

# Learning to Be a Minister

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the necessity of passion, discipline, and divine anointing in effective ministry.*

**Duration:** 1:26:10

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:29, Daniel 6:22, Matthew 6:33, Acts 9:5, Philippians 3:7, Philippians 3:13

**Topics:** "Personal Devotion", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about John Wesley and his commitment to spending time with God every morning at 4 o'clock. The speaker emphasizes the importance of dedicating time to God and suggests that two hours and twenty-four minutes is a suitable amount of time to give to God each day. He also mentions the value of personal experience with God, stating that those who have encountered God in their lives are not easily swayed by arguments or criticisms. The speaker encourages the audience to prioritize their relationship with God over scholarly pursuits and to seek wisdom from the book of Proverbs.

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## Transcript

Recently I picked up a book by C.S. Lewis. How many of you read C.S. Lewis? Oh, I haven't read much of him. But in the introduction of the book he said, I want to write on a theme I know nothing about.

At least he was honest. Most people don't know much and write a book. You won't remember a famous preacher that lived, a family he preached in Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia about, I guess, twenty-five years ago, so most of you won't remember him.

He was a very wise man, had a lot of erudition as they say. He had studied in England, he had studied in America, he had studied in Germany, he had, I don't know, any doctorates. One day I was talking to Dr. Tozer and he said, you know, I've just been reading that fellow Barnhouse.

He said, I wish I knew as much about one thing as Barnhouse knows about everything. I was thinking about books just before I came up there. Books are good when they are guides, and they're bad when they become our chains.

One of the pioneer missionaries to India was a man by the name of Carey. He was a Baptist. And he was in a meeting where there were a lot of old greybeards, you know, you had to have a greybeard to see, you've got some beards around here.

Greybeard to be an elder. And in an elder's meeting one day, he said, or one night, he said, you know, I want to go and evangelize India. And one of the old boys said, sit down.

When God wants to evangelize India he'll do it without you. Which is not true. Carey was, I don't know if my classification is right, I would say Carey was the second best missionary that went to India.

He had a son who worked with him in India for a while. And he seemed to be going, you know, pretty good as a missionary. But then he got an invitation to become an ambassador to the court of King James, as we call the court in England.

And he accepted the ambassadorship, which gave a lot of status, you know. He was accepted in almost any realm in the world after that. And became a very influential politician.

Somebody went to India and in the course of talking with Carey said to him, oh, what about your son? He said, is he a missionary? He said, no, he's stooped to be a king. I think he had it right. Stooped to be a king.

Not because I'm a preacher, but I'm quite convinced of this, that the greatest office in the world is that of a preacher. You know, the old hellfire preachers have passed away. You don't see any on TV except Jimmy Swaggart bursts a blood vessel round again.

But apart from Jimmy there's not that many. And right now the humanists in the nation are ganging up to get Jimmy off the air because he's blasted them so much. Let me go back again and say that the preachers today are not the old type that I knew anyhow years ago.

The blood and sweat of the sawdust trail has gone. Fellows come from seminary now and they're told that they're equal with doctors or equal with lawyers and all the other junk. Which as far as I'm concerned is pure nonsense.

Oh, well, preaching, you know, now is a very, very acceptable profession. Well that's the trouble with it, it's become a profession. Preaching is not a profession, it's a passion.

If you don't have passion, don't touch it. If God has called you to be a preacher, well, preach. I think one of the problems in America, in fact in most countries I've been in, forgive the exaggeration, you know, preachers always exaggerate anyhow, evangelists do.

It's their number one sin, but anyhow. Preaching generally, I think, from the coast of the, from the borderline of Canada to the coast of Florida or the coast of the Gulf Coast, from New York to California, the nation is about three feet deep in teaching tapes. We had a young man in our home not long ago, and he wasn't boasting, we were talking about tapes, he said, well, I think at the moment I have about 3,000.

Now imagine 3,000 tapes that cost anything from three to five dollars each, and he's still in school. By the time he's my age, he'll need an 18-wheeler to take them home. But he keeps adding tapes, tapes, tapes, tapes.

But they're all on teaching. There's a terrible dearth of preaching in America today. Thus saith the Lord.

In my opinion, I'm not always right, I usually am, but in my opinion, teaching, how shall I put it? Okay, teaching brings illumination. Preaching brings conviction. You can sit down and dictate into a machine and teach.

You cannot do that really and preach. There's one thing that God requires of us, and there's one thing that's demanded of us, obviously, as preachers, if we're going to really preach, is that we can say what I think is the most unique thing to say this side of eternity. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach.

Which is from 61st chapter again of Isaiah. Or going there to 1st John 2 and verse 20, where it says, we have an unction from the Holy One. Someone once asked a preacher, what is unction? He said, well, I don't know what it is, but I know what it isn't.

He said, I know when I have it, and I know when I don't have it. It's difficult to classify. You might condense it and say it's the anointing.

Well, in the Old Testament, the only people that were anointed were kings and priests. But now this is general. It should be in the Church of the Living God.

He's made us a nation of kings, a people of kings and priests, unto God. I'm quite sure that Jesus, from his early days, I don't know what day, was aware he was a son of God, even at 12 years of age, you remember, in the temple. Wished he not that I must be about my father's business.

He knew he was a son of God, but he never preached until he was anointed. He didn't preach until he was 30 years of age. In the Old Testament economy, a man could be a soul do when he was 20, because then and now you don't need brains to kill anybody.

Could be a soldier when you were 20. Could not be a priest until you were 25. Could not be a high priest until you were 30.

Jesus preached after he was 30. John the Baptist preached after he was 30. So did Paul.

So did Moses. So did all the great characters. Now, I don't believe that means you have to wait until you're 30 years of age.

If you remember, the walls in Solomon's place were 30 cubits high. The walls in Noah's Ark were 30 cubits high. I believe it's a figure of perfection, or if you like, maturity.

You know, in the outer court, that shabby old strange-looking thing that they called the tabernacle. In the outer court there was daylight. In the holy place there was candlelight.

In the holy of holies there was no light. No windows, pitch black. We say so often, God is light.

There's a wonderful word there, shekinah. The shekinah glory came in the tabernacle into the first temple, not into the second temple. It was the blinding glory of God's presence, something I think that most of us have never seen anyhow.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. I want to emphasize that, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, and he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted. Isaiah 58.

