

Last Day, That Great Day of the Feast - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit in the church and in individual lives, and critiques the present church for lacking the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 58:35

Scripture: John 7:37

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "The Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Awakening"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the urgency of seeking a genuine relationship with God, urging listeners to pray for divine communication and a commitment to obedience. He reflects on the significance of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers, asserting that the modern church often neglects the Spirit's role, leading to spiritual stagnation. Ravenhill critiques the superficiality of contemporary Christianity, calling for a return to the supernatural power of God as demonstrated in the early church. He highlights Jesus' bold proclamation during the last day of the feast, inviting those who thirst to come and receive the living water of the Holy Spirit. The preacher's passionate plea is for believers to recognize the importance of the Holy Spirit in their lives and the church's mission.

Transcript

I would like to ask you to do a very simple thing. If you really mean business with God tonight, I want to ask you to pray a prayer of four very simple words that everybody understands. And then when we've prayed that prayer, to pray another prayer of five very simple words.

So shall we pray? And will you pray these words quietly? You don't need to pray them audibly, but just pray this prayer, Lord, speak to me. And that a simple prayer, I promise to obey thee. Father, we thank you as Jesus did.

We thank you for hearing us tonight. We thank you for working your eternal purpose out in this service, and ask that it shall not merely reach to the uttermost parts of the earth, but to the very extremities of eternity. In Jesus' name.

I want to read just a few verses from the Gospel as recorded by John in the 7th chapter. I'm reading from verse 37. The Gospel as John recorded it in the 7th chapter, I'm reading from verse 37.

In the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. That this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.

For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. One of the most famous broadcasters in America, a man that usually had something very incisive to say, used to finish every broadcast by saying this, this is one man's opinion. And I think it's essential to keep that in focus, whoever is preaching, to realize he is a man and though he may speak with tremendous conviction and earnestness, it is still one man's opinion.

And it must always be weighed in the light of the Holy Spirit of God, because men are fallible. It's this one man's opinion that the present church is an embarrassment to God. God never planned failure for his church.

If the world holds together another four years, if the Lord hasn't come, the year 1974 will celebrate 300 years since John Owen, the famous Puritan, wrote his monumental work on the Holy Spirit. Some people have said that there never has been a major work on the Spirit since that day. I'm not just concerned about his interpretation of the Holy Spirit, I'm concerned about three things he said 300 years ago.

He said the people of the Old Testament sinned against God by rejecting the Word of the Father. The people in the day of Jesus Christ sinned against him because they rejected the Word of the Son. We, he said, sin against God because we reject the Word of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit.

I don't know what you think about that judgment, but I think that he's right. And as I said last night, I think this is a day of the offended Holy Ghost. In the Apostles' Creed, which of course is not out of the Bible, though some people seem to think it is, but in the Apostles' Creed there are ten statements about the person and work of Jesus Christ and only one statement about the work of the Holy Spirit.

I think you could go to many churches these days and hear ten sermons on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and only hear maybe one sermon on the Holy Spirit. Indeed, it's very difficult to hear a message about the Holy Spirit anymore, because in some churches where they emphasize the Holy Spirit they don't talk about him, they talk about his gifts. And then maybe I should withdraw that and say they don't even talk about his gifts.

They're very often just about his gift. The emphasis is usually on the things. I think you might go to church and hear a hundred and ten sermons on the work of Jesus Christ and only one sermon on the person of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes I turn to the Encyclopedia Britannica for confirmation of certain truths, and I found in the Encyclopedia Britannica that there were forty-six pages devoted to the Pope and less than three pages devoted to the Holy Spirit. Now here we have a very wonderful picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. Last year I was privileged to speak in a church on the fringe of Dallas in Garland, the church that's pastored by Bud Hunter.

And one night I began the message by saying this, I would like to start a society to rescue Jesus Christ from stained-glass windows and children's crowning books. There was a big fat lady in the audience and she dug her husband in the ribs with her elbow and gave him the sign that he seemed to know very well. And a part of them struggled off to the door.

She didn't come back. But I would say that again tonight if you all walked to the door. I would like to rescue Jesus from stained-glass windows and children's crowning books.

And while I love the hymn of Charles Wesley, Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild, I think very often that we've never done the picture of Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild. And all the portrayals of Jesus are usually some kind of effeminate person with a lamb in his hand that, if you like the common parlance, couldn't save but a goose. But a portrait of Jesus in the Word of God is a very, very different portrait from that.

On this occasion we read or heard in the seventh chapter of John, it says that this was the last day of the great day of the feast. It was not only the last day of the great day of the feast, but this was the last of the great feasts that the Jews celebrated in the year. And on the last day of the last feast, Jesus went up into the temple.

