

Most Holy Faith

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being sanctified by God's presence, loving God's Word, and preparing for Jesus' coming through a deeper relationship with Him.

Duration: 55:19

Scripture: Exodus 14:30, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 3:1-2, 1 Timothy 1:17, 2 Peter 3:3, Jude 1:20, Jude 1:24

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of building oneself up in faith and staying vigilant against worldly temptations. He shares a story about a preacher who hypocritically indulges in drinking despite preaching against it. The preacher also mentions the urgency and gravity of the times we live in and the need to fulfill our calling. He suggests revising the Communion service and encourages believers to come together in a half-circle formation. The sermon concludes with a proclamation of God's ability to keep believers from falling and to present them faultless before His glory.

Transcript

This ground is very common ground, we're aware it's farm ground. I'm not aware that we sprinkled it with water or we had some special occasion to sanctify it. But Lord, it's sanctified by your presence, not ours.

It's beautiful because you're here, not because we're here. We appreciate each other in the gospel. We thank you for the ties that bind our hearts and yet it's all because of Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

We thank you for the work of grace in us. We're not the people we used to be, we're not the people we want to be. We recognize there's very much land ahead to be possessed and we pray that we may reach out by faith and possess our possessions.

We thank you for those with us whom you've renewed in health, physically, and ask you to continue that work. We pray for those who inwardly bear scars today, we can't see those wounds. But Lord, as we sang that lovely hymn today, Jesus, the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast.

If we think about world conditions, we could panic. If we think about some of the things round about us they'd cause, at least Satan would try to create bitterness in us because of them. If we thought of so many areas that the world right now is failing in, we would be distressed and perplexed.

But the very thought of thee, thy faithfulness, thy holiness, thy loveliness. Lord, as we sang and we meant it as we sang it this afternoon, in that lovely hymn, Lord he comes with clouds descending. There's going to be a moment when this old world as we know it and its systems will disappear.

They'll vanish like a cloud and he will come on the clouds with ten thousand of his saints. And in that day again we shall say it would be worth it all when we see Jesus. We recognize he is the author and the finisher.

There are men who steal the very glory of God, but in that day all glory shall be given to him. And every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. They may say it in a thousand or ten thousand languages at the same moment, but it will all mean the same to the Son of God.

They're going to sing the song unto him that has loved us and loosed us from our sins in his own blood. Unto him be glory and dominion now and forever. And Lord as we think of this, we think of the the blessing we have, sitting quiet.

We're not afraid somebody will beat the door down. We were reading just this weekend of those who meet in misery. We think of the young man there from Bulgaria with the Agape force who got back to Bulgaria some months ago and he said that Friday is the free night and everybody clouds wherever they can.

It's a free night. The police are not there and the soldiers don't spy on them. And so they take every moment and they pack it till midnight with praise and glory and thanksgiving.

And there are buildings that are jammed to capacity because that's their one free night and they enjoy what they have in Jesus Christ. And yet Lord we're privileged to do this every day if we want to do it. We thank you for our freedom.

We thank you for the blessings of life. We thank you for those who lay down their lives that we might be free. We thank you for those who lay down their lives that we might have the Word of God.

And we pray gracious God that you'll give us a heart to love thee. It's so easy to get under the weather. We know we don't need a desert in our eye.

Just one little piece of grit and we feel as though we've got the whole desert in our eyes. One problem could weigh us down. One difficulty can harass us.

But Father we pray that we should be separated from these things as we look into your eternal Word. What a treasure it is. There's no treasure house in the world has anything to compare with thy Word.

This Word will live when all empires have perished. It will live when all banking systems have gone. It will live when all the philosophies of men have passed like the dew that dries up in the morning.

We thank you for your Word. We thank you for whatever it's been preached today. We can't imagine some of the little holes in which men have met together.

We can't visualize those in steaming jungles that can't find a drink of water to cool their parched tongues. We think of those up in the north in the snows in Canada there pursuing the Indians and the other people that are around there, Eskimos and others. We thank you Lord that you see them all this afternoon.

You don't forget one of them. There's nobody more precious to you than I am and there's nobody more precious to you than I am and there's nobody else less precious. We're all equal in my sight.

You love us all. You sought us all. You redeemed us all.

You shed your blood for us all. You're coming for us all. Lord if you were coming for everybody on earth but me I'd be terribly disappointed.

But Lord I thank you you'll take me and even me. Thank you you'll take each one of us in that moment when you do come and take the bride to yourself. Again we ask you keep us looking to Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith and bless this word we ask in Jesus name.

Amen. Let me tell you something that's really been on my heart while I've been away. As I converse with different preachers there's a after all the spirit only talks with one voice and he'll say the same thing to all of us if we listen surely.

And the sense of urgency is on so many preachers these days. The urgency of the brevity of time to do the job. And then I met a preacher and he told me about the communion service they'd had.

I thought it was very beautiful and I'm going to suggest to you we revise ours. We've got John back and one or two fellows that can work and I suggest we put a good real good half circle ray around here for communion and that we all come up. It's nice to come in families but that's not the body.