I'll just make reference to these and then hurry on. Isaiah 58, verse 5. Is this such a fast that I have chosen a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulwark, and to spread sackcloth and ashes unto him? Wilt thou call this a fast and acceptable day unto the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that

ye break every yoke? Is it not to give thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and hide not thy face from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine house shall speed forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and I will answer thee.

All these promises are conditional. Thou shalt call, I will answer thee. And I shall cry, and he shall say, Here I am.

If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, the speaking of vanity, if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday. Verse 13. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, that is specially written for footballers, if thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, we play all our professional games.

You know, Sunday now, we should rename it. It isn't Sunday, it's fun day. Play our professional football on Sunday, play our professional baseball on Sunday, have our sports on Sunday.

It's sports day. It's not a holy day any more, it's a holiday. And yet, God conditions revival on that.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day. How many commandments are there? Come on, it's not a catch-catch. How many? Ten.

Well which one has remember in it? Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. It's the only one that has that title there. I believe the sabbath day is God's tithe on our week.

You know, we tithe our money. I wonder how many of us tithe our time. Malachi says bring all the tithes, and it's the zzzz that's the problem.

We've been taught to tithe money. How many tithe our time? Twenty-four hours in a day. A tenth of twenty-four will be two hours, and four hours over.

Four times sixty, two hundred and forty, be two hours and twenty-four minutes that we give to God. And that's his tithe. On top of that you give him an offering.

I deal with an awful lot of ministers. I usually insult all of them anyhow. Three of them came in.

Many of you would know the center character there. He's very well known in Southern Baptist churches. Very fine preacher.

I've heard him often. They came in a few days ago, sat on the bench in my office. This middle fellow said, we want you to talk to us.

I said, okay, I'll talk to you. Two of you I've never seen before. I'll talk to you.

Number one, you're not disciplined men. Number two, you've no prayer life. Number three, you don't know what worship is.

Now, those are strong accusations, but none of them could refuse it. Preachers are most undisciplined men. I listen to the news in the morning.

It's not always good. In fact, it hardly ever is. But a few months ago, there was a big horse race out of Kentucky, Derby.

Then what's the next big one? Preakness? What's after that? Belmont, thank you. The interviewer said, I understand that this jockey that won there on Saturday, you traveled with him through the night? Yeah, I traveled with him on a plane from California. And he said, we'd been airborne maybe a couple of hours, and the sweet stewardess came and said, now this is what's on the menu.

You can have this or you can have this. And this man said, I took filet mignon. I said, bring me everything.

I'm hungry. So I got the full course, and after that I took a second course. I took everything I could get.

This little fellow, who is, I think, a Puerto Rican, sat at the side of me. The stewardess says, what would you like? Would you like dessert? No. She came out, as they do now, you know, give you a bag of nuts, which is in case you've had a heart transplant from a baboon.

So they give you a bag of nuts. And he said, this little fellow took one nut, peanut out, put it on his plate, held it with a fork and cut it in two. Put half of the nut into his pocket and chewed the other half, halfway across America.

About an hour out of New York he finished the other half. He said, I'd heard this man is one of the most disciplined men in the world. Goes to bed early at night, is always on the race course by four o'clock in the morning.

Watches his weight more jealously than any woman in the world. Limits his social life. He's determined that he'll be the best jockey in the world.

I think right now he's number one jockey, making maybe half a million a year. He said, I'd heard about this man's ability to discipline his body. But when I saw it, he said, it was awesome.

How could he chew on half a nut halfway across America? Then he ate the other half. Get into the airport at midnight in New York, go to bed, get up at two o'clock and drive out to the race course. He said, I said to him before the race, hey, how much sleep have you had? Oh, I did pretty good.

I had over two hours last night. How many peaches live like that? I saw an interview with a girl, I think she's the captain of the American girls' volleyball team. She was on Good Morning America.

They said, there's an athlete coming in. Well, she rolled in. Came in like a kangaroo nearly.

And they said, how long have you been on the team? Six years. How much do you practice a day? Oh, six to eight hours. Do three hours and have a stretch and maybe drink a milk and another break and have lunch.

Then three to four hours again, strenuous every day. Well, Hartman, I think it was, interviewing her said, isn't this rather demanding on you? Yes, but I want, I wanted to make the women's volleyball team. I want a USA badge on my coat there.

Now you're the captain. Yeah, I'm the captain. You gave up your profession.

Yes, I gave it up six years ago to go in for this. Full stretch all the way. I've been living for eight years just to take part in the Olympics.

Oh, you have to leave your parents too. Yeah, I left my job, I left my parents. What's the hardest thing about it? The discipline? Up before six every morning, not getting to bed often till after eleven at night? Is that the hardest? No, she said, the hardest thing is I haven't seen my boyfriend for eight months.

Now, what if all you kids, as you use the term, if you came here and were told you couldn't see your girlfriend for eight months, would you have come? If it was you, if it was your wife, she might be glad to come, but if it's your girlfriend, it's different. I got some black looks right there. But you know, every time I heard of these amazing feats of discipline, a man that had never, what was it, something he was in, he was a Mohammedan I think, and he told his daddy, I want to go to America in the Olympics.

Oh, you can't do it. Gradually he persuaded his dad, you can go on one condition, that you go up into a cave, where I often go, and you meditate there for 40 days and 40 nights, and have a minimum of food, and do certain exercises. So he shut himself in the cave, and did what he was told to do, and got a medal.

I don't know whether it's gold or what in the world it was, but the point again is that these men disciplined, and every time I heard of those things, I thought of what Paul says, they do it for a corruptible crowd. We do it for an incorruptible. A man knocks what? Oh mercy, it used to be, he knocked a second off a sprint.

Now they say, he knocked off a one hundredth part of a second. You know, that means you could blink your eyes a hundred times. Hundredth part of a second, and it's a new record.

And yet they strive for that, they discipline their bodies, they discipline their appetites. They go to bed, oh, the girl said, oh often I go to bed so aching at night, and in the morning my arms won't even stretch out. You know, playing volleyball so strenuously, or running so strenuously.