Maybe sometime you'd like to check up on that on an encyclopedia and discover the vastness of the temple. On this occasion, if you read the chapter, beginning of the chapter, the disciples seemed very eager that they might go up into the temple, go to the feast. And Jesus gives them permission to go.

He says, you go up to the feast, I'm not going up yet. Because he said my hour is not yet come. And in the economy of Jesus, nothing was ever wasted.

And so they go up to the feast. The feast only lasted for eight days. And Jesus says, you go up to the feast, I don't have enough time to waste.

But he went up in the middle of the feast, which must have been the third or the fourth day. Now, this feast don't mean too much to us. I'm sure they meant a great deal to Jesus.

John has great sed naems in his interpretation of the gospel. I am the door, I am the way, I am the truth. And Jesus has said to them, I am the bread of life.

Your fathers ate bread in the wilderness and they perished, but either each of them shall never perish or never hunger. To this very day, the Jews have a little cake, an unleavened cake they use at Passover. They break it and share it with each other, reminding them of the time when they were delivered from the oppression of Pharaoh.

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. And that on the feast day, they, in the process of the feast, they erected a great, what looked like a letter T, with a basket of fire hanging on each end of it. That fire was the only means of illuminating the city of Jerusalem because they had no artificial lights like we have.

And that dull kind of smoky fire that was hanging there, it meant so much to them. The children would ask the question, why do you hang baskets of fire? Ah, this is to remind us of the day when God led us by a fiery, cloudy pillar. The shocking thing about modern Christianity is there's so little of it that's supernatural.

Most of our preaching is giving lectures on a man that died 2,000 years ago, and pulling our feathers and feeling we're very good because we do believe in the virgin birth. I've got news for you, the devil believes in it, he has to, he witnessed it. We're not doing much for the world by declaring that Jesus died 2,000 years ago.

The world outside, sick and sad and on the brink of hell itself, that great world isn't waiting for a new definition of Christianity, it's waiting for a new demonstration of Christianity. And there can be no

demonstration of Christianity without the Holy Ghost, not according to your theology of man, but according to the precious Word of the living God. They pointed the finger and said those, those baskets of fire, just like the bread reminds us of the bread that we were given in the wilderness, those baskets of fire remind us of the day when, if you got a little nervous and troubled, you could lift the, uh, turn over in the sweep, and they had no Samanax or anything and didn't need it.

So they lifted the edge of the tent and looked out, and there was a pillar of fire, and they went to sleep because God was in the midst. I've said before and say again and hope to say many times, you never have to advertise a fire. The reason you advertise in the newspaper is you have no fire, that's why.

And you're stupid if you think that Johnny Smith at the end of the block there, an ungodly unsaved materialist who would rather read Playboy anyhow than read anything you publish. If you think that that sinning, drunken, blaspheming man looks in the newspaper at the end of the week to see his preaching in your church, you'd better think again. When you preachers go down into San Francisco or Chicago, I hope you don't take the San Francisco newspaper or the Chicago Tribune to see how many girls are stripping on State Street.

You don't go down to the Fresh Pops, do you? You say, no, no, no, I don't walk that way anymore. Well if you don't have any, if the world has no attraction for you, what makes you think that some preacher has an attraction for Johnny Smith who's just come into town with his guitar? I say again, life will only work one way and that's God's way. The church will only function one way and that's God's way.

And you don't need a new formula, it's here. What we need to do is rediscover what God has to say for the day in which we're living. I say again, the present church to me is an embarrassment to God.

On the last great day of the feast, Jesus was not concerned with the bread and he was not concerned with the pillars of fire or the baskets of fire prior to the last day. At a given moment each day the temple orchestra and the temple choir went down the shoulder of the hill and a priest with a golden urn on his shoulder was relieved of the urn and they dipped the vessel in the pool of Siloam and with chanting and excitement singing the Psalms from 145 to 150. And then just as on certain occasions we sing that magnificent oratorio of Handel's, the Messiah, they sang the great Hillel.

They gave then that everything that had breath should praise the Lord. They counted their mortues. They looked back over the time when God with a strong hand and a stretched out arm delivered them, a minority, from the mighty oppression of Pharaoh.

And then he let the pillar of the fire guide them and he let a river of water follow them and he opened the windows and sent bread to feed them. In other words they were sustained the whole time by the supernatural. When the supernatural comes back into your church you say we've got it, I don't believe you.

