

Much Fishing but Where Is the Catch

by Leonard Ravenhill

Jesus' provision and compassion are essential for his disciples to succeed in their mission and to experience true fulfillment and joy.

Duration: 1:05:38

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 21:1-18

Topics: "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experiences of holding street meetings and ministering to those in need. He emphasizes that true joy and fulfillment come from serving and rescuing the perishing, rather than seeking entertainment or worldly recognition. The speaker also highlights the importance of spending time in solitude and unlearning worldly knowledge in order to truly know God. He references various biblical passages, including John chapter 21, where Jesus appears to his disciples after his resurrection and asks Peter if he loves him. The sermon concludes with a reminder that zeal is not the same as anointing, and that true strength comes from relying on God's power rather than our own.

Transcript

Okay, let's look at the Gospel recorded by John. Remind you again, there are not four Gospels. There's only one Gospel told by four different people.

If there were four Gospels, we'd need four Calvaries and four Resurrections. John, chapter 21, verse 1, I'm reading it, as I tell you so often, I'm reading from the Living Bible, the King James Version. After these things, Jesus showed himself to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias.

On this rise he showed himself. There were together Simon Peter, Thomas Caldidimus, and Nathanael of Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee. They're not mentioned there now, just the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

That means seven. One of the great classic pictures of all time is a picture by Raphael, the Miraculous Draft of Fishes. It's in a, it's where? It's in, it's in Spain, in a cathedral.

They can keep it, I don't want it. But it's a wonderful picture. All the world came to see it.

Its colors were so vast, so gorgeous. Every detail is so beautiful, until one day an Englishman by the name of Ruskin went to see it. And when he saw it, he laughed, and they thought, you know, he was crazy.

What's wrong with the picture? He said, I'm trying to find out what's right with it. Well, number one, where was the Miraculous Draft of Fishes? On the Sea of Galilee. The Romans changed the name, you remember, to Sea of Tiberias, because they had a, a, a Caesar Tiberius.

He was on the Sea of Galilee. Well, he said, what's the Dome of St. Peter's doing in the back? The artist had put the Dome of St. Peter's in Rome at the back of the picture, at the painting. Then he said, secondly, how many men were in the boat at the time? Seven.

He's got eleven in the boat. Who's the man leaning over the boat with a lace collar and lace cuffs? Oh, that's Peter. Now, if you, if you've never fished with a lace collar and lace cuffs, you've never fished in your life.

So you'd better get lace and cuffs. You see, that's the idea of saints. When you get dressed up, you're living in a certain place, you're hiding in a monastery.

You do lots of disciplinary things to try and work out or prove your salvation. Okay, let's go to verse three. You've got all these men now, seven of them.

Simon Peter said unto them, notice, I go fishing. He didn't say, will you go fishing with me? He said, I go fishing. They said unto him, we also will go with thee.

And they went forth and entered into the ship. And that night, who fishes at night? In these days, commercial fishermen do, but in those days they didn't. But you notice, when you want to run away, there's always something handy, a donkey you can jump on or a ship.

There was a ship there and immediately they got in the ship and went off in the dark. And that night they caught nothing. Maybe you remember in the fifth chapter, there's a likely, a story very much like this.

Another miraculous draught of fishes, but there's a difference. In the story in the fifth chapter, Jesus is in the boat. In this one, he's outside on the shore.

An old hymn says, by faith let me wrestle, and he will perform. With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm. But that's the secret, with Christ in the vessel, Christ the center of the personality.

But here he isn't there, he's away on the coast. They've been out all night. Do you know what I think about that night? I think it was the longest night they ever lived, the coldest night they ever lived, the loneliest night they ever lived, the darkest night they ever lived, the roughest night they ever lived.

Why? Because Jesus wasn't there. They thought they could manage it. Do you know what this is? This is that part of that miraculous period where Jesus had risen from the dead and he has 40 days with them.