The greatest men I've known, and I've known a lot of very wonderful preachers, have all been disciplined men. Have a time to go to bed. You may know in English literature, there's a man called Dr. Johnson, supposed to be one of the wisest men that ever lived.

He had a secretary by the name of Boswell, and one of the great classics in English literature is Boswell's life of Dr. Johnson. Well, one day Johnson invited John Wesley to dinner. Wesley had a weakness, he liked partridge pie.

So they had partridge pie. And when they finished, Mr. Johnson said, now the night is young. Fold your legs under the table, otherwise cross your legs under this big oak table.

Now will you have time to talk. Wesley had one of those big turnips, you know, big pocket ones, he'd pull it out and he said, I've only about five minutes. It's only five minutes of night.

Yeah. Why are you in a hurry? Because, he said, I have an appointment in the morning at four o'clock. You have an appointment at four o'clock? Yeah.

Tomorrow morning? Every morning. Well, who do you talk to at four o'clock every morning? He said, God. Here is a man who is the king in his philosophy, the most desirable personality in the world to see.

You see, they didn't glamorize film stars in those days, there were no films. But these men sat on pinnacles. Here's a distinguished scientist, here's a man who's distinguished in English letters or some

other letters.

And to get in his presence, for even a few minutes, was considered wonderful. Wesley could sit there two or three hours and shut the door like that and go out and say, well, okay, I can't break my trice, as we would say in Old English, I can't break my trice on my appointment with God. A few years before we left England, the Prime Minister of England was Lord Baldwin.

And somebody gave Baldwin the life of Wesley, I don't know which one. Salve wrote the life of Wesley, it was very bad. And a critic said, thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep.

I thought that was a good criticism. He didn't get anywhere near Wesley, didn't know his spirit, didn't understand him. Baldwin read this life of Wesley and he said, you know, compared with John Wesley, though I'm the busiest man in the British Empire, supposed to be.

The British Empire was in full blast at that time. And he said, I have to take correspondence, telephones, ambassadors from men all over the world. I'm busy from breakfast after breakfast till I have dinner at night.

But compared with Wesley, he said, I'm unemployed. Wesley rode his little nag. He rode more than any man in history, except in America, because Americans always have the best way cars.

Wesley rode 225,000 miles on horseback. Not non-stop now, come on now. In his lifetime.

Who beat him? Very famous circuit rider, maybe America's most famous circuit rider. Ashbury. The great college there, founded, I've preached there a number of times, a very wonderful college, up in Kentucky.

Ashbury rode 240,000 miles on horseback. No holiday inns, no hamburgers, no convenience stores, go through rivers at flood, come out soaking wet at the other side, and yet on and on and on they went. You know, one of the tragedies of our modern day is that the courage has gone out of our Christianity.

Undisciplined. Oh, I want to take you to something a bit more interesting here. Go back over to the 26th chapter in the book of Acts, or the book of Actions, whatever you want to call it.

Now some of you fellows don't have a very good record, I'm sure. But don't let it disturb you. I think the next issue that Melody has been writing on now for the next issue of Newsletter of Last Days is on address to those who don't forgive themselves.

You've got to remember this, the devil is the accuser of the brethren. And he'll be here as long as we're here. And he's got nothing to learn.

He's had 6,000 years of studying human nature, and he's pretty smart. David Wilkerson was telling me a few days ago, he said, you know, I've taken up a new text from my life, from Isaiah. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.

I like the verse in the middle of Romans 8, it is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth. If you can get this lodged in your mind, it will help you. There's nobody can change God's opinion of you, except you.

Somebody slanders you, says you're a thief, a liar, an adulterer, all the rest. So what if it's not true, I worry. I may lose lots of my friends.

Well if you lose them for that, they're not worth calling friends anyhow, you're better without them. But it is God that justifies. If you had a vote and said, right through America we've taken 67 million votes, and Leonard Radin is number one Christian in America.

What do you think God would say? Oh, I hadn't noticed that. I'd been so busy running the universe, I hadn't bothered much about Radin. But I'm number one Christian.

Do you know how far I've traveled? Do you know how many books I've written this year? Let me whisper this in your ear, or shout it. As Christians, we're in grave danger when we let our accomplishments become the ground of our confidence. I've preached so long, I've traveled so far, I've been in so many countries, I've written so many books, I've won so many cells, so what? That's vanity.

Maybe there won't be much reward for it at the end of the line. Certainly not if it's perforated with pride. Don't let your accomplishments become the ground of your confidence.

To turn it round a little, and that's all that's what we've got to do, do it with the Word of God. This race is not to the swift, this battle is not to the strong. I've been saying to young preachers, and I've got a boy who's done this, what you should do is learn one proverb every week.

When you get up Sunday morning, get a proverb, read it, read it during the day, read it at night before you go to bed, and do that every day. Read it three times a day, till the end of the week you'd have it lodged up here. And somebody say get it in your mind, then you'd have it in a nutshell.

But anyhow, you'd have it stored away. And if you do that 52 times, at the end of the year you'd have 52 arguments. What did Jesus do when the devil came to him? Given it in a common Americanism, what did he do? Threw the book at him.

It is written, it is written, it is written. Well you can't do that if you don't know it. The Spirit says it in John 14 there, or 16, I forget which, that he will bring all things to your remembrance that you've learned.

If I asked you what John 3.16 is, you'd all graduate I suppose tonight. What if I asked you what John 3.15 is? Would you know that? It's as powerful as John 3.16, but we don't quote it. Therefore it isn't lodged in what the big smart people call the repressed complex of your subconscious.

Write that down brother Joe. In other words, you're not going to get it stored away in your memory, you know. I remember when the first computer was made in England about 30 years ago, and a lot of wise boys came down from Manchester University.

Do you know the first computer was bigger than this room? Massive thing. Now you'll be able to get one in a watch before long. You know they've got TV on watches.

A friend of mine was telling me he got a TV on his watch. You know I thought some of the folk in church were so interested in what I was saying, and they were watching a ball game. Watching a ball game, by their priest in their Sunday.

I'm going to say everybody past the offering plate, all put your watches in, pick them up after the meeting. He could only bring to our remembrance what we've learned of him. It's like having so many bullets.