I'm not going to argue with you but unless the whole gamut of New Testament revelation and New Testament miracle and New Testament gifts and New Testament graces and New Testament fruits are in your church you don't have what God intended you and I should have under the ministry of the Spirit of the Living God. I agree as Jimmy said tonight you've no problem with money, you'll have some problem with people. I remember being in a certain church and somebody said to this preacher do you really have a New Testament church? He said I sure do, I've every problem they had.

Well that's when we're proving it anyhow. I can't prove that Ananias and Sapphira were in the upper room but you can't disprove it if I said they were either. And it's an awesome awesome thing to think that those men could be one day filled with the Holy Ghost and then right after that the servant of God says rath Satan fill thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost on the last day of the great day of the feast.

Not gentle Jesus meek and mild, Jesus tremendous in his moral strength and spiritual power. He went and stood right on the very spot where the priest had stood and for six days he had poured out water reminding of the time when the rock was smitten and a river of life, a river of healing, a river of blessing had followed them. And Jesus stood there with thousands of people looking on with just a common bit of a garment that had no rich embroidery.

I don't believe he wore any phylacteries, I don't think he had a breastplate like Aaron. He didn't have pomegranates and bells on the skirts of his garments. And you say that Jesus was meek and mild, no here is Jesus Christ strong.

I would to God that you and I could always say what Jesus said and it was continually true of him has been continually true of many men. The only reason he dared face that formidable hostility, the anger of the crowd, and do the thing that he did because I say Jesus to me is full of courage. This is the most courageous thing Jesus did until he entered the hellishness of Gethsemane.

And Jesus here standing alone with the vicious eyes of those Jews with their hearts boiling with hatred against him. Why didn't he go to the feast? Because he said the Jews desired to kill him. That's what he says in the first verse, the Jews sought to kill him.

And so he says my time is not yet come. Go ye up to the feast he says in verse 7, 7 pardon me verse 8, my time is not fully come. Verse 14, nine minutes to the feast Jesus went up into the temple and the Jews marveled saying how is it that this man hath letters and he's never learned? Oh there's wisdom for you.

There's something that doesn't belong to the academy, that doesn't belong to your particular seminary, that can't be imparted by anything that men can do in the way of mental struggle and anguish. Jesus Christ is made unto us if we're really in him, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption and here he displays his wisdom and right away the Jews are wondering why, why, why, how? He's never been a member of the family he dreads. You've got to question his credentials, who is he, where is he from, why does he speak like this? There's something that was strangely not of this world and I want to tell you something.

You can bring the hardest, bitterest, strongest, wickedest sinner in the house of God but if the preacher preaches with the Holy Ghost even a sinner knows it. But you can do a theological juggling act and show him how cunning you are and now you can twist the Hebrew text and talk to the Greek and make it all believe what you wanted to say and you'll go home and say boy that guy should have been a politician. And he's right.

Jesus not only went up into the midst of the temple but he begins to assail them. Oh you're asking questions of me, how is it I have wisdom and I never learn? Now he says in the 19th verse, did not Moses give you the law and let none one of you keepeth the law? There were some women in the temple and when they saw Jesus come in they asked questions. Hey you said you'd kill him if you got a chance, well here he is, he hasn't got his disciples, he's got no henchmen.

Why don't you go take hold of him, strangle him, kill him? Oh what keeps you from going? Well the only thing that kept them I'm sure from touching Jesus was his moral strength and the anointing of God is upon him. But the woman says now look you say Messiah is coming, now she says look when Messiah cometh will he do more miracles than this man has done? He must be Messiah, he has done everything that the prophets said. Isaiah says when he has come the eyes of the blind shall be open and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped and the lame shall leap as a harp and the ten of the And it all happened just in rotation like that under his ministry.

Now why don't you accept him as Messiah or put him to death as an imposter? And no man came near to touch him. Oh I like this picture of Jesus. I think of the other picture that's going to soon be fulfilled.

You see we have portrayed Jesus as Brother Jimmy said, we spend so much time talking about what he was and talking about what he's going to be but we forget where he is and what he is right now. Sitting at the right hand of the Father living to make intercession for us. Purchasing by his death everything that is essential for his church to function in the way that the capacity that he intended it should function in.

I say again I believe that we're living in a day of the insulted Holy Spirit. As Wesley said stay thou insulted spirit stay. I don't know when I ever heard a sermon on prevenient grace not for a long while anyhow but our fathers used to talk about this.

You see everything that we do in this dispensation to use a word that again we've tortured. Everything we do in this day is dependent on the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit of God is totally incapable of doing anything that's small and minute. All his work is full of majesty.

Let's give him the praise and honor. We talk about the Holy Spirit as though you have the Father then the Son and then the Holy Spirit. It's this way Father Son and Holy Spirit is equal in glory equally majesty equal in eternity.