He doesn't stay with them very long, he goes in and out. That's right, it says here, after these things, after what things? Well, if you go into the first chapter, in 20th chapter, it says, the first day of the week he cometh, then cometh Mary Magdalene and others. But notice what it says here.

Verse 14 in chapter 2 says, this is now the third time that Jesus showed himself. No, it isn't, it's more than that. No, no, wait a minute, there's a caution light here.

It's the third time that Jesus shows himself to his disciples. He showed himself to others before that, but this is the third time he comes to the disciples. Well, they went forth, we said in verse three, and that night

they caught nothing.

The coldest, darkest, loneliest, longest night they'd ever lived. They'd seen his wonderful works right after the resurrection. And from the resurrection up to the, from the resurrection to the ascension, there are 40 days.

40 is always a time of testing in the scriptures. The book of Matthew is the 40th book in the Bible, because the Jews and the world at that time was tested by Jesus Christ in their midst. What did they do with him? 40 days.

You see, that's not very long on vacation. I'll tell you what, it's a long time in hospital when you've cast on, you think it's 40 years. It's a long time when you're unemployed.

It's a long time when there's a serious sit, 40, 40, 40. You know, most of us, we can't be very nice people, we don't even like our own company. What do you do if you're left alone? You get on the phone and talk to somebody, or run around the corner to Mary Smith or somebody else.

It's torture to live by yourself, isn't it? But not if the Lord's there. Here's a most brilliant man that ever lived almost, it says in the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles concerning Moses, he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was mighty in word.

No, no, he stammered. He was a statesman before ever he touched the Ten Commandments. He's learned in the courts, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.

I believe in your astrology, maybe he spoke ten languages. He'd been raised as a royal child, then God takes him and sticks him on the backside of the desert for 40 months. No, that's the wrong version.

The right version is 40 years, a third of his life. Mercy. Would you like to go for the royal banquet? Boy, you've got your gorgeous clothes on, and your jewels, and everybody bows down when you come down the street, and then the sheep go past and say, nay, you know.

Can't recognize him. Who is this guy around here, this stranger? 40 years on the backside of the desert? What was he doing, learning? No, unlearning. He knew too much.

Most of our pulpits are loaded with guys that know too much, but they don't know God in the way they should. 40 days, 40 years on the backside. Jesus is the Son of God.

40 what? Days where? In the wilderness. John Baptist, a whole slice of his life on the backside of the desert. We had a young man came, I think he drove eight hours last week to come to this prayer meeting.

Going out, he says, it's had an impact on my life. He wrote me a beautiful letter this week, and he said, I'm going to get a lawnmower. I'm going to read the whole armor of God.

I'm going to get that little book written in what, 1519 by Isaac Ambrose, uh, looking unto Jesus. Three words. He wrote 700 pages on those three words.

I'm going to get a lawn. You see, the trouble with people going to school, Bible school, they get to know their Bibles. That's not the point.

Do they know God? Do you know God? You can quote scriptures till they run out of your ears almost, but when you come to a situation, they don't help so much. It's knowing his presence. It's knowing his power.

It's knowing his peace. These treasures that money cannot buy, and they're not thrown to us like that. God is making you.

I'll come to that in a minute. Jesus said unto his disciples, now verse four, when the morning was now come, after that terrible night, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said unto them, children, maybe there's a mark in your Bible there that is in mind.

There's a one there, and in the margin at the side, it says, he said unto them, sirs. He didn't use the term of endearment. He usually used little children.

He said, sirs. In other words, he's talking, challenging them like men. Jesus said unto them, sirs, have ye any meat? And they answered him, no.

And he said unto them, cast on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast there for now, and they were not able to join for the multitude of the fishes. Now, when you get the story earlier in the chapter, chapter five, what happens? You have more men in the boat.

What happens? Jesus says, cast your net on the right side of the ship. Is there a right side and a wrong side? Yes, there is. Because in those days, they didn't fish over the side, they fished at the back.

They put a drag net, like they still do in European countries. They put the net behind and dragged it through the waters. And Jesus says, cast your net on the right side of the ship.