We need to come up together and brother Herb will give you the bread I'll follow with the wine we'll quote scriptures we'll sing some hymns and then at the side we'll make a kind of a little uh a little stand and we'll we'll get sister Mabel to find us a beaten up old cup a silver cup or something and a plate and we'll put that there for the captives who are not able to come. I don't think we remember enough the children of God who are in captivity and I think if we just had a cup there we won't put anything in it because they won't be here to drink. We'll we'll get a beaten up plate and we'll put that there and just put a little notice on it maybe till he comes.

You know there may be a day when we'll be wishing to God somebody would remember us like this. And so let's do this let's let's get this thing put it about a couple of feet here so there's room to get behind make a kind of a little table in the middle not too high maybe 30 inches so we can put the emblems on it and then a place to kneel and we're going to do this every week for a simple reason that the word that the Lord burned into my heart while we've been away do this till I come. And I don't know how soon that coming is and you don't know how soon the coming is and we need not to rush it we need to take a little time so I'm going to ask you try and get here for quarter past two let's try and get singing for um 20 past and then uh it's going to take a little time after that.

Did the children learn a verse? Okay let's not leave you out. Who's the first? Glory I thought of one all right just some thoughts I got a sore throat we drove yesterday for nearly 600 miles and we kept hitting sandstones and whether I got some of that I don't know but I got a bad throat which isn't as bad as last night thank the Lord but it's I'm still feeling a little of it. All right the epistle of Jude.

God willing we'll return to the other study later next Lord's Day. The epistle of Jude these thoughts were coming in the night this morning. Notice there's 25 verses and usually this epistle is called an epitome of the whole Bible.

It is in essence a condensation of the word of God at least up to about verse 17 and then it starts speaking about the disciples of the Lord Jesus. Uh the the rundown on this let me give you because I'm not going to stay with it all obviously. Read verse five.

I will therefore put you in remembrance that though ye once knew this how that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt afterward destroyed them that believe not. Now I think that's the pattern for much of what there is later in this chapter. There's the pattern.

Notice in verse 18 how they told you there should be mockers in the last time who should walk after their own lusts. That obviously is the prophecy. Verse 20 but ye beloved building yourselves up in your most holy faith praying in the holy gulf.

That's the privilege. And verse 24 now unto him that is able to keep you from falling to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy so the only wise God our Savior be glory and majesty dominion and power both now and forever. That's the proclamation.

All right for a few minutes let's stay just with this 20th verse but ye beloved building up yourselves on your most holy faith praying in the holy ghost. Now again nobody has ever decided what proportion of responsibility is ours and what proportion of responsibility is God's that we should be built up in our most holy faith. Again I remind you that nobody that ever lived ever had a bigger Bible than you have.

They never had a backdoor entrance to God. They never had more privileges than you and I have. We're all heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

I did not check this I think it's in Galatians where Paul says that because you're an heir does not give you the right of an inheritance. There's many a person here I think of a girl in the Bahamas a beautiful girl about 18 years of age and when money was money seven or eight ten years ago when we were there she inherited seven million dollars or 17 I forget which. Enough for her to spend anyhow.

But there's a caution in the world you're not to get a penny of this money until you're of age. Now she's a child there's no way that you can argue against that. She's the rightful heir there's no way you can argue against that but she cannot inherit the things.

Now I don't know how you read the scripture. You read the scripture it's flat then suddenly you bump into something like that and say why didn't I think of that before today? And I tried to teach last Sunday morning on 1 corinthians 13 we had a pretty good meeting I thought the Lord God came down but you know that that that thing's so beautiful there are 13 verses in 1 corinthians 13. And of course as you know he's speaking about love.

And then suddenly he comes to what I call is a bump there he says but when I became a man I put away childish things. Now where did he consciously enter into maturity? I believe that there is a moment. I think that little guy the other day at four years of age knew that God called him to the ministry.

After all if God could speak to Samuel at that age he could speak to him what's the difference? The little guy has been nurtured he has an awful fear of the world. You see that's why in the school there they say look we're going to discipline disagree if you don't want your child to come this way that's all right you take them somewhere else but they're coming here dressed like girls they're coming here dressed like boys if you want some other way. Oh we don't want to go to school oh it's a terrible school there's all kinds of wildness and madness.

Isn't it amazing we don't want to go from one thing to the other all right they said this is the condition. Now I'll tell you this the apostle says the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to grace. And God doesn't withhold anything the more closely you walk with God the more you'll find he puts a tighter yoke on you because he says my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Then Paul says when I became a man and some people say you see he came to the place where gifts didn't matter healings didn't matter prophets didn't matter he says oh I've grown up beyond that I'm just consumed with love that's exactly what he doesn't say. He says in that 11th chapter pardon me in the 12th chapter if you read it carefully he talks about the church being a body well if the church is a body love is the blood in that body that keeps it functioning. Elsewhere he talks about the church being a building.

Can you put a building together a brick a normal stone building without cement? If we are his workmanship if we are lively stones in the building of Jesus Christ the only way to hold those brick those uh to bond those stones together is with a bond of love. Love is the fulfilling of the law but there was a conscious entry. Now I don't know where it was I don't know I figure it wasn't on the Damascus road because again he was a babe.