Sure I believe in the Holy Ghost. I believe all his works again are full of majesty. Here here you've got a book.

Men have burned it and banned it and blamed it. They've done everything they could to pronounce the sentence of death on it. They've said it would only be found in museums and libraries after a number of years.

But it seems to me that this book is like tennis and stream. It can say men may come and men may go but I go on forever because it was conceived by the Holy Ghost that's why. If Mr. Nixon in the midst of all his troubles were to say tonight that the governor of each of the 50 states should bring a piece of stone and put it there on the ellipse outside of the White House or on the lawn of the White House and without any uh collusion amongst these different leaders each of them brought a piece of stone different size different color different texture different value and you took those stones and put them all together and they fit it into a perfect pyramid.

I think you'd take a lot of persuading that nobody had been working on them before they got there. If they just fit perfectly. One had come from Hawaii thousands of miles away.

The other had come from Alaska. One had come from down south. The other had come from New York.

One had come up from the New England states. But when you put them all together they're perfectly symmetrical. They make an exact flawless pyramid.

You'd say that couldn't never happen by accident and I don't believe it could. But how do you take the word of God covering centuries? How do you take a king writing one section and just a man who gathered sycamore fruit climbed up trees and got down again and they all put their writings together and they're perfectly symmetrical. Why? Because the Holy Ghost engineered it that's why.

Look at the world in which we live we're suddenly discovering what there is in the world. We're living in the most exciting day speaking scientifically and we're going to see a lot more very very wonderful and I think even distressing things from the standpoint of science. The world in which I live is the work of the Holy Spirit.

So he made the world he made the world and then his crowning miracle was that he he brooded over the matrix of the Virgin Mary and in Jesus and in that matrix he conceived Jesus Christ the Son of God. Even Jesus was dependent upon the Holy Ghost. Jesus never dared venture out.

Though he was very God of very God before the anointing of the Spirit was on him Jesus never went forth to preach and never did a miracle and never did anything in the work of God until the Holy Ghost came upon him. Amen and if you think it'd be promised in some seminary is your guarantee you're I nearly said another word I didn't say it I'm glad I didn't distress anyhow let's put it that way. The only authority any man has to God is that he can say the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach and then after the miracle Jesus Christ conceived in the matrix of the Virgin.

I've often wondered what the angels thought when they when they saw Jesus there they used to bow down before him they used to sing morning till night they sang endlessly holy holy holy they'd seen him a high and lifted up as Isaiah saw him because in John 12 John says that when Isaiah saw him in the sixth chapter there he didn't see God the Father he was seeing God the Son and now he's laid aside his glory and wrapped himself in our clay and he's become very man of man he's laid aside his majesty he's as helpless as any babe that ever lived he must be nourished on the breast of his mother before long wicked men take him and slay him and put him to death. I think this is the most forgotten work of the Holy Spirit very often but when Jesus was lying there cold lying there in the tomb as dead as any man that ever died yet suddenly the Holy Ghost came upon him because it says in the 8th chapter of Romans there the Spirit of heaven that raised up Jesus from the dead. It doesn't matter where you begin it doesn't matter where we end everything is dependent on the Holy Ghost.

I say our Father as the old old time preachers used to talk about prevenient grace. You see there are three things in natural birth that follow through in spiritual birth. Number one conception, number two gestation, number three birth.

You can't alter the order and some evangelists will begin to be sensible when they leave all the poking and pushing at the altar to the Holy Ghost and let him do it because if the Holy Ghost begins a work of conviction a man may go through agony week after week after week and month after month. We have a letter just recently from a couple in Africa. The lady now married to a an evangelist there who was in the revival in the Hebrides when Duncan Campbell was there.

She didn't want to yield to God. Morally she was very good she wasn't one of the drinking, swearing, smoking crowd. She had all the attributes of good morality and even knew her Bible to some degree as

they do in the churches there but she wasn't born again.

And one night Duncan Campbell who had prepared a message all day suddenly felt that he should switch and he stood up and said you know I was going to preach a sermon and I just can't preach it. I'm not going to try and preach I'm just going to talk on this and this girl's name was Mary Morrison and he said I feel I've got to preach tonight on this text. Mary the Master has come and calleth for thee.

Well that shut her down. Not that she was the only Mary in the assembly but she was the only one that God was after and you know from that night for five months he never spoke to her again. The things she loved all dried up.

The folks she liked she could find no fellowship with them. The food she usually delighted to eat somehow became just oh very very uninteresting. The good sleep that she always enjoyed began to be broken.