These are expert fishermen and he's a, what is he? He's a man who works with a hammer. What does he know about fishing? In the first story, in the fifth chapter, as you read it, it's amazing there. He said to Peter, I will make you a fisher, a fisher of men.

Now he's telling them how to fish for fish. But that's not the humiliation. There's a jubilation there.

They cast on, as he told them, and they were not able to draw for a multitude of fishes. Therefore, that disciple whom Jesus loves said unto Peter, it is the Lord. Isn't it amazing? You see, he was the first to recognize Jesus.

What a difference when you see Jesus. Peter was the first to recognize him. That John was the first to act, and Peter was the first to act.

John was the first to see, because love can see. There's a hymn, it isn't in our book, I wish it was, written by, I know it's written by, I've forgotten now. Let me quote part of it to you.

Loved with everlasting love, led, led, led by grace, led by grace, led by grace, that love to know. Spirit breathing from above, thou hast taught me, it is so. All this full and perfect peace, all this transport, all divine, in a love which cannot cease, I am his and he is mine.

Heaven above is softer blue, earth around is sweeter green, something lives in every hue, Christless eyes have never seen. Birds with gladder songs o'erflow, flowers with deeper beauty shine, in a love which cannot be, I am his and he is mine. Something lives in every hue.

Once your eyes get anointed, you'll see what no philosopher can see. You can argue with them, you can educate them, you can teach them to twist the Greek and the Hebrew, but once God touches your eyes. Twenty-odd, five years ago, nearly, we worked when Tea and Challenge wasn't known hardly.

My dear boys, my dear wife and I worked in New York with Dave Wilkerson and the rest. I loved to go over the Brooklyn Bridge, I didn't like it, but anyhow I went. And it comes into Canal Street, there's a sign on a wall there.

The building was crumbly, old bricks were worn with age. Then they covered it to make it look nice, it says on Water Street. There's a book, if ever you see it, buy it.

And if you don't want it, give it to me. I had it in England, you can't find it now. The Water Street Mission, there's a man called Sam Hadley went in there one day.

He saw this bunch of derelict men and prostitutes. He was one of the worst criminals in New York. He had actually defrauded one company a hundred and twenty-five times they had bills against him.

A hundred and twenty-five times, he did every conceivable evil. And one night he got marvelously saved, came into a real living relationship with the Lord. And he said, I went out and I looked up into the sky.

Do you know, he hardly knew there were such things as stars. And he said, when I looked up and I saw the stars, I thought those were the eyes of Jesus looking down for me. And you know that man got such a marvelous revelation of God's mercy.

He said, I never knew about God, I never saw the stars, but once I saw the stars, I thought about the one who put them there. And his whole world was illuminated. He became one of the greatest soul winners in the history of New York.

When he was buried, they stopped the traffic. People coming in town said, are you burying the mayor of the town? Is this your senator that's dead? No, he's a broken down, drunken old tramp that got redeemed. And then he went to everybody else.

What did Wesley say? Wesley said, the grace that found out me, all that the world might taste and see, the riches of his grace, the arms of love that compassed me, would all mankind embrace. You see, if you don't get some passionate love in your soul for the Lord, you better check up and see if you are saved. If you don't discover you've passed from things that used to be dead to you and now alive, things that were alive and attractive are now dead.

Okay, verse 7 says in 21st John, the disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, it is the Lord. Now when Simon heard that it was the Lord, he got his fisher's coat about him, for he was naked. Oh, the Greek actually says he was without his outer garment, he wasn't stark naked.

You remember Jesus said, if a man takes your cloak, give him your coat also. But anyhow, when this, these men heard Peter say, I go fishing, they went. Did you notice? When he got his garment and jumped overboard, they didn't all jump overboard with him anyhow.

You know, some people go so far with you and no further. When the other disciples came in a little ship, now here's the, here's the humiliation. There are other little ships all around and they see these two expert fishermen, the rest of them fishing and putting the net over the right side of the ship.

That's a contradiction of fishing. It should be behind. But you don't mind being ridiculed.