If you run out of bullets, it's your fault, not God's. You find every answer, and the more you read Proverbs, the more wisdom you have. Our David, he'd be home in a few months, maybe come down and see you.

You know a few years ago, I wouldn't have said that much for that boy as a preacher. But he shut himself away with God. He's pastoring a church now, get fifteen hundred and fifty people every Sunday morning.

He'd been all through the South Seas. He'd been down to, oh I don't know where he hasn't been, Borneo, Singapore, Australia, I was going to say King Kong, I mean Hong Kong. What did he do? Shut himself away.

I sat on a one-to-one basis with some of the greatest preachers in the world. But nobody ever passed in my judgment, for me anyhow, the wisdom of Dr. Tozer. He had no education, never went to Bible school, just got away on a little house up on a hill in Pennsylvania and studied the Word of God.

Then gave himself assignments, decided to learn a little Latin, decided to learn a little Greek, read the mystics. You know we don't have mystics now, we've just misfits. But what was accomplished out of his life? Yeah, it's rather humiliating for me anyhow.

I've been, I've been taking studies on Tuesday night over at Last Days, on Hebrews 11. I love that marvelous, marvelous chapter. The only thing, every time I read it, I finish up with my nose in the dirt.

What did they do? They subdued kingdom, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, women, women received their dead race to life again. They were mocked, they had cruel scourgings, they were in prison and all the rest of it. They pulled down strongholds.

Well, Brother Amy, what embarrasses you? Well, just this, that nobody in that chapter ever had a Bible. You and I have got in this book everything that God is ever, is ever going to give to man. God has no afterthoughts.

He doesn't have to make any corrections. All these boys are writing new versions of the Bible, most are perversions. I'm like the old lady, she said that King James was good enough for St. Paul, so it's good enough for me, she said.

Enoch walked with God how long? I don't know. Wouldn't you like to follow a beat behind him, walking with God, with a tape recorder? Enoch never had a Bible. I wrote a book, which has been pretty well accepted, got my royalties today, they were very good.

I don't get a penny out of it. All goes to missions anyhow. Enoch walked with God.

He had a son called Methuselah, who lived to be 969. A nice time to live, if you get your pension at 65. 969.

And after Enoch had Methuselah, he had a whole stack of sons and daughters. Methuselah had a whole stack of sons and daughters. Tell me what happened to them.

They sure didn't get in the ark, did they? I think they all helped build the ark. They helped to get another man delivered and perished. Right, you see, Mason's building our lovely churches.

Never go in them once they're done. Men print our Bibles, never read them. Print our hymn books, never sing the hymns.

What kind of a judgment are they going to have? Now preaching is at the same time both the simplest and the most profound job in the world. Let's get it into perspective here a little. What would we say? I ask you

to turn to Acts 10.26. Here is Paul standing before a gripper.

How should it be the other way around? Here is a gripper standing before Paul. Here's Felix standing before Paul. Must have been that way because Felix trembled.

Paul didn't. Read the 22nd, 24th, 26th chapters of Acts. Look at verse 24 in the previous chapter.

First it said, King a gripper and all men which are here present with us. Ye see this man about whom all the multitude of Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. It's a strange world, isn't it? If you do good they'll kill you, if you do bad they'll kill you.

But when I found that he had done nothing worthy of death and he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I haven't determined to send him, of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my Lord, wherefore I brought him before you and especially before thee, O King a gripper, that after examination I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not withal to signify the crime's rate against him. Then a gripper said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.

Now remember, Paul is here facing a pagan king in a heathen court. Do you remember who the first king of Israel was? Who was it? Saul. He was the first.

This is the last king. A gripper said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth a hand, you know the Hitler salute, and answered him, I am happy, King a gripper, because I answer for myself this day, touching all things whereof I am accused of the Jews.

Now look, no, it's smartness, especially because I know thee to be experts in all the customs and questions with. He was a Jew himself, a gripper. He was a vassalite king.

He'd been rented by the Roman powers. Now Paul doesn't attack Festus that way. In other words, he hits him where it hurts.

You're a Jew trying a Jew. You're a slave, I'm a free man. I know you're an expert, not just a good guy, but you're an expert in all the customs of the Jews.

So him he patiently. My manner of life for my youth, which was at the first among my own people in Jerusalem. So he goes on.

You know, the vastness of Paul's life staggers me. Where was he born? Tarsus. The most historic city in the world.

Ancient city in the world. He was born in Tarsus, the capital of the world at that time, politically and materially. Where did he end up? In Rome, the military capital of the world.

In between he went to Jerusalem, the religious capital of the world. Before that he went to Athens, the intellectual capital of the world. Remember what, the 16th of Acts there, where he goes up the hillside of the Areopagus and he speaks with what? Politicians? Poets? He's quite at home.

They looked at him, he was undersized according to tradition, small. They said, what will this babbler say? He wasn't an athlete. Do you think a man that's been in a corner blasted with stones, stomped four times, lashed 195 times, hanging on a piece of wood in the Mediterranean for 36 hours, a night and a day I was in the deepest till his skin was pickled.

I think he had one eye hanging down, he limped, dragged his feet. His body's blasted. And yet that guy is in prison, wrote his greatest epistles, Philippians anyhow, and Colossians and Ephesians in prison.

They should have been writing to him. He's writing to them, rejoice, rejoice, rejoice. How do you rejoice in a hellhole like that? He had lost just about everything that he had.

I had some friends in today, some nice folk I haven't known too long, but in the course of talking we talked about Paul, and I said, well, well, was he married? Yeah, yeah, he was married. What's the proof? He had a thorn in the flesh. No, the real proof is he was a member of the Sanhedrin, and no single man could be a member of the Sanhedrin.

How could a single man legislate without families? I've got a wonderful friend by the name of Bill Gothard. He won't use TV, he won't use newspaper announcements. He wrote to me some months ago when I was sick, he said, Len, I'm sorry to hear you're sick again.

We had a wonderful week. We had a hundred thousand people to our meetings. You see, he goes to a city and he gets blackout, what do you call it, blackout TV in different, uh, is that what you call it? I don't know what you call it.

Thank you, closed-circuit TV. I'm thinking of blackouts in the war. Closed-circuit TV.