The patterns of life had all broken up. The Holy Ghost was working and striving and every time she moved he blocked the road and every time she turned he was there. And every time she tried to get sleep he'd wake her up.

And every time she tried to do a business deal somehow something would come and the Spirit of God haunted her. Well she really got born again. The first thing about natural birth is conception.

The second thing is gestation. Whatever they're going to do in the in the unholy business of genetics. And there was a long talk on TV today about it I believe.

I bought a book for seven dollars recently on this on this new science and it's a terrifying thing. Sleeping bags. Knock on the door of a country church.

Could we sleep in your church? We've got sleeping bags. Where are you from? Cliff College. Oh I've heard of Cliff College.

Yeah that'd be all right. Oh no sometimes they turned us out in the rain. I enjoyed every minute of it.

Sometimes we couldn't get anywhere so we had a cart and we had a belt end in it when there's old army belt ends and we stuck it up somewhere and slept in that. We got washed out many times. Blown down all the rest.

So what? What about Paul? In weirdness, in fastings, in painfulness, in perils of the deep, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils of robbers. Doesn't it make you feel pretty sheltered? Somebody there's a there's a rock outside off the coast of Aberdeen there. It's a a rock I guess as big as this room.

In the sea and it has a tower there. The tower has grills you know grills bars there. They put an old saint in there.

In fact I think it was Samuel Rutherford who left a diary from which was extracted that great hymn the sands of time are sinking. Nobody had seen him for weeks, for months. Well he was pretty yellow when they got in, pale.

The sea beat on that rock from the North Sea, one of the angriest seas in the world. And he would splash up and come through that iron grill and soak him. The food was rotten.

There he was. A preacher went to see him and said well how are you feeling? Well he said I'm feeling all right. Are you in good shape? He said well maybe not too good physically but spiritually I'm great.

There's one thing that's just one thing that's troubling me. Well what is it brother Rutherford? He said God has offered me no challenges since I came here. They've been in prison without any food and a blanket to cover him.

The spray the cold spray comes in. Cakes his face with salt. Can't keep his things dry.

Hasn't got one single creature comfort and yet he's rejoicing as much as the apostle Paul ever rejoiced. I have appeared unto thee. What? Just so you can say oh I saw Jesus personally.

No I've got more than that in mind. I've appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister to testify a witness of the things which you've seen and heard and which will I reveal unto thee. Now listen.

Delivering thee from the people. You know there are more traps for preachers than anybody else. I remember a church where I was raised just where I went to college.

We had a touch of revival there. There was a lady with a lot of money. One of the four men that came up with the revival team.

He got very friendly with this lady. Not in her own way but she'd money. Later he became the pastor in that church.

Married. A couple of years after they had a child. They have those big boat shaped prambulators you know that they push babies around him.

All he had to do was whisper that he needed something. That woman paid every bill that man had. He could ask anything he got it.

What did it do? Weakened him. He didn't lean on God. He leaned on the woman.

He ended up in distress. Not morally. Spiritually.

Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee. Now here's what the ministry is. To open their eyes.

You know it's something to look out on. I preached in a church a while ago. Three thousand people in that church.

Just a gorgeous church. One of the greatest preachers in America. Oh I have maybe 45 doctors in my congregation.

And I'm sure we've at least 30 lawyers. Businessmen. So I'm looking at that crowd of three thousand.

And close circuit downstairs. TV with another seven or eight hundred in. Saying to myself.

I wonder how many of these men that look so smart and sharp in their lovely suits and these women. How many of them are blind? Their eyes have never been open. And the ministry as ambassadors of light.

It's our job to open their eyes. And then it's backed up with something tremendous here. Open their eyes to turn them from darkness to light.

A bit deeper now. And from the power of Satan unto God. What a mandate.

Nobody. Nobody else has this mandate brother Joe. This is my challenge every time I stand in the public wherever I stand.

Father we thank you so much for this opportunity that we've experienced tonight oh God. Lord we're so thankful for the years. And Lord not only the years but the depth of knowing you.

That our brother Ravenhill represents tonight. Lord I pray that in some way that we will have put into our spirit just the seeds of the making of a man of God. Lord that you would put into our spirits this night Lord.

The importance of the anointing. The importance of preparation as a spiritual man. Lord God that we will realize that there is a vast knowledge of Jesus Christ that is available to us.

And that there are many that have gone before us and they have written things down oh Lord. Lord that has been recorded. But I pray oh God that we really hope that this teaching has ministered to you.

And in some way drawn you closer to our Lord Jesus. God has nothing to add. And he says if anybody adds to the book he'll add the plague.