You see there's no such thing as making a flying leap into maturity. When God was going to deal with Moses he threw him on the back side of the desert for 40 years. Moses is very like the Lord Jesus he's a prototype.

After all Moses was on the back side of the desert for 40 years. Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days. Moses was up there in the glory with it with it with the father and he came down and when he came down his face shone.

It was his transfiguration like Jesus had his transfiguration. Jesus gives us a sermon on the mount. Moses gave us the sermon on the mount on 12 on the tablets of stone.

Moses has to suffer in Egypt. Jesus suffered in Egypt. He was sent down into Egypt because of the conditions as you know.

And so if you if you read the story through you'll find there's a striking parallel. But again you see Moses according to the seventh chapter of Acts he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. I think Moses was one of the greatest men.

He was a Socrates, a Plato, you say what you like. I believe he was one of the most brilliant men the world ever had. Maybe one day we'll discover that he designed many of the great things that were invented.

I don't know whether pyramids were there or not. But he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. When he went down the street people saluted him.

When he went to bed they stood over him and fanned him with ostrich feathers. When he had a meal it was served fit for a king. And God pulls him out of that and says get down to the back side of the desert.

You're going to be dried out for 40 years. I say again God wouldn't trust me with that. I go blazing mad I'm sure.

In that situation I'd be crying to heaven my God I've been here 20 years. 5,000 people die every day in the concentration camps of Egypt. What are you doing about it? And he goes on year after year after year

after year for 40 years.

Surely if any man could have made a leap he would have made it but he did not make it. A lot of these young fellows come up and ask you a question. I'm leaving the seminary I don't know what to do.

I don't feel ready and I give them the same old treatment. Go bury your head in a haystack. If the fire hasn't gone out in six months you've got something.

If it did go out thank God you didn't spread your disease to a church. Go and stay there and see if the fire burns. Oh I you know I begin to feel I'm kind of mature.

Well uh I remind you of this that God took 30 years to mature his own son. He learned obedience by the things he suffered. And if it took him 30 years to find the mind of his father and do it so forth and so on.

Maybe you and I still need a little bit of time on the back side of the desert. You see God doesn't God doesn't answer rush orders don't you wish he did? He'd get an awful lot today wouldn't he? I could put one or two orders in and say you wouldn't have any herb of course you've got no problem. But I would take them up and I'd say Lord please could you cash this right away? You know like the man said I need patience and I need it now.

Huh? Lord I know you're going to answer but Lord could you shorten it? It's the thing that's killing me is you're so slow about this. God's never slow. God is perfect.

He's never been late in any issue. He's never been before time either. In the fullness of time God sent forth.

There's a gap between here and the last prophet in the Old Testament of 400 years. 400 years. How many how many people died in 400 years? They didn't have a prophet.

They had a religious system. They shed the blood of bulls and goats. They did all the ritual of the Old Testament.

But I'll tell you what the shekinah glory never never never filled the holy place. I remember students the other day again I said remember this you could be you could be a soldier in Israel when you were 20. You could not be a priest until you were 25 and you could not be a high priest until you were 30.

In other words the man who enters not just into the outer court where you can minister to other people not merely in the first place in the tabernacle which had on the right hand coming in of course the right hand it had the the seven branch candlestick on the left hand it had the table of showbread. Immediately in front there was the altar of incense typical of prayer because you cannot enter into the holiest of all. But remember on the outside there was daylight.

The inside there was candlelight. In the holy of holies there was no light. God pities if there's no light we'll make it anyhow.

If there's no light we'll whoop it up in a meeting. If God hasn't descended let's pull him down. As I asked the folk the other day how often have you been in a sanctuary where God so it came that you walked out and didn't say a word.

You felt if you said to Mrs. So-and-so I'll see you tomorrow and we'll go and shop you'd have killed the whole thing. They're so familiar with God. I was preaching the other night on a sermon I haven't preached for a number of years but it was good.

I really enjoyed it because I hadn't heard myself preach about it for so long and I was preaching on 1 Corinthians 3 he obeys in Christ and God just as I said it the folk came to me look there's a period in the life of a girl when she's too young to bear children. There's a period when she's too old. There's a period in between when normally she can.

And Paul says I I I talk to you but your babe's in Christ. I feed you with milk and just as I said it like that I spurted the thing out. I said is this the reason God can't give us revival because you're not old enough to handle it.

Lord turn Sagina upside down. What would you do if he did? Do we have enough mothers in Israel to take care of the people? Do we have a condition into which we could bring people? You know it's you see an old lady like we saw the other day bless her heart she she reminded me of old hammer not that I ever saw hammer of course but but uh she reminded me of hammer and you know her face is up she oh oh little thing she said you know this week has been so marvelous for 50 years I prayed that God would count. I tell you that little old soul's a joyful woman.