If you've got your eyes on the Lord, if you're doing the task he gave you to do, where's the humiliation? And the other disciples came to the ship. They were not far from the land. As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals thereon.

Jesus said unto them, bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Jump down to verse 12. Jesus said unto them, come and dine.

You know, that's the greatest breakfast in the world. Come and dine. What does it say? Verse 9 says, as soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there and fish laid thereon.

And then Jesus says, come and dine. Wait a minute. Why doesn't he preach to Peter before he eats? Because Peter's exhausted.

He struggled to the land. He's cold, he's wet. And Jesus looks and says, Peter, come.

Come and dine. You won't remember this. I don't know if you're good for it.

Do you remember a chorus, come and dine the master caller? Isn't it a pity these folks are young, they don't know all the wise things that we know? The old, old hymn we used to sing 50, 60, 70 years ago, I sang it. Jesus has a table spread where the saints of God are fed. He invites his chosen people, come and dine.

There they met their heart's desire, bread and fish upon the fire. To the hungry now he calleth, come and dine. And the chorus says, come and dine the master caller, come and dine.

You may feast at Jesus' table all the time. He who fed the multitude. There's an old lady there quoting it with me.

It's Sonny's wife. So I know how old she is now. That's a lovely chorus.

Come and dine the master caller, come and dine. You may feast at Jesus' table all the time. He who fed the multitude turned the water into wine.

To the hungry calleth now. Do you think they weren't hungry all night? Cold, the wind beating on them, the waves washing up. They no special lovely garments.

And they were tired, toil-worn, the longest night, the loneliest night, the coldest night, the fiercest night. And Jesus prepares breakfast. Do you imagine they stared at it? Do you know that's one of the miracles? Brother Bracey, I had to come tonight to hear this.

Where did he get the stuff, Brother Bracey? Where did he get the stuff to make the breakfast? Good, thank you. That's what I thought. So I know you're wise now.

Do you know what? You can never do the wrong, right thing. You can't do the wrong thing at the right time. You can do the right thing at the wrong time.

Remember Jesus one day, Satan says, look, if you're the son of God, take that rock there and change it into bread. And boy, you'll fascinate them. He didn't do it.

And Satan says, if you'll do it, I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world. It didn't mean real estate because he knew the Lord owns the earth. He meant he'd give him the kingdoms of the world, the intellectual kingdom, the Greeks, the military kingdom, the Romans, the religious kingdom, the Jews.

Boy, all heaven is looking and all hell. And Jesus takes a rock and puts it there and says, become bread. And it did.

And he says to the devil, I'll do it when I want, not when you want. Then going past, he says to a fish, come here. And the fish stood on its tail.

Sure it did. Had no feet. Well, if Jesus says, look, you go to the water.

Boy, I wish he'd do it for me. He says, you catch that fish. It's got your income tax money in its mouth.

If you know any fish in your pond like that, Brother Dale, we'll go back. Can you imagine what a meal this was? Those sacred hands that had nail prints in them. It shows his compassion, doesn't it? Verse 9, look at verse 9. As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals and the fish laid there on.

Then in verse 12, Jesus said, come and dine. First he has a provision and then he has a compassion. You see, it's no good you go into the mission field just because you've learned a few scriptures.

There are some things you must have if you're going to be a successful missionary. Come to that in a minute. Jesus said, come and dine, verse 12.

None of his disciples dared ask him, who art thou? Knowing it was the Lord. Something you said the other day, Brother Bracey, too. You know, there are times when the Spirit of God talks to you and there's a thing you can't do.

As the dear Quakers used to talk about having an authentic stop in the Spirit. You see the Apostle Paul, where are you going? He said, I'm going to Bithynia. It's a wicked hell on earth.

I'm going to Bithynia. And instead of going to Bithynia, he ends up in Macedonia. Why? Because God called him to Macedonia.

Good thing he hadn't sent a newsletter out saying where he was going. And he goes to Macedonia. Why? There are times when the Lord says, no, and you can't explain why.