And if anybody takes away they're going to be in a serious situation. And I say again it to me an awesome thing that if the world does last another 2,000 years, which I'm quite sure it won't, not in the present setup. God has nothing more to say to mankind.

He's said it all. What more can he say than to you he has said. I remember walking into Dr. Tulsa's office and it was I think maybe the most unique privilege of my life.

To talk to him on many occasions just the two of us alone. And I remember when I walked in this particular day he said Len lock the door and let your hair down. You know relax.

And he said this very wonderful, disturbing, challenging thing. He said you know Len not many of us are going to look God straight in the face at the judgment seat. Most of us will hang our heads.

And he said I'm not too troubled about the things that I've done but I have to answer for. It's the things I could have done that trouble me. If I'd been more alive in God.

You know it's true of all of us and Christians anywhere that you are just as spiritual as you want to be. The proper's in your own hand. You can talk all you like about being sanctified and our baptisms of the Holy Ghost and all very wonderful but the Holy Ghost won't drag you out of bed at four o'clock in the morning and make you pray.

Even if you're getting overweight he won't push you from the table and make you fast. The proper's in your hand. You're as spiritual as you want to be.

It's equally awesome to me to realize that no man that ever lived ever had a greater Bible than I have. You can think of Phinney, brilliant lawyer, preacher, Spurgeon. Isn't it amazing that Spurgeon was saved at 15.

He never went to Bible school and by the time he was 19 they had to build an auditorium that seated 5,000 and they filled it twice every Sunday. At 19 years of age without any Bible school training. Some ladies in the church I passed had asked me to go see their mother.

She was a beautiful character. She looked like Whistler's mother. She sat in a high carved chair and she had a little lace thing on top of her head and a lace collar and a footstool.

She was the very essence of dignity. When I went in I just bowed and said well I'm very privileged to see you. She was 95 years of age and she said you know my daughter's come home on a Sunday night so excited and and they tried to re-preach your sermon.

You preached a long while. That's about all she knew. But anyhow I said that's right.

And she said you know you remind me so much of Spurgeon. You must preach like Spurgeon. I said now look lady thank you for the compliment but I'm sure Spurgeon was a million miles ahead of myself.

And then I said did you ever hear Spurgeon? Oh many times, many times she said. He used to go to London to buy things in the spring. We went on Thursday, bought on Friday, toured the city on Saturday and went to Spurgeon's cab night one time.

He was amazing. He said he would come in and say something and people would be smiling and maybe bring tears to your eyes and you'd rub the tears away and the next thing is still the voice was way up there in eternity lifting the congregation into the presence of God. I think one of the things that does disturb me in America is that there's very little pulpit praying.

Spurgeon will let anybody pray with me. He didn't say deacon so-and-so, Johnny Brown. He said it was more important to prepare what you're going to pray about than what you're going to preach.

So very often the prayer is the same. Bow your head, thank Lord, Lord we thank you ahead this morning, bless the choir this evening and the offering and help us with the building front and thank you for all the blessings and that's it. You've got three problems with the congregation.

One is to get them there physically. The second is to get them there mentally. The third is to get them into the presence of God.

We're so attacked to springs and all other things from the dirty world that we've been in for a week that it's difficult. You usually don't get people there till about five to twelve. Then they're looking at the watches and want to get home to watch the rams play the goats in the afternoon.

Hebrews 11 as we said yesterday is an awesome chapter and the thing that really fakes me about it is that while they subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness and obtained promises and stopped the mouths of lions and did all the fancy fantastic things they did by faith, not one of them ever had a bible. I say again the only only proof you have that you're in deadline with the new testament if you say we're in the apostolic success and there's only one way to prove it that is have apostolic success and then it's irrefutable. Hebrews 11 24 times in that chapter faith is mentioned.

It's mentioned 32 times in the epistle. It's mentioned over 300 maybe about 330 times in the new testament. Only twice in the whole of the old testament because again they didn't find articles of faith like we do to join a church.

They acted in faith. I looked for a book for about 30 years. I got it fairly recently called the possibilities of grace written I think by a Nazarene priest.

Well isn't this what it's all about. You were in the church not too long ago and the pastor said to me you see that fine looking man over there with a balding head and nice shoes on. Yeah yeah yeah.

He's worth three quarters of a billion dollars. See the man on the left? President of the first national church. See the man over there? One of the biggest lancers in the district.

What's that got to do with spirituality? You'd almost imagine that because um top boomer somebody gets the baptism they give God some food. God isn't looking for fresh food. Sometimes I wish I could shout from the house stop God is not looking for sponsors.