But again going back to Paul Paul says when I became a man I'm going to tell you this you disagree if you like but I believe there'll come a time in your personal experience and most likely not in a meeting when you're alone with God when you'll pass through an invisible barrier and once you're through it you'll know that God has done something in your life that you didn't get on an altar you didn't ask God to save you you didn't ask God to give you the baptism you didn't ask God to give you some gifts but you'll consciously enter into a relationship that you've never had before. And from that day you'll say look have I been satisfied so long with so little when there's so much? I think it'll take us about two million years to get over our embarrassment when we get to heaven. We believe God so little really haven't we? Have we got to waters to the ankles yet do you think or to the knees or to the loins as the in the book of Revelation as given in Ezekiel.

All right verse 21 pardon me verse 20 says what but ye beloved now notice he uses that phrase over and over this is this is a letter to people that he loves he is not writing to the world he's writing to godly men and women and he says ye beloved building up yourselves on your most holy faith praying in the Holy Ghost. Now the negative side of that will be what Peter says keep yourself from idols. Again what proportion of responsibility is mine to be spiritual? I have a whole bible I have a whole heaven to gain I have the whole person of the Holy Spirit to teach me to inspire me or to inspire you.

Now how much responsibility belongs to God and how much response to me? I don't know anybody that knows the percentage on it. Now I don't know this that the apostle says that we're to keep our keep you pardon me ye beloved building up yourselves. You see he's talking about a day that's coming an awful day.

Judgment is coming. Now if you're going to run in a race next week for a world championship you won't start training next Wednesday will you? You'll find an athlete and you'll say how long have you trained for this? Oh well I failed at the last olympics four years ago but I'm really getting into business now. I've been at it every day.

Isn't that what Mark Spitz said when he failed in Mexico? Didn't win a thing and after that he said I spent eight hours a day every day for four years swimming. Apart from the time I did other ways of building my muscles. Four eight hours a day in water.

But remember when he went he brought record after record after record after record until they changed the the rules and said we won't let anybody do that again. But you see again the word of God says the man does it for an earthly crown. What does it mean when he God says he'll wipe away all tears from their eyes? There are no tears in heaven.

I suggest to you he'll wipe the tears away at the judgment seat. Not for things we've done but as dear Tozer said Len, he used to say Len I'm not too troubled about the things I've done it's the things I haven't done that trouble me. If I'd been alive and alerting God what would I have done? And then the Lord says look I want to show you something.

Come here Len Ravenhill. You see you could have gone this way and this and if you've gone that way you'd have struck a pot of gold and if you've gone here I mean spiritually you'd have hit a diamond mine and if you'd gone there you would have found resources but you see you were so engaged here and you listened to other voices and you trotted away and you would have been a super millionaire in eternity whereas I'm going to put a match to all you've done and all you've got is ashes anyhow. That's a pretty serious thing isn't it? Lord let me go back to earth.

No the Lord doesn't believe in reincarnation. You had one shot you missed it well that's it you're through so am I. Now building yourselves up in your most holy faith building suggests edification. A man builds up his intellect, why? By study.

He builds up his body by exercise. And you know faith cometh by hearing the good book says and hearing by the word of God. Building yourself up.

I'll tell you one thing you'll have to be out if you're going to build yourself up and the things that the thing that is out is doubt. If doubt gets in you're sunk. You believe God you clench your teeth and you as I've got in my office there a sign Hebrews 11 6. God is.

Sometimes I almost feel as though he isn't but I know he is. He is what? He is faithful. He is able to keep me from falling.

He's able to make all grace abound. He's able to save to the uttermost. God is.

Is what? He's everything he says he is in his word that's what he is. Well why didn't he do that thing when I prayed and that of the other? I was reading this morning in John 11. Well you know that woman said to Jesus if you really really really did love my brother as you say you'd have been here.

You'd have been here you wouldn't have let him die. Oh did you hear that master? And Jesus says yes I'm, I'm glad. You're glad.

He says to the disciples I'm glad for your sakes. Glad for our sakes. What do we get out of this? Well number one you see I don't always rush when you ask me to come.

Number two your faith was tested. I'm glad for your sakes. Oh you phone to somebody and say now listen why didn't you call me? I didn't know you were in trouble.

Look I'd have been on the next bus the next train. I would have come and I'd have let that happen again. I'll be there you wouldn't trust me.

And Jesus said I'm glad I wasn't there. Hmm. I'll tell you what in a jam like that you prove yourself to yourself if what you've had is only a theory and not faith.

You, you say the storm may roar without me, my heart may loathe be laid, but God is round about me and shall I be afraid? Hmm. His wisdom never faileth. You know we can give God a lot.

You can give him your troubles and your problems and you can't give him advice. Don't you wish we could sometime? Lord if you do it this way I just want to explain this to you. Well it so happens uh he studied quite a number of people down the ages right from Adam and he's never blundered any time.

Oh he's been terribly late for some people. Well you know what it is? It's all a lack of faith. If you'd have had faith this wouldn't have happened.

You think God treats his children like this? Yes I do. As a matter of fact the better you are the worse he treats you. Hmm? You're having a rough time? Cheer up, get worse.