We had a hundred thousand people this week. He never advertises, never takes an offering, never uses TV, never uses newspaper advertising. I like to see somebody that's a little bit out of step with the rest of the gang, don't you? Paul was surely out of step.

Again, his achievements. I sometimes think only he and Isaac Watts who wrote the hymn could really sing when I surveyed the wondrous cross. My richest gain I count but loss.

Why? Well, he says, I have nothing and yet I possess all things. Now the church has everything and possesses nothing. With more gimmicks and gadgets.

I can remember when I was younger than you guys, in the 1920s, you know, there was no TV and there was no radio. And when it came in, the newspapers, religious papers said, in 30 years from now, every home in the world will have a TV. We should evangelize the world in about two years.

Once everybody gets, well, we've had radio in every home for 25 years and we're as near hell now as we were then. I cringe when I hear these guys saying, we're already on 350 TV stations. Would you please help us to get on to another 150? My reaction is why spread your weakness? Turn this tape over for the remainder of the message.

We're going to celebrate the coming of Jesus shortly. You'll see how stupid the world is. You'll see a manger, a doll in it for the baby and the wise men with their gifts.

They never got near the manger. None of them ever went in the manger. The shepherds did, not the kings.

There were three wise men. How do you know? Come on, read your Greek. You can't find it.

We just figured there were because they presented three gifts. There could have 30 men bringing one gift. We think there were three men.

You see these tables publicly exhibited and your bus goes past and somebody says, oh, there are the three kings of Orient and there they are presenting gifts. Sure they brought gifts. But who did they come to see? Hmm? They didn't come to see the babe.

Who did they come to see? The young child. By the distance they'd come. He couldn't be a babe when they got there.

What did Herod do? He said, massacre every child under two. If they came to see the baby, he'd have said, massacre every child under six months. No sooner was the infant Christ born, the devil tried to destroy him.

No sooner was the infant church born than this man of God, so-called, this brilliant man, this member of the Sanhedrin, this Pharisee of the Pharisees, who could actually have sung with real honesty, my richest gain I count of the horses of the tribe of Benjamin, the seed of Abraham. Everything everybody else was clutching for, he becomes almost offensive. He says, I count them but don't that I may win Christ.

You can call them on as if you like. They don't mean that much to me. To put it in a modern phrase, the Apostle Paul travelled very light.

He didn't have much baggage. I put them into prison. I punished them in every synagogue and I compelled them to blaspheme and I was blind with rage.

He's saying this to a heathen king who's almost as blind with rage. He could suddenly shut up or kick him out or chop his head off. Verse 12, whereupon as I went up to Jerusalem with authority from, you know he had a document in his togar, as they call the old Roman garment.

He had a pocket. He had a document there which sealed and settled and it had the official signature from Caesar or the Roman government. He could liquidate anybody who professed the name of Jesus Christ.

What happened to him? Well, he got a turnaround on that Damascus Road and he became the most zealous man that has ever lived. I love to read that story when he was on the Damascus Road. I'm sure he was riding a horse.

He wouldn't be walking all the way to Damascus and he was pitched off the horse into the dust and he heard a voice. He had a voice and a vision. He saw binding light.

You know, I don't think he ever got his eyesight back. This eyesight, yes. Remember that little chorus you used to sing so often, Brother John? You used to sing it too.

Good wife. Shows how old you are. Remember he used to sing, the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory.

I turn that round. When you get to eternity and look back, the things of earth will look strangely grim. We'll find we were investing our lives in fool's gold.

Trying to build with balloons. Verse 13, Mid the oaking I saw in a way a light from heaven above the brightness of the noonday sun shining round about them. About me and them which journeyed with me.

And when they were all, now notice the difference, when they were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking to me. Daniel says the same thing. There was a voice that spoke to me.

I don't think those guys that were there, they all fell to the earth, wondered what it was all about. But the voice spoke. Just the sort.

Sometimes I address small meetings like this, sometimes I address meetings of thousands. And when I go on the platform I say, well, now come on Brother Len, maybe God brought you here for one man in this congregation. I'd rather see one man or woman totally revolutionized than hundreds of people that come out every time there's an altar call.

When we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying in the Hebrew tongue, let me step back a minute there. We were all fallen to the earth. Now notice, forgive my mischief, it didn't say fell backwards.

I was preaching at First Assembly of God, a fantastic church there in Corpus Christi a few years ago. And after the meeting, a very delightful lady, I've seen some horrid ladies, but this was a delightful lady, very delightful. And she said, Mr. Rayleigh, what does it mean to fall backwards? I said, well, what does it mean to fall backwards? I said, by the way, have you fallen backwards? She said, yes, at least 20 times.

I said, what happened? She said, nothing. I answered your question. You got up with a bump on the back of your head, that's all.

What did it do for you next day? Did you say your prayers holding a bump? Read in the book of Revelation, how many of them fell? How did they fall? On their faces. There's no account of anybody falling backwards in the Bible except sinners. In the God of Gethsemane, when they went toward Jesus, there was such power emanating from Jesus, they fell backwards.

How many sons did Eli have? Two. What happened to them? They fell backwards and broke their necks. Maybe if you had a few folk broke their necks in meetings, we'd quit the silly game.

He fell to the earth. I remember distinctly, you know, when I used to walk in Dr. Coase's office, he'd say, well now, Brother Len, let your hair down, you know, relax. He'd come up with something.

Remember one day he looked me right in the eye, he said, Len, when you and I get to the judgment seat of Christ, we won't dare look Christ in the face. Hmm? He said, Len, I've been thinking again about the judgment seat. We talked about it when you were here before, I said yes.

He said, I don't really think I'm very troubled to have to answer to God at the judgment seat for the things I've done before, since I was saved even. He said, it's not the things I've done that trouble me, it's the things I could have done. I got preoccupied, I got sidetracked.

I thought there was super importance and I missed some prize God wanted for me. We were all fallen to the earth. I heard a voice speaking unto me, saying in the Hebrew tongue, so he couldn't miss it, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It's hard for thee to kick against the pricks or the goads.

Then I said, who art thou? You know, so often we read that, I said, who art thou, Lord? That's not what he said. And that's what's printed there. It just depends how you say it.

I could say this, you can't dispute it. Charles II was the king of Israel, king of England. We're just one of the lost tribes, when we have.