Maybe a tv manager. All God is looking for is men who have totally abandoned his will. And for those of us to move up in simple faith to really really exercising this remarkable thing called faith.

Which again as I said yesterday has been so abused. Faith can do anything. That's nonsense it can't.

You can only do what God wants. If faith can do anything why don't you get a group of preachers together let them fast a week and believe God and for the devil to get saved. That'd clear a lot of mess up wouldn't it? Nobody has faith to believe that.

Why don't we pray the Lord would raise up raise up Sturgeon and a few of the great saints. He doesn't do it that way. You can have all the faith in the world and pray and have hands laid on you and do anything else you like.

And if you're 70 years of age you won't wake up 25 years of age tomorrow morning. There are certain things that faith can do. There are certain things that faith cannot do.

Now we said yesterday again that the epistle to the Hebrews is really an exposition of the wilderness journey of the children of Israel and the book of Psalms. The marvelous dealing of God dealings of God with Israel. I think if I can use this language and you understand one of the heartbreaks of God must be the slowness by which we mature spiritually.

I'm not talking about a lot of head knowledge. I'm not talking whether you know Greek or Hebrew or you can explain and give me the structure of the epistles of Romans or something else. I'm talking about our personal relationship our personal development in spirituality.

Remember in Ezekiel is the prophet of degrees. Everything's done a little at a time you know. And as I said the other day I do believe in instant purity because there are no degrees of purity.

I think it's pure or impure. There are no degrees of purity. I believe in instant purity.

I do not believe in instant maturity. Listen there isn't a man on God's earth at night now and I don't care whose name you name. There isn't a man that's yet arrived spiritually.

There's still more land ahead for all of us to possess. I don't care what miracles you've seen. I don't care what faith you've operated.

There's still so much territory. As we said yesterday the children of Israel could have got out of they could have got out of Egypt into the promised land in about 10 or 11 days. It took them 40 years.

Why? Hebrews explains why. Because they um they entered not in because of unbelief. Now Hebrews 11 the key word is faith.

The key to me to Hebrews totally is Hebrews 11 6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him. No of them that diligently seek him. Remember the woman that lost the piece of silver she didn't seek for it she thought diligently.

She thought with urgency. She must recover it. And God never encourages laziness.

Sometimes I think pastors are about the laziest people in the world. You see they don't have to get up for a certain time. They don't have to bed.

They can go to bed when they want. That is if they're just pastors. If they're disciples they can't.

We tell people who come to the altar you're saved your name's written in heaven you're going to have a five decker crown you're going to have a free ticket to the marriage supper of the lamb and a free mansion on main street and oh we pour all the blessings and they're not all true either. But why don't we tell them the other side of the coin. If you've really been redeemed if you've been bought by the Christ if he's redeemed you from your sin if he's come to take possession of your personality one aspect of this thing is you're a soldier of Jesus Christ and a soldier has no right.

You can't find me one man in history inside or outside of the church who has been a success in any particular sphere who has not been a disciplinarian. Not one. John Wesley was contemporary with some of the greatest figures in history and one day one evening he took supper with Dr. Johnson one of the most famous men in literature.

They had what Wesley had a weakness for partridge pie. And after they'd eaten and they talked a while Wesley got a little disturbed and he said I well I shall have to go. Go go.

Well they hadn't risked what the old doctor lifted out that great big turnip that he had and looked he said why man it's only a few minutes to nine o'clock. Fold your legs under the table take it easy let's talk. Oh Wesley said I have an appointment in the morning at four o'clock.

Four o'clock? Who are you going to meet in the morning at four o'clock? God he said. He's in every morning at four o'clock. If you only buy one book out there buy a treasury of prayer.

Dr. E. M. Bounds one of the great characters in American history. One of the greatest prayer. Men of prayer.

His daughter used to write to me and she said brother Rayfield my daddy normally rose at four o'clock in the morning for the main part of his life but as he got older he rose at three o'clock. Why some of you had just finished seeing Johnny Carson at that time or a night show or something. Wesley rose at four o'clock.

E. M. Bounds rose at four o'clock. John Fletcher rose at four o'clock. Robert Mary McShane who is a is the opposite number in English history to your very marvelous in fact one of the most unsurpassed men in American history who died at the ripe old age of 29.

David Brainerd. Rose before sunlight. The founder of the Chandler Inman mission.

Dr. Huston Taylor said the sun never rose to find me in bed. Books can be a curse as well as a blessing. They become crutches.

There's a hymn that talks about certain things being earth guides and not our chains. And sometimes we reach for a book it stirs it and we get an outline. We copy what somebody else says and we take some second-hand theology and second-hand thinking to people who possibly read the book before you did and said he hasn't got that.