The Spirit just answers. Wesley's favorite verse in Romans 8, that sermon he preached most to tens of thousands of people, if not hundreds of thousands, that we have the witness of the Spirit. We used to sing a little hymn in England in the Methodist hymn book.

Then on each he setteth his own secret sign. They that have my Spirit, these saith he, are mine. The Spirit bears witness.

The Lord says you can't do it and you stop. And everybody's amazed. Or you sit on this course and the Lord says, no, you go that way.

Your daddy's disappointed. He expected you'd be a doctor or be something else. But think of the mercy that you were not a doctor.

He didn't kill anybody. But anyhow, you go to the mission field or somewhere else because he turned your feet out of the way. Verse 13, Jesus cometh and taketh bread and giveth them and the fish likewise.

This is the third time that Jesus showed himself to disciples when he rose from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus says to Peter, lovest thou me? After he'd dined. Why didn't he start lecturing him before? Because Peter's exhausted.

You know there are times when we try to do things in our own strength. Zealous as we are, don't mistake zeal for anointing. Just like prayer meeting sometime last week was almost disgusting because it's so noisy.

Noise is not power. I don't mind folks shouting when they pray, but let the other fellow finish. Don't everybody praying? It's a bedlam.

We want to hear what people are praying. Okay, Jesus says to Simon, lovest thou me? You see, the first thing, why do we get our wires crossed so much, God help us? You go into the mission field. Let me ask you a question.

Do you love souls? That's not the first question. Jesus didn't say, will you die for me? He says, do you love me? Tell me once, tell me twice, tell me three times. I love you Lord, I love you.

If you love me, feed my lambs. If you love me, feed my sheep. If you love me, feed my my lambs again.

The first thing he requires of you is not brilliance, organizing ability, a brilliant mind so you can translate the scripture. You may have all those and expire. I remember years ago in going to a fabulous mansion in England.

It was a Saturday afternoon conference. There was a man I wanted to meet. I read, there's a life story written about him.

And I preached on prayer. If I remember right, I preached on Elijah. As we went down the long hall in that gorgeous, fabulous home, he put his arm around my shoulder and gave me a hug.

And he said, Len, I needed that today. He'd been living in one of the most dangerous mission, mission fields in the world. And he said, Len, I want to tell you, of all things I lost my devotional life in the middle of a battle for God.

Fighting heathenism, translating scripture, meeting witch doctors. And yet it got boring, it got tiring. Why? Because his personal love relationship with Jesus had gone down.

I talked with somebody this week who said that half the missionaries in the world should come back. I agree with that. Because they've lost vision.

Almost the last night I was in New Zealand, I made many trips there. The last one, some people came forward. I went to a room to pray and a lady, very beautifully dressed, came in.

I said, yes, I'll help you, but let me get a lady. So I got another lady to come in. This lady got down, she hardly got her knees to the ground, she started sobbing and groaning.

I don't want to go, Brother Raymond, I don't want to go. I said, go where? Go home? No, I leave New Zealand tomorrow for the mission field. I don't want to go.

Where are you going? She told me where she was going. I said, no, it's a very backward country. It's a dirty country, it's a dangerous country.

The food is bad, the climate's bad, the people are bad. I don't want to go. No, no, no, she said, Mr. Raymond, it's not that at all, not one of those things.

The reason I don't want to go to the mission field is there's so much contention there, so much bitterness, so much envy, so much strife among the ministries, there's so much carnality. I don't want to go. I tell you again, as God's my witness, the American missionaries have not taken the gospel to countries, they've taken the American gospel.

The British have taken the British gospel. We haven't taken the word of God. How can we take what we don't have? I don't judge anymore.

I judged lots of folks a while ago. But when people say, somebody said recently, our church is giving half a million dollars a year to missions. That's no proof of anything, except you have an affluent church.

How many ministries has your church sent out in the last five years? Check it. If they haven't sent any, you're in a dead place. I don't care what the crowd is.