Charles I, it was, Charles I walked and talked five minutes after his head was chopped off. Now what do you think of that? It's true historically. Charles I walked and talked five minutes after his head was chopped

off.

What did he do, pick his head up and hold it up and let it talk? No, it depends where you punctuate it. Charles I walked and talked five minutes after his head was chopped off. The same thing, it's where you punctuate it that matters.

Oh, for years I read it, my Sunday school teacher read it. Who art thou, Lord? No. He's stunned.

He charted his course, he knew everything that was going to happen, he knew how many people he was going to arrest and how many put in prison and all the devilish things, he got it all planned out. And suddenly he was in perception, he never dreamed that Jesus would meet him. I thank God he didn't meet a preacher, he might have forgotten about the preacher.

Glad nobody gave him a copy of the four laws, he would have read them and nodded his head and been in the kingdom. Who art thou, Lord? No. Who art thou, Lord? Are you the Lord of the universe? Have you left glory? Do you ever think of that? I can't prove this, Brother Joe, but I'm sure I'm right.

I'm proud of my humility, you know. What was I going to say? I can't prove this. But I believe that the Apostle Paul, he wasn't an apostle, he was on number one on everybody's prayer list who was converted at that time.

He was leaving a track of blood behind him, broken hearts, broken homes, chasing people to strange cities. He was a Hitler. He would have gone on the same list as Hitler, he was one of the most diabolical men that ever lived.

And like King Tutankhamen, no, he was a second Herod, Pharaoh I mean. His proper name is Amenhotep II, so don't call him King Tut, give him his proper name. But anyhow, his brother wiped out the children of Israel, the babes.

Herod wiped out the massacre of the babies. This man was going to wipe out Christianity, liquidate the whole thing. We've all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew tongue, my persecutor is thou me.

And how could he persecute him? He'd never seen him. Well, that's easy to explain. In as much as you do it to the least of these, you do it unto me.

If you hurt another Christian, you hurt Jesus Christ before us. If somebody sprung on my toe, please don't, because I got broken toes. Broke my feet some years ago.

And boy, they really hurt me. He hurt in my shoes very often. Somebody occasionally steps on, oh boy.

I pray for them. You have to pray for your enemies, so I pray for them. But if you give a man some dope, you can stand on his toes and bang like that, he won't feel it.

But apart from that, before the pain gets up his leg, it gets into his mind. Now, if you hurt another Christian before you hurt that Christian, you hurt the head. You're touching the body, he's the head.

Why persecute us without me? You hurt somebody. It didn't mean much until you realize, again, I hurt Jesus Christ today. Father is body, a member of his body.

We're members one of another. I'm going to get preaching soon, Brother Joe. I'm just getting warmed up.

I'll be OK. I said, who art thou, Lord? He said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. Now, here you've got, here's a nutshell of the Gospel.

If you're going to be a preacher, you need to read this every week on your knees. Another thing you need to read is, read the 40th chapter of Isaiah. What's the last, what's the 29th verse there? Do you know it? They that wait upon the Lord.

You can't wait on a God you don't know. You're getting too stylish here, Joe. It looks like Westminster Abbey.

It's not a blackboard here, so I can chalk on it. OK. What does it say in that very chapter of the 40th chapter of Isaiah? This God we serve sits on the circle of the earth.

In other words, everything's on the meeting, all the kingdoms of the world. I mentioned to somebody in my office, no, in my home actually today, I went to Chandler first Sunday night to preach. I had a very good meeting.

I preached on worship. If you see a book on worship, buy it and either give me it or let me buy it from you. I never heard a sermon on worship.

I've been going to meetings, and in my 77th year, I went to meetings when I was two years old. So I've been going to meetings in 75 years all over the world, and I've heard every subject under heaven from demons to what have you got, but never one on worship. Do you know how valuable worship is? If you worship, if I fall down in front of these men, I'm acknowledging I'm inferior.

I'm subordinate. I shall pay tribute to you. The devil says to Jesus, You just kneel down for a minute and worship me, and I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world.

I don't think he meant all the real estate. I don't think he meant all of Russia and China. I believe he meant all the systems of the world.

I'll give you the money system of the world. I'll give you the military system of the world. I'll give you the intellectual system of the world.

I'll give you them all. Just worship me. Why? Because he'd seen angels, he'd seen Cherubim away there in eternity, worshipping the Father, and he wanted the same thing that God had.

I'll be on the circle of the earth. I want Cherubim, Seraphim, to bow down before me. It would have satisfied him for all eternity if Jesus had bowed the knee.

He wouldn't do it. The other side of the coin is in Hebrews 1. You need to read that just as we go into Christmas. See all the titles in about the first four verses.

It's fantastic what titles God has given his Son. Don't read it now, you'll get more interested in that than me. That won't do it.

No, but in that chapter it says what? Let all the angels of God. It says thy soul, O God, is forever and ever. Now, come on, be honest.

How many of you were thinking about Genghis Khan this afternoon? Did you think of Philip of Macedon? Hmm? Did you think of Henry VIII? Hmm? No? The Tsar of Russia? The Maharajas of India? The Kalash of Baghdad? Did you think of all the men that have ruled the earth? I love that phrase in that first chapter of Hebrews. Thy soul, O God, is forever and ever. I remember when the news used to come in in England in 1940 and Hitler would be growling out there with his horrible voice.

He made the world tremble. When I was a boy there was a king in Italy. There's no king there now.

There wasn't a king in France, he'd already gone. There's a king of Belgium, there's a king of Spain, king of Germany, king of Sweden, king of Norway. Most of the lesser countries there in Europe had kings.

They've all gone. Their thrones have gone. Thy soul, O God, is forever and ever.

Let the angels of God serve him, worship him, bow down before him. I asked a congregation Sunday night. They let me ask a very simple question.

Don't answer it this way, answer it that way. Did you come here tonight to meet God? Or did you come to hear a sermon about him? I guess 99% of people in America on Sunday do not go to the house of God to meet God. They've got to hear a sermon about him.

Oh, I didn't get much out of the meeting this morning. That doesn't mean that much. The criteria is what did he get out of it.

The preacher may have got a lot of congratulations. Oh, you never preached better. You should look back and say, I must have been preaching worse all the time.