That's what he does. Faith gets you anywhere. Why didn't get Daniel out of the den of lions? Why did the second half of Hebrews say these all died in the faith? Well there's nobody there to lay hands on them eh? Do you know what it says those people died as triumphant? Oh no they didn't die in bed with a nurse around them spraying the room to keep the bugs out.

Some of them died when a lion jumped up and tore their ears off. Some of them died when they saw their wives with a babe at the breast and a lion got up and crunched the baby up in front of them and you're defenseless you can't do anything about it. You know God's good to me.

Do you know what he's done? I want to tell you all he's done since the last day. Do you know the word of God says that when men were filled really filled with the spirit that they rejoiced that they were count worthy to suffer for him. Brother that's a that's a twist isn't it? Oh I think God's good when he gets me out of every difficulty.

I mean he knows how feeble I am. Yeah if I'd have been him I'd have given up on you but he's a bit more grace and patience than you'd have given up on me. But listen I'll tell you this that God there's no rationalizing the things that God does or how he does them.

You've every right to tell God you want to be a saint but you've no right to tell him how to make you a saint. And you could read six books on how God has made every other person and you know what? The way that he made them wouldn't fit you any more than the clothes would fit me or you. Man if you saw me coming in Brother Herb's shirt and trousers I'd look a saint.

You think I've got a bridal dress on his britches would be trailing behind me his legs are so long and I'd have to put a couple of pillows in here I guess to fill the thing up. And if he came in wine you'd think he's a boy scout. We want to wear somebody else's uniform.

We want God to do it our way. No, no, no, no, no. Building yourselves up.

After all building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourself in the love of God. Well there he gives you the prescription. That's the commandment.

This is what you do. You keep yourself in the love of God. Like you're going down the street and it's shady here and the sunlight's there, you cross into the sunshine.

Keep yourself in the love of God. I was in a street in England years ago 1939 I think. I saw a junk shop and it had some books in of Spurgeons and I bought them at a real bargain price for sure.

And I remember a statement that Spurgeon made. He said you see when it says keep yourself in the love of God, it doesn't mean you keep yourself so that God will love you more. Oh no, no, you can't do that.

Well I disagree with him. Because in Psalm 91 when the Psalmist finishes the Psalm, do you know what he says? Because he hath set his love upon me. Who? The man in the first verse that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High.

After all that's a place to live isn't it? You talk about bomb-proof shelters. Listen you'll never escape doubts and fears and trials and testings and so forth. But you see there's a corresponding scripture for every New Testament scripture in the Old Testament as far as I'm concerned.

I like John 15. I taught it the other afternoon. It's a marvelous marvelous uh chapter.

It's about the vine and the branches the pruning and all the rest. But the secret is fruit is mentioned eight times in that chapter. Abiding is mentioned nine times.

Now the secret of abounding is abiding. If you separate the branch from the vine there's no fruit there's no life. Now the corresponding chapter in my judgment is the 91st Psalm and at the end of 91st Psalm it says he that dwelleth in the... About one person he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High.

Right and then when he comes at the end of the Psalm he says he the same person that dwelleth in the shadow of the Almighty that same person because he hath set his love upon me I will be with him in trouble. He doesn't say I'll let him escape it but I'll be with him. It was uh Nelson who was at sea one period when in those days they they didn't have steam ships so they had no fuel problems.

Yes they did because the wind didn't always blow and they got in the doldrums and scurvy broke out and all the men were in a mess. But a little wind came another man of war came another way and they signaled for it and they asked the man of war to take some letters home and some women in England got little notes tiny notes and one man put all his complaints on the note and he said don't worry we're not downhearted because Nelson is with us. In other words I'd rather be on board with all the problems with Nelson with us than be anywhere else without him.

Now God says I will be with him in trouble so put it under a I will accompany him not out of it but in the trouble. He guides me with his eye even in the trouble I will be with him. Well that's beautiful and he says I will accompany him that's better.

And he says I will avenge him which is better still. But you see the timetable is God's not these are the exceeding great and precious promises. Now if I'm going to keep myself in the most holy faith there's one thing for sure I'll have to know about that faith.

I'll have to understand I'll have to believe for instance again in the virgin birth the physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious coming that's going to take place before too long. You see this this man is telling these people that they better watch out because he says you're living in a in an evil day

there are many evil things and he says there are some in verse 11 who've gone after the way of Cain and ran greedily after the error of Balaam and perished in the gainsaying of Coray. Now these are the things that are going to try to destroy my faith these are the things that are going to try and pull me down.

What are they? They've gone the way of Cain. What way was that? The way of murder. You say I'd never gone the way of murder.

Wait a minute wait a minute Jesus narrows it down a bit more and he says there's anybody in your heart you hate you're a murderer. I remember as a kid once listening to somebody teach and this man said look if you could commit sin and get away with it would you do it? Whatever sin it is, if you secretly lust would you commit adultery if you could do it and get away with it? Would you steal if you could do it and get away with it? Would you lie? Would you do it? Would you do it? Because if you do your disposition has never been changed you've still got a heart that's a murderer's heart. They've gone after the way of Cain which is the way of murder.

