put one hand on the horns of the altar, and on this poor stinking world in which I live and bankrupt church.

God listens to praying men. I'm glad you pray well, Fredo, and your dear wife. He could tell you some answers to prayer.

When we get to heaven, we're going to be embarrassed with how little we've received of our inheritance in Jesus Christ. God gave us Jesus Christ, and if this doesn't blow your mind, what will? And with him, he has freely given us all things. There's no reason why we should ever doubt.

There's no reason why we should ever fail. There's no reason why we should step back from some super task that God puts in front of us. He delights in our success in the Spirit.

This man was the greatest preacher that ever lived, I think, the Apostle Paul, after Jesus. But God never said, Behold, he preacheth. He never said, Behold, he prophesieth.

He never said, Behold, he raised the dead again. Behold, there's pandemonium in hell. Why? Because he cast demons out of the woman.

I've said it before, let me say it again, because some of you haven't been here before. I think the greatest honor ever paid to any human being outside of Jesus, paid to the Apostle Paul, when one day some men tried to drive a demon out of a man, and the demon in the man said, Listen, Jesus we know, and Paul we know. In God's name, do you know anything greater than that? I would be like, I'd rather be on the devil's list of most wanted men in America than any honor the world could give me.

You couldn't, you could give me all the banks in the world. They wouldn't satisfy me. Whisper in my ear that Satan moved you up.

He says you're getting to be dangerous to his kingdom. He says you're spoiling his plans. You're thwarting his purposes.

You're pulling down his strongholds. We're not pulling things out. We're building pretty little churches and little rooms for people to sit around.

People say, Well, if you're praying the Holy Ghost, you're praying in tongues. You couldn't prove that with all the religion you have in the world, all the Greek. Praying in the Holy Ghost is praying God's mind with God's strength, with God's wisdom, with God's love.

If you tell me you have to pray in tongues, tell me how did Wesley shake the world and never spoke in tongues? How did Phineas shake the world? How did Judson go to Burma, one of the hardest countries, and see revival? How did Easton stay for seven years and never see a convert and not get discouraged? Because he was looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher. Dear Wilfredo and his wife, this precious brother, what God has begun in Venezuela is going to finish. I don't care how big it's been, it's only the beginning.

I don't prophesy like Dave does, but I tell you this, your whole outfit down there is still in water to the ankles. You're going to go to waters to the knees, then water to swimming, then to true Holy Ghost abandonment. We want you to send us reports that will make us weep, make us search our hearts.

Look what God's doing down there. David has a statement in his book that will cause him some trouble, that God Almighty is not dependent on the money in the churches in America to shake the world. He's done it all through history without money, men.

I know we've got to live, we've got to eat, we've got to pay our taxes, but people think if we can launch out here, the little boy on PTL says, this is God's method, you know. What do you mean God Almighty's method to save the world? People that listen up the Amazon can't afford a shirt, never mind a TV. Go around the Philippine islands and see people there.

They've no shoes to their feet. There's a hymn that was written, I've forgotten, 40 years ago about a woman that came, I think it was through Korea. They told her about a man who was preaching about the living God, who had a son, and his son once came to this earth and he lived like us and got sleepy and tired and hungry, and yet people kicked him around.

Where is that man? And she was told she walked 15 miles at 70 years of age, she walked 15 miles to the meeting. She couldn't hear too well, and just before she left, she said to the preacher, I didn't quite get the name of the man you said died for my sins. I would like to say thank you to him.

Did he take all my sins? Yes, I have been very bad. He took all yours. There's not one of them the devil can bring up against you in that great day.

What was his name? Jesus. Jesus. She walked home 15 miles through the forest, feet were blistered and sore and bleeding when she got home.

She slept soundly, sure she did. Woke up in the next morning and had forgotten his name, and she walked back to the missionary, 15 miles. She asked for the missionary, and they said he hammered on the door, and she said, tell me his name again.

I forgot it, and he spelled it out again. Somebody wrote a chorus, we used to sing, oh tell me his name again, or sing me that glad refrain, how Jesus in love came down from above to die for our sin and shame. Tell me his name again.

You know that name has lost its charm for many of us. You know we'll never get things till we God's way. Some people never get out of the first five chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

Well, the Acts of the Apostles is the Acts of the Holy Ghost, it's the Acts of the Church, but read it carefully and get out of your doldrum and find out the name of Jesus is mentioned far more often than the Holy Ghost. In whose name did he do this thing? There's one name that makes hell tremble, it's name high over all in hell or earth or sky. Angels and men before it fall, and devils fear and fly.

I say this, I don't care who listens, I'm embarrassed to be part of the Church of Jesus Christ tonight, which is so totally, radically different from the New Testament, so impoverished, so blind, so powerless. I talked with David now yesterday, we had a wonderful talk. I've come to this conclusion, there is a move of God in America today, but not amongst the unsaved.