We don't go out spellbound, do we? Dumb with the glory of God. No. We took off the preacher's theology.

He wasn't very clear here, he wasn't very strong there. We weigh him up and down. Okay, let me get into this verse here a little while.

Verse 15. I said, Who art thou, Lord? He said, I'm Jesus who thou persecutors, that rise and stand upon thy feet. I said that this man, and this kind of stuns me.

Here he is on the Damascus road, pitched off his horse. And here's the God of the universe, the God who made heaven and earth and all the glory in it. And he says to a fellow, Ananias, go to the street called Strait, to the house of Judas, saying, cry to a man called Peter.

God knew the name and address of the biggest rebel in the world who was rebelling against God. Even the times tell me he doesn't know my name and address, when I love him. He was born in prayer.

That's why he writes, I'll leave records of some of the most amazing prayers ever prayed in history. You get like the atmosphere you're born in. If you're born in a frivolous atmosphere, you'll be frivolous all your life.

If you're spiritually born, I mean, spiritually born in deep piety, you'll be deeply pious all your life. So much depends on where we're born. Somebody said if you're born in fire, you'll never set off a smoke.

What's the command from the Father, from Jesus? Rise, stand upon thy feet. And listen, if you stand on your knees before men, you'll stand on your feet all your life. I mean, if you stand on your knees before

God, you'll be able to stand on your feet all your life.

I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister. And you know what? Nobody else can make you a minister but God. Preaching really is not something that's taught, it's caught.

You can have a colossal mind, vocabulary, rich illustrations, all the rest of things. Won't make you a minister. I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, a witness both of the things which thou hast seen, and of the things which will I appear unto thee.

You know, this marvelous man never boasts. He could have said, I'm number one missionary, I've traveled to more countries than anybody, I'm number one theologian, I've given more theology, I'm number one writer, I've written more epistles, 14 if you include Hebrews, which I think he wrote. My richest gain I count but loss.

Again, sometimes, do you remember another phrase of his which I think is very wonderful? He says, forgetting those things which are behind. Now notice what he says, he doesn't say forgetting the bad things. Sometimes the good things are a big encumbrance to us.

It's a syllogism if you want to call it, or a little phrase. Keep it in your mind. Very often in the Christian life the good things are the enemy of the best.

You haven't done anything that's wrong this week, but the best things you miss them. You were doing something that was nice and innocent and sweet, but wait a minute, you miss the ball of gold. Why are you preoccupied with that thing? Again, you see the preacher doesn't have to go to bed at night when the bell rings, he doesn't have to get up when the bell rings.

We're talking about books here. There's a book by a man called William Gouge, G-O-U-G-E. It's published by Kegels.

Ask your grandmother to buy it for you for Christmas. It costs you \$30. \$36.

It's 1140 pages. It was written in, what, 1640 I think. It's just the epistle to Hebrews.

It's about so thick it's like a big old family Bible. For \$36. That man preached in an area of London called Blackfriars.

Just like you go to New York and you have Queens over here, never saw any Queens around. Lived in a dirty old place called Brooklyn for three years when Teen Challenge was just starting. This man lived in Blackfriars, London, and for 32 years every Tuesday night he preached on Hebrews.

The average preacher in town can get through it in one night. It's amazing that he could stick in that book for 32 years. The most amazing thing to me is this.

He finished his private devotions by 2 o'clock in the morning. Almost all those men, John Wesley, John Fletcher, you name them, almost all of them had their devotions between 4 o'clock and 5 o'clock in the morning. You've got Barnes there, one of Barnes' commentaries.

He wrote those commentaries, whatever you want to call them, between 5 o'clock in the morning and 8 o'clock. I have no argument with Barnes, he does pretty good. You see the Bible is so vast that no man can be a good expositor of the whole Bible.

It's like trying to cross the ocean in a rowing boat. Or coming down Mount Shasta on a skateboard. Pretty difficult.

The thing is, find out which is the best writer on every book. Gouge, I would say, is the best on Hebrews. You could read Arthur Pink on quite a lot.

I don't know how many books he wrote. I may be out of 20 of his, I don't know. But if I were given a tip on preaching, I'd say this.

When you get a text in your mind, don't stack your desk up with, you know, Matthew, Henry here, and Barnes here, and Ellicott here, and somebody there. Forget it. You'll stultify your own thinking.

Go to them as a last resort, not as a first resort. You know, the amazing thing, I look like my library, somebody's admiring it today. I said, well, it's not that big.

I've given two, three libraries away. The one I have isn't too big now. Not that I've read everything in it.

But I'm challenged when I look at them and say, you know, all those men that wrote, they didn't write on, what were you saying you used today? The thing you type with it? A word processor. No word processor. You think of Barnes writing 40 volumes from Genesis to Revelation, longhand, and not even a ballpoint.

Writing like my dad used to write sometimes with a quill. A goose feather. You have to split it, dip it in the ink and lift it, and then you've blotted all the ink all over the page and started all over again.

I've tried it a few times, they're horrible. Now guys sit down on a word processor. I know Winky was saying, before he went to New Zealand, he went up to Las Vegas and he sat down in the office there and typed, and it came out of a machine up at Bethany.

Isn't that magic? It's evil, it must be. It must be evil, I can't use one. But you know, again, with all these gimmicks and gadgets, we're not producing anything better.

In fact, we're not producing anything here, those guys. One book, I guess you got that book of Alexander White's, did you? Bible Characters, Joe? You didn't? You naughty boy, I told you to get it last time you were out at that book place. Those are the greatest characters ever written.

Just fantastic. Bible Characters by Alexander White. That's W-H-Y-T-E.

He's an illegitimate child, nobody wanted him, he became the greatest preacher in Scotland, maybe they never surpassed him. You see, if you keep looking at your resources, you'll be disgusted. If you look inside, you'll be discouraged.

If you look outside at the world, it's a disaster. The only way is to look up, it's glorious. Everything has death and despair in it.

This is the best summary. I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister. How long does it take? Oh, I remember when I came from the little college I went to, somebody said, you know, you need to read E.M. Bounds.

So I got a copy of E.M. Bounds. Famous American writer, read the first page, get up. Why do you throw him on one side? Because he said, it takes 20 years for God to make a minister.