They ran greedily after the error of Balaam and his sin was greed and they perished in the gainsaying of Coray and his major sin was envy. Step back will you to verse five. I will therefore that you put I put in remembrance though ye once knew this how the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt after had destroyed them.

Oh don't stop there. The angels which kept not their first estate but left their habitation either reserved in everlasting they were angels. Dear God what happens to angels they're in a place I don't know a thing about hardly.

Brother Herb talks about glory of heaven I like to meditate on it. But you see eye hasn't seen you don't have an eye that's capable of seeing the glory of God any more than you look into the sun. When the sun is up it would blind you.

And here are these holy beings in this celestial office worshiping, praising, in adoration and now they're in everlasting chains. Here's a people that God delivered by miracle after miracle after miracle after miracle but they never entered the promised land. You see that's why it says build yourself up.

Don't you get dwelling too much on your own security and happiness brother there's a pitfall there. Dave Wilkerson told me he was in a plane not many days ago he saw a certain man who has a big t-build program you've all seen him. And he stumbled against drinking everything else he comes in the big buxom French woman and sits down with her in the first class and she says section of the plane from Canada.

Drinks a big cocktail and then another then another then another then another. He drank five straight up. Dear old brave Dave went across the aisle in the first class compartment knelt at the side of him he said aren't you so and so? Yes.

Is this your wife? No. Don't you thunder against liquor? Yes. Man the whole nation's heard you.

What are you doing here? God must have put you on this plane. Oh yes I repent, I repent, I repent. A month after the man was back in the same situation he pulls out of the ministry and he's running you know this is what all a lot of the big boys are doing.

You enter room in the Ramada and have a special you know you're only coming by invitation. Cost you fifty dollars. Get a hundred people in you're not doing bad.

The man who was sitting on the throne, the man who had the ears of millions of people. Bunyan's, pardon me, Bunyan wrote the book. Sure Pilgrim's Progress.

You remember he said the thing that amazed him most was that that right to the gate of heaven were the many adversaries. There was a slough of despond. There were those green pastures where he went in and rested because he was very tired.

A kind of sleepy holler. There's another place where there was a lion in the way. But you see he fell when he saw those green pastures he slipped over the fence.

Remember while he was over the fence relaxing that giant despair came and grabbed him by the scuff of the neck and took him to Doubting Castle. You know we we think that we're that we're easy. You know so often when we're in easy street we're in the dangerous most dangerous place of life.

If David had gone to battle he'd never got messed up with Bathsheba but he stayed at home. Do you remember the same psalmist says there's an arrow that flyeth by day. There's a pestilence that walketh in darkness.

There's a sun stroke at moon in the middle of the day and there's a sun stroke there's a moon stroke you know as well as the sun stroke. The arrow flies by day. Nobody's going to shoot with an arrow in the night you can't see you.

The arrow that flyeth by day, the pestilence that walketh at noontide. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night. There is no period this side of eternity where I'm safe in my own strength or my own wisdom.

I need to be built up in my most holy faith. I need to be strengthened with all might by the spirit in the inner man. So therefore he says those men that came out of Egypt.

You know you and I we sit down often and we grieve over certain things and rightly so we're human beings. I grieve when I heard that. I said David that's terrible.

I'd have been as sick as a dog if I'd seen that man in the plane. But you see again I talk with him about it not for gossip's sake. God knows I don't want to hear it.

I'm all for fellowship I'm not for gossip. If you're in fellowship that turns to gossip get out of it because you'll poison yourself and others. But you know then I began to think that man is hurt.

He's hurt his wife, he's hurt his children, he's even hurting the bad woman he's with. He's hurt that. But listen most of all he's hurt God.

Well how do you think God felt when he pulled maybe five million people out of Egypt and not one of them made it? Well two of them made it to the promised land. I suggest to you that Caleb and Joshua must have had hearts that were tended toward God and hearts like steel. How many people do you think they, how many funerals do you think they had every day to liquidate five million people in that period that they went through out of Egypt to the promised land? They must have got sick of death and failure and every blessed thing.

And yet they hung on despite the collapsing system. But again they came out of Egypt and he destroyed them. He put the barrier up.

He said you're not going in. The second one here in this thing is the angels which kept not their first estate. And the third is in verse seven is Sodom and Gomorrah.

They were the most fertile areas of the world at that time. They had every privilege. My Lord, my Lord, if I'd been living in those days and known there was an old man up on the hill that'd have been after him.

I must be, I said to Martha, let it come in. I said sweetie I must be getting old or bent or decaying or something. Somebody prays and says thank you for sending an old prophet in our midst.

The next man the next night said Lord thank you for this patriarch. I thought oh boy I must be Abraham risen from the dead or something. It sounds, sounds, but you know if I'd lived in Sodom and Gomorrah and that fellow had been living on the mountain I'd have been up there every day to see that guy.

And you know when God was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah he did not send notice to the mayor of the town who happened to be called Mr. Lott. I think it was a bad lot but his name was Lott. He didn't send it to Mr. Lott who was the judge because he sat in the gate.