I don't care how smart your preacher is. The law of life is reproduction. I sent for a book this week, I don't know if you've read it, on the Presbyterian revival in 1905.

You know what? Once there's a fire, you can't tell how much it will spread. 1904 and five, the Welsh revival. Some of you have read the book.

If you haven't, buy it. Brother Jack will sell you a copy. It's called The Invasion of Wales.

It's about the best interpretation of the Welsh Revival. It's fabulous. The man God used was 26 years of age.

26! The whole nation at his feet. G. Campbell Morgan came from London. S.B. Meyer came from London.

William Booth came from London. What? To see a man who could handle the Greek and Hebrew and fascinate the crowd? Hypnotize them? No, sir. That man had been praying, he was 26, he had been praying 13 years for revival.

I had a guy call me about two weeks ago. Mr. Raymond, I hope it answers my question. I said, well, I'll try.

It sounded as though his mother or somebody had died. I said, I don't know if I can. He said, Mr. Raymond, we've prayed and we've fasted for revival and nothing's happened.

I said, well, brother, how long have you been praying and fasting? He said, two days. Typical American, isn't it? Put them in a slot, wind the handle, out it comes. Some of you women wish you could have your baby when you found you were pregnant.

Have your baby in a week, eh? You carry it for what, nine months? Whatever it is. You know, there's a price to pay. Presbyterian revival.

You could not become a member of the church unless you personally, through your testimony, had won another soul to Jesus Christ. Not prayed with them when they came to the altar, that doesn't count. Show me that you have life.

You've reproduced another Christian by the grace of God. And then when they found each, when each person had personally brought another soul into being, prayed them through, every church had to bring to birth another church. Do you wonder they spread through the nation like wildfire? You see, somebody in a Welsh revival went to the Cyclone Hills.

That may ring a bell with you. If it doesn't, that's the place where Praying Hyde used to pray. I met somebody one day who prayed with Praying Hyde.

Man, I want to get all of that fella and lick his face almost. You prayed with Praying Hyde? Yes. I went to pray with him at quarter to three in the afternoon at a conference.

No, no, he said, I'm speaking at quarter to three. I'll see you in the morning at quarter past nine. He said, I went in the room and he said, I waited 15 minutes for him to pray and he didn't pray.

So I thought, oh well, of course he's waiting for me. So he said, I waited and then he started to pray. Fellow thought, stay out there and you're not coming in here.

I'll never get to pray with this man again. No, I won't go to the door. Third time.

Somebody opened the door and said, Brother Hyde, it's a quarter of three or quarter till three, you say. Quarter till three and you're to preach at three o'clock. This man said, ridiculous.

It was quarter of nine when I read, till nine when I knelt down here. Quarters of nine to ten to eleven to twelve to one to two to three to four to three. Five hours, six hours.

It had gone like that, he said. The fire was started in Wales. A man on fire went to the Cyclod Hills, they had revival.

From there they went to China, they had revival. From there they went to Korea. The Chinese said, you can't go to Korea, they're so phlegmatic, they're not like us, us Chinese people.

They went to Korea and had a bigger revival than they had in China. Then they went back to China again. I've been reading a story this week, dear Lord, there's a book called, I don't know if you know it, Jack, what was it, Five Great Missionaries, Martha? Five Pioneer Missionaries.

One I'd never, I'd heard of him, I'd never read it, John Elliot. At the side of him there's a man who had revival. There's a block of granite as big as this wall in, in Dundee, Scotland.

I stood outside, it says here the pastor of this church was John, was praying, Robert, Robert Murray McShane, get mixed up. Robert Murray McShane, he died at about 28. He travelled in birth.

He went down to about a hundred pounds. He was skilled in Hebrew and Greek. The Lord said, go to Israel.

He went to Israel. When he got there, the Lord said, hold off. He had to stay.

He was sick. W.C. Burns is in that little book, we should get some of them. W.C. Burns followed Paul, plants of Paul's waters.

People say, how long have you been preaching? 66 years. How many people have you led to the Lord? I don't know, not the slightest idea. I've gone to churches where they said, this is the best revival.