I said, that was the old way. I mean, I've just come out of college, there are no spurgeons risen from the dead as soon as I go and preach. Somebody will say, well, spurgeons are supposed to be... Here, look at this young fellow.

And I found out he's right. You were born with disposition. Two young ladies there, are you twins? I thought so.

You see how observant I am. But you differ in your dispositions, is that right? Sure, there you are. Disposition is something we're born with, character is something that we built.

You build your character out of knowledge, out of convictions. In fact, it's a word not used much. These dear old ladies with grey hair, remember, used to say about somebody in a church, oh, he's a character.

You don't say that anymore. What do you say? Oh, she has a marvellous personality. That's seven o'clock at night.

See her at seven o'clock in the morning before she gets all her war paint on and see what she looks like. Oh, she's gorgeous at seven o'clock. Ten o'clock, it's all gone down the sink.

She looks a sight, a freak. Is that right? Character is what I build. I build it on convictions.

I build it from revelation from God. Disposition, you can conquer it little by little. You can get it under control.

But character is something really under God that gets me under control. I've appeared to thee for this purpose. Oh, let me see here.

I want to make you a minister, a witness of the things which thou hast seen and those which I will appear unto thee. Do you think when he got up from the Damascus road and brushed his breeches or whatever he was wearing, did he ever think he thought he'd be caught up to the third heaven? He never wrote a book on it. It would have been a bestseller, I'm sure.

His whole business is to magnify Christ, not project Paul. He'll tell you that people say he's a babler. He was maybe the greatest theologian that ever lived, but he surely wasn't a great speaker.

Apollos was the speaker of the early church. Remember people divided up in Corinth, I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos, I'm of Cephas. Paul, oh boy, he has a staggering colossal intellect.

I'm of Apollos, boy, he plays on me like playing... Oh, something makes me shiver up and down my back when he's talking. I get vibrations and sweat and... Oh, well, I like Peter. You see, he's the only one of the three that walked with Jesus.

He lived with him for three years. And they got tied up in men. I will appear unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister.

What's the next thing? And a witness. No man should be allowed to be a minister if he can't witness. I go into men's offices, I see, hey, this man was ordained in 1943 or something, and then from there he went to Yale and studied something, then from there he went to Brugesburg in Germany and studied some Hebrew and Greek.

Oh boy, he's got more diplomas than a psychiatrist. In fact, I was in an office in Canada, I saw this fantastic display in beautiful frames of this young man from his high school diploma to his college diploma to Bible school diploma to seminary diploma to studying in some foreign country. And the janitor said, what are you looking at? I said, those were all his... Oh, he's a super brilliant man.

I said, what time do you come here in the morning? Oh, I usually open this office at eight o'clock. I said, I guess when the devil peeps in, he runs away. He said, you know, those diplomas terrify me.

He said, what? I said, don't you think the devil's scared to death when he sees a man loaded with wisdom and scholarship and Greek and Hebrew? Never thought of it like that. I said, well, don't bother, because it does scare him a bit. I know a little Hebrew.

He used to repair my slacks in Brooklyn. I know a little Greek. I used to park my car in his parking lot on 8th Avenue in New York.

And I can say alpha, beta, gamma, delta and go through, you know, the Greek vocabulary and so on. No, not despising scholarship, but now it's become a number one most important thing. Talked with a young man this week that wants to go to Bolivia.

He's applied to four different mission societies. What did they tell him? Oh, you need to get more training. You need to get more scholarship.

You need to get back into school for three or four years. Can't do that. My heart's burning.

This is a commission to the preacher. I've appeared to thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness. Here's a simple thing.

Stick it in your mind. Keep it. Write it down if you can't remember it.

A man or a woman with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument. If it's happened in your life, demons, devils, psychologists, doesn't matter who they are. If God has done a miracle in your life, God witnesses with your spirit.

It doesn't matter what men say. They'll never shift you. You'll do as it says here.

You'll stand on your feet. Those things in which I will appear unto thee. Again, he never thought he'd be caught up into the third heaven.

He never thought he'd go on those missionary journeys and accomplish all he did. He never thought that demons one day would cry out. When a preacher was kicking them around, do you remember what they said? They said, the greatest thing that can be said this side of eternity.

The demons looked at the men that were trying to cast them out and they said, Jesus we know and Paul we know. Do you think there's any honour greater than that in the world? If the devil has a list of the ten most wanted men in America, I hope I'm on that list. I'd rather be the last on the list of the ten most wanted men than be the first as one of the great preachers of the country, which I'm not.

But if I was, I'd still prefer to be on the devil's danger list. I don't believe the devil was ever comfortable while Paul was living. I think he gave the demons all a half day off when Paul died.

Never see anybody like him again. Fanatic. Making thee a minister and a witness both of the things which thou hast seen.

Now you may have learned a lot since you came here, but wait a minute brother, you've got years ahead if Jesus tarries. I remember when I left school, boy was I boiling. I was boiling to get out and preach.

There's a city over there called Bristol. There's a city here called London. There's a city up there called Newcastle.

John Wesley used to saddle his horse in Bristol right to London, right from London to Newcastle. But I didn't have a horse. Didn't have a car.

Didn't have a bicycle, so I walked it. Well England's not a big country. Well you try walking 400 miles, you'll find it's pretty rough.

And then walked it back. And then walked it again. Stopped in villages, had meetings.

Just took 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'll be alright.

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.

One of those 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. Didn't it make you feel pretty sheltered? Hmm? Somebody, there's a rock outside off the coast of Aberdeen there.

It's 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? Oh, 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 with hardly any food. I haven't a blanket to cover him. The spray, the cold spray comes in, cakes his face with salt, can't keep his things dry.

I haven'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 have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister, to testify, a witness of the things which you have 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 before 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 the wrong way, but she'd money.

Later, he became the pastor in that church. Married. A couple of years after, they had a child.

They had those big boat-shaped prambulators, you know, that they pushed babies around in. All he had to do was whisper that he needed something. That woman paid every bill that that man had.

He could ask anything he got. What did he 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 at.

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 forty-five doctors in my congregation. And I'm sure we have at least thirty 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 opened.

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 else has this mandate, Brother Joe. This is my challenge every time I stand in the pulpit 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 spirits 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,

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