When God was going to destroy the the cities of the plain he sent notice to the man who was praying, the man of God. He tipped him off in our language. Do you think God's going to send a note to the White House? Not in your life.

Any notice God is going to serve is going to be served in God's house, not in the White House. And so these people of privilege, the angels in the celestial glory and majesty are chained in darkness. You don't have to do this.

I'm going to ask the Lord to let me go look at them one day. Not go down there, just look over the edge. I don't want to go down there.

But I'd like to see those angels and say, oh you poor fools, you poor fools, you poor fools. I'm going to see an awful lot of people who should have made it far better than they did do. So I've got to build up myself in my most holy faith to ward myself off from these things.

Let's go back a minute. You build yourself up in your most holy faith. You keep yourself in the love of God house.

You build yourself up in your most holy faith. So we're going to have to dwell a bit on holiness there, because it's a holy faith. It's not just a faith, it's a, it's a faith that produces holy living.

And if you, if you build yourself up in holy living, how do you do it? You do it by what? Number one, you have to build yourself up. Number two, it must be in your most holy faith. Number three, praying in the Holy Ghost.

Now that's great praying. I was in two prayer meetings this week. Honest to goodness.

If the upper room was better than those, I'd have fallen apart. Oh, there's a German fellow. You see, you know what it is? It's the old, old story.

Those who have been forgiven much, love much. The danger with many of us, we were on the clean side of the road when Jesus found us. We haven't been to hell and back like these kids say.

Here's a big German fellow, about six foot three or four. Mr. Schultz, of course. Oh, he's a lovely guy.

His father, a German. His mother, a Jew. And he's a little guy.

When Hitler began to purge the nation, I didn't hear the story, but people said, you know, if he were to give his life story, your ears would tinkle, you'd be fascinated. How God, miraculously, got him out of a concentration camp, got him over to England. He met Iain Thomas, some of that bunch, and they led him to the Lord.

And now he has a tremendous ministry. But you know, there was something about the man. You know, almost when he walked in the room, he's just an ordinary cheap suit, like most preachers have.

Wasn't that much about him? But you know, when he came in and he looked at you like, you've got some wonderful eyes. But oh, when he prayed. I'm not facetious, I mean this, and I'm saying it in a spiritual sense.

I was almost afraid to open my eyes in case Jesus was standing in front of me. He just brought the glory of God down on the plane. And he said to me, Brother Ravenhill, Brother Ravenhill, we don't love God as we should.

We don't pray as we should. Oh, how we need to pray. I looked at that, that big fellow about six feet four, and then this little guy wasn't four feet high, and I thought, yeah, he prays too.

There's a different degree in praying. But you see, if you pray, if you build yourself up in the Holy Ghost, you'll never go running. You won't commit murder.

You won't even hate somebody. You say, Brother, I said, I think if I could get away without murder him. No, no you wouldn't.

If you build yourself up in love, one thing you'll know, there'll be no hatred, there'll be no bitterness, there'll be no strife in your heart. If you build yourself up in love, you won't be greedy and courteous and just longing for every blessed penny you can make. And if you build yourself up in love, you won't perish in the gainsaying of Coray, which again was the gainsaying of envy, raising up strife and raising up bitterness.

So here are the things we have to do, build ourselves up in our most, building ourselves up, and the qualification is building ourselves up in our most holy faith. And then the thing is, we're to pray in the Holy Ghost. Again, I can remember Spurgeon saying it, but I found it before I knew he'd said it.

Anyhow, he said, and I'm sure he's right, that true prayer begins in the heart of God, comes down into my heart and goes right back. Because I don't believe God's obligated to listen to any other prayer. But what he starts, praying in the Holy Ghost.

It sure isn't giving God a shopping list. Now there are degrees in prayer, sure there are. We, as I say, we had some just amazing prayer meetings.

One night I didn't go in, I was very tired. I had free services on the Tuesday, and I spoke about an hour and a half in the first, and an hour and a half in the second. I needed a bit of a rest, and so I laid on a bed in an adjoining room.

But you know those men, they were at the other end of the house, and it must have been the bricks were hollow or something. It was thundering right down at the back of my head, just booming, booming, booming, booming. Hallelujah, I'm a great meeting tonight.

Now I didn't have to ask people to come to the altar. There's a minister there, got kicked out of his church not too long ago, a saintly man, beautiful man. Before I'd finished, he came walking down the aisle, tried to find a way through his tears to kneel at the altar.

Then I felt the guy was a hundred yards ahead of me anyhow. And before he'd done, there were others there. The altars were filled, there was no place.

Then there were about five steps, all crimson carpet they had up, and you know they were just packed, packed, packed with students and people seeking God, and they even had to let down out there. You know somebody would go home and say, boy, Ravenhill preached well tonight, forget it. Those men prayed that blessing down.

Those men prayed that thing into being. They tore the barriers away. Herb and I many times this last year, and I thank God for that.

Together we've claimed that promise where God said to John Baptist, prepare ye the way of the Lord. You see, we prepare the way of the Lord when we're humble before him. We prepare the way of the Lord when we do those things which are pleasing in his sight.