It's amongst the redeemed who are determined by the grace of God to be part of the bride. And to be part of the bride, you have to be divorced from everything in the world. You can't be holy on Sundays and carnal on Mondays.

You can't delight in some little scripture the preacher gives you and you turn it over and then Monday say, oh I just saw the Dow Jones boy, isn't it wonderful? Oh brother that money stinks, when it's become your idol. Anything you like more than prayer and worshipping God is an idol, you better get rid of it. I shall have no other God before me.

God is a jealous God. I wouldn't share my dear wife if I said to my wife, well darling I love you, you're beautiful, but you know, remember a girl I used to know called Alice? I'll just need one night a week to go and talk with Alice. I mean, I'll be back, you know, by nine o'clock and she says, yes, doesn't matter if you never come back, which would be right.

Come on, why don't you, you've got an idol, come on. Some of you can't wait for baseball to start. You'll know every player, you'll know as the average is, you know how many times he gets knocked out or washed out or beaten up, whatever it is.

You've had no joy all winter because you don't like football. Oh boy, just a week or two and we'll have the TV showing us a wonderful game. Anything that you love more than you love Jesus Christ is an idol.

Don't care what it is. David will say, well in fact, my dear wife and I have been reading that book, it's very stirring. And in one place he says, Rebecca, remember Rebecca was barren.

God told her to take all the idols out of her tent and when she did, she became fruitful. And he labors on that, on the barrenness in the churches due to the idols in our homes. I counsel thee to buy.

It will cost something. Buy gold from a banking system. Buy gold from a city that made more garments than any nation in the world.

Buy ISAB. There was one of the greatest hospitals in early history in that very church, pardon me, in that very city. And yet he's saying to the church, you can make that ISAB, but I have an ISAB.

Wonderful to have wonderful eyes. Wonderful when we can see the things that God is doing. We can see into the creation of God.

Well, my time's gone. I'm going to ask you to pray for these precious brothers as they go back, dear wife, to Venezuela. Pray for Paul, our Paul down in one of the most difficult... All these other countries in South America, I think, every one of them at one time or another have revival.

All except Paraguay has never in its history had revival. Anthropologists say the people in that country are the most savage people of all the people in South America. I'm not asking you to pray because it's my son.

I'm asking you to pray that the devil will be overthrown, that souls will be liberated. They're not trying to build a church. You remember when dear Irene was here? And she said, we are not in South America to get converts.

We're in South America to get worshippers. That's wonderful. David Wilkerson's boy Gary, he's working in one of the darkest spots in America, right downtown Detroit.

Vicious. Do you know there are more young people killed in Detroit in a month than are killed in New York City in a year? The murder rate in the schools, the devastation amongst young people is utterly wild. And yet there's people all over town.

They've been lifting their arms up for months and years, and God Almighty, they've never done a thing. I'm tired of writing and reading about revival. I want to see God do it.

The last thing here, somebody quoted it tonight, I think, Romans 12, 1 and 2, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your body a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable to God, which is only a reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world. What did Philip say? Don't let this world shape you in its mold.

I read a statement by Dr. Krishnamurti. A while ago he said, I'm amazed at the worldliness of the people of God in these days. How worldly we are.

How caught up in materialism. How fascinated with the things we can say. The perishing things of clay, born but for one brief day.

I've told you before, I'll say it and I'll sit down. I do not want God to say to me in that day, my son, I had many things to tell you, but you couldn't bear them. I'm going to stand by myself, my darling wife won't be with me, my boys won't be with me, my friends won't.

I'll be standing there with billions of eyes looking on me, the apostle Paul and Jeremiah and Isaiah, and all the saints of all the ages, watching poor Leonard Ravenhill give an account of his life. And God said, you didn't go far enough into the checkbook. That's what Mr. Spurgeon called it.

This is God's checkbook. It's signed in the blood of Jesus. Everything you need for life, for time and eternity is in that book.

I'm tired of working with dwarfs. I want to see God raise some Samson's, spiritual Samson's, who can pull down strongholds. So next, Friday night, God willing, I want to bring a message on Easter, part of the Easter message.

As I say, David will be preaching on a Sunday morning. We want to pray. Pray for something that's on your heart tonight, really pray.

Doesn't matter if you cry, forget it. Pray for your own church, maybe it's bankrupt. Pray for your own pastor, maybe he's no power.

Pray for your family, maybe they have no vision. Behold he prayeth. I want God to look down and say there in eternity, look there, they're praying there.

It's the most important thing we'll ever do after worship. Okay, you want to kneel a little while? Pray.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/5ht7RhnK9Vs.mp4>

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