This is the greatest unexplored thing I was going to say shall we say error in the whole world. After all did God finish his production? Did he close the assembly line if you want to put it that way? Did he did he finish with great men when he finished with Wesley and Finley and Booth and Spurgeon and a few other fellows there? Do we have to relax and say well of course they're not living in those days. God doesn't do that anymore.

I think there are some of the greatest men ever on in the earth today. The only thing that holds America together certainly isn't the church. It's some godly man in it.

I told you the other day I know a man in this country is very sick right now maybe dying he's 90 years of age he hasn't been to bed one night for the last 30 years. Prayed every night from 10 o'clock at night till 5 or 6 in the morning by himself. Takes tremendous burdens for different areas of the country or different parts of the world.

No woman in Chicago looks after a sick mother but she prays five hours a day. No little man in Canada who's even lived in a tent through seven winters up there. In his last letter he told me he said they laid me out for the third time.

Sent to the relatives and said well he is dying this time. I know he fooled us twice before but he can't survive. He gets so weak with fasting and prayer they find him frustrated enough to lift him into bed and give him attention like a newborn child.

And he carries such burden he sweats and he grieves and he groans. Now he's pretty heavy he weighs about 95 pounds. You see we read about Brainerd 200 years ago.

We read about these other men and think God somehow doesn't produce men. The great men never strut on TV. That's what placed the dwarf.

The men with the greatest most profound knowledge of God and spirituality are men who are hidden away. And I say again it's a slow business growth. True growth in grace is really really really a slow business.

When I first read E.M. Bounds I read him in the few days I did go to Bible college. And when he said in his book Power Through Prayer it takes 20 years to make a sermon because it makes takes God 20 years to make a man. I thought well I'm not that serious after the winter.

When I get out of this place they'll think Virgin has risen from the dead. Nobody's ever thought it but that one old woman she was too old to really understand. But I'm saying that to say this you see that there are that we've got to explore this book.

And I told you that that Hebrews 12 is corrected as God is never wrong as you know. And we're moving into a bottleneck in history that's mentioned in Hebrews 12 where it says that everything that can be shaken will be shaken that the kingdom that cannot be shaken may remain. God is going to shake every system in the world.

Like our financial system is like that right now. Economically we're struggling. Morally we're broken up.

Everything is being shaken. Just so that God can honor his son and show the kingdom that cannot be shaken will remain. Now this epistle is not addressed as you know like the epistle to the Romans.

It's addressed to who? You say it doesn't carry a title. Oh yeah yes it does. As I said yesterday this this epistle has not one word to say to lost people.

And listen there isn't an epistle in the whole bible that has. After the acts of the apostles the whole balance of the new testament is to the church. Correction to the church.

Ministry to the church. If you read the first five books of the bible. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy is a recap of the other four books. If you take the five books of Psalms which there are five books in Psalms. The fifth is a recap of the other four.

If you take the new testament Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and then you come to Acts. What is Acts? The book of Acts is the church doing everything that Jesus did. And until she does that she's not a healthy church.

The apostle Paul did everything that Jesus did didn't he? And the world doesn't have to believe us because we stand up here and denounce this and denounce that and denounce something else. It is amazing that in his day Jesus never made any reference to the system of slavery that was crippling the world under the Roman Empire. Isn't it amazing that Paul never said well there's a new Caesar come on the throne and he's more diabolical than the previous Caesar.

They never bothered with those things like we did. They presented Jesus Christ as the answer to the problem. Tell you again you see Paul he was born in where? He was born in the historic capital of the world Tartus.

He ended in a military capital of the world Rome. In between he went to the religious capital of the world Jerusalem. He went to the immoral capital of the world which was Corinth.

He went to the intellectual capital of the world which was Athens. And he said he was all things to all men and he was. Whichever you can find it.

I'm going to say let me have it. But there's a poem written somewhere in the 1800s by F. W. H. Myers. M. Y. E. R. S. It's pointless.

I thought I'd found a good version just recently. It has 72 stanzas and it had the five stanzas I wanted were not in it. And all it's called is from Paul.

It's one of the most dramatic things ever written outside of the Bible. One phrase of it says this. Then with a rush the intolerable craving shivers throughout me like a trumpet call.

All to save these and perish for their saving. To die for their life and be offered for them all. He talked about the world gazing at the cross with an empty wonder.

Consumed with emptiness. When you think of the majesty of God. When you think of the enormity of the gospel.

How in the world can we present a gospel that people can go to sleep while we

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20595.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/last-day-that-great-day-of-the-feast-part-1/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net