As I said to the other night, you know, we, we say, you know, I, I, I'm nothing against so-and-so. I think she's something against me, or he's something. Well if you have, listen, God alerted you.

She, he didn't alert her. You go and ask her what's wrong. See it's not difficult for you to go when you know there's something wrong.

But when you go up, I mean, in case you miss it, you know, wouldn't you look silly? But God says if you know that somebody has something against you, don't dare to pray. First be reconciled to your brother or sister. Put it right first, not afterwards.

We sabotage much of our own praying. We sabotage our prayers with secret grudges, with unbelief, with coldness. When we're trying to get God to work for us, I've told you so many times, and it comes back to me so often, that when I ask God to bless me, I think I'm an infant.

I don't care if you sweat doing it. I don't care if you pray it in 50 languages. If you just pray and say, Lord bless me, bless me, bless me.

I think you're still a junior. But if you forget all about that and you say, Lord make me a blessing. Listen, you'll get ten times more blessing when he makes you a blessing, than if he handed it down on a tray and just filled you up with something that you call blessing, or happiness, or joy, or something else.

The true way of being blessed is to be made a blessing to somebody else. All right, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. So you got the, did you get that now? Let's tie it up.

You beloved building, verse 20, building, same verse, praying, 21, keeping, and then looking. Building is edification, prayer is devotion, keeping yourself in the love is affection, and looking is expectation. You

know this silly thought came to me, is it silly today? If you knew you're going to die five minutes from now, would you have anything to put straight? How do you know you're not going to die five minutes from now? We all live as though God's going to serve notice.

You're not going to die for 12 hours, you're not going to die for three weeks. I have an idea most people don't get noticed like that. Well isn't that really the art of living? They said to John Wesley after Methodism had been rolling a while, they said, you know Mr. Wesley, your people die well.

Well if you live well, you'll die well. Huh? Well I'm just depending on the mercy of God, I mean I, you know, I'm not what I ought to be, I'm depending on the mercy of God. Hey, wait a minute, you mean your back's slidding tonight, this afternoon, or your bitterness in your heart, or your strife in your heart, or your envy in your heart, or your unforgiving spirit, what if you die a minute from now? Does the grave purify us? There's no sanctification in the sepulcher.

But you see if I keep myself in the love of God, it's like a certain man that David spoke to the other week and he rebuked him, he said you, you go on big shows and you, you sing, I, I love to sing the old rugged cross. A month ago you dedicated a, a race course, a new race course, did you dedicate a new race course? And he said yes. Why in the world do you do a thing like that? That's as ungodly and wicked as can be.

You dedicate a race course and the next night you sing up in a convention, I love the old rugged. Do you know what the man said? Brother David, you're the first to talk to me about it. Well I think I'm harsh if you like, but I immediately said, you know that man isn't saved because the spirit would have talked to him.

If you read the word that the spirit will talk to you, the spirit will stop you, the spirit will prompt you. And again whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Oh that's something.

Keep yourself in the love of God, yeah, yeah, yeah. You keep yourself in the love of God by living up to all the light he gives you. And you know when he loves us? And I mean this and I said it to the preachers the other day, look I'll tell you when he loves us.

When you can go to him and say, Lord put a burden on me, you can't put on anybody else in Sugeen or anybody else where I live. Hmm? Do you telephone your secrets all around town? They might get around if you tell the wrong woman or the wrong man, but you don't broadcast them. You go to somebody and say, look you're one person I can talk to.

Hmm? Again you wouldn't tell a child a secret. Maybe like the little boy that ran into his daddy. I remember this happening in England and their pet dog had died during the day and this Salvation Army officer came and he took his big hat off and put it on the couch and little boy came up and said, Daddy we're not going to tell you till after dinner that the dog got killed this afternoon.

That's about the way it goes isn't it? We're not going to tell it till after dinner that the dog got killed. Now God whispers his secret. I'm not sure if it wasn't Hudson Taylor that used to say, let's live within whispering distance of God.

I wonder if God turns around some days and says, well I was trying to get a message through in Sugeen there but there's nobody listening to that. They were all so busy doing this, that and the other. The secrets of the Lord.

I've had people come to me many times and say, look and I love it for this. They've given me secrets that were tragic in their lives and said I'm coming to you. I say, why do you come to me? You've passed a hundred preachers homes coming up.

Why do you come to me? Because I believe you can keep a secret. I said, look I'll keep it there. It's my hand.

I'll keep it and if it's exposed it will be at the judgment. Won't come through my lips. I'll keep it.

You know I want God to talk to us like that. The secret of the Lord with them that fear him, them that love him. Build yourself up in your most holy faith.

Build yourself up by praying. Build yourself up by reading the word. Build yourself up by keeping short accounts with God.

Build yourself up by having the love of God. Shed abroad in the heart as Paul says in Romans 5. Shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. Keeping ourselves from idols.

Keeping ourselves in the love of God. Cleansing ourselves if we do get defiled. Doing as the word of God says and it puts responsibility on us as believers too.

We decide the part we have to play. A provision is all made. Let's see that we do the appropriating.

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