Dr. Tozer said, Brother Rayner, this is the best revival in my church in 25 years. The orders were aligned, we stayed till midnight. That's happened in many places.

You know what? My precious wife is a gold medal nurse and she's a state registered midwife in England, I was, and she's brought to birth babies in the ambulance. Babies went right to running around the floor, all kinds. Boy, I'm glad she didn't bring them home.

I've gone to many places and seen travail of somebody else birthed. I delivered the baby. We went to a town and saw towns shaken from senators conference.

We had no money. We slept in the tent, ate in the tent. We stayed there eight weeks.

Last week, last year, I was invited to go back to that church and preach the 50th anniversary. Why? Because one morning when I was preaching, I was sure it was a deacon. You know how mischievous they are.

A voice behind me said, you're not the most spiritual man in this church. It was the biggest church, holiness church in England. We had more in our congregation, Sunday mornings, than any other church within 50 miles, 100 miles.

And the Lord said, you're not the most, I thought, just like a deacon. No, he wasn't a deacon. The little lady over there with a bonnet tied, ribbon under her chin.

You need to see that woman. Afterwards, I asked about her. A man said, you know the little man on the front seat, Furnable? Yes.

And that old lady, for 40 years there, fasted and prayed for revival in this town. And then new kids come along, he said. We just had a blue shirt and a nice tie.

And I was younger than I am now. That was 1932. So you can guess I was sure handsome.

That little lady's face would light up like an electric light in the prayer meetings. Lord, let your servant depart in peace. We've seen the salvation of God.

They prayed for weeks and months. They weren't concerned that anybody knew that they'd done it. She never once mentioned it in testimony meetings.

If she testified, she testified about maybe when Finney came to town, or that her grandfather was a circuit rider or somebody. But you see, you can't tell. I don't know who in the world dares say I've won so many souls.

I haven't. The average preachers don't pray, God help them. I told you this new definitive study of Jonathan Edwards I'm reading now.

I opened the book, sure I would, somebody knocked me flat. He prayed 13 hours every day. He prayed and studied the Bible.

It was common for men in those days. Spirituality was not their priority, it was their life. It was their whole life.

He's the man you may remember that said, Lord stamp eternity on my eyeballs. He couldn't see a congregation, he saw eternity. It was like that man that worked with Wesley for a while.

George Winfield says, when I see a congregation, I don't see the wall at the back, I see the flames of hell. They want to consume them. I have to pluck my pants from the burning.

Where do you have preachers like that anymore? 13 hours every day with the Word of God and prayer. His secret was he lived in eternity six days a week and came down one day a week to declare what he'd seen. Our preachers don't know a blessed thing about that.

I guarantee that the average preacher does not spend 13 hours a week, never mind a day. Do you know what I believe true Holy Ghost revival praying is, uh, preaching is? To use it in a, in a modern phrase, I believe true Holy Ghost preaching is really, uh, open heart surgery. Instead of a scalpel, it's this Word, the Word of God, quick and powerful, sharper than any scalpel ever made in history.

Dear God, when I was reading the other day about the famous Quaker, one of the greatest ever as far as I'm concerned, Stephen Grillet, a brilliant Frenchman, wealthy, everything else. When God met him, I mentioned last week, he was walking at the side of a forest when every leaf on every tree became a tongue and they began to chant eternity, eternity, eternity. And he fell to the ground like Saul of Tarsus.

And when he got up, he hadn't a thing of his own. From that day, he says, I'm a debtor to the whole world. And that precious man said this, when I saw my vileness in the light of eternity, I groaned, I cried.

For four or five days all night, I couldn't eat, I couldn't sleep. Is there grace enough to come to a vile, corrupt person like me? He wasn't outwardly a sinner, he was a scholar, a scholar, but a gentleman. But you see, we don't know a thing about conviction like that.

We want to sow the seed, we want to break up the fallow ground, sow the seed, and water the seed, and reap the harvest all in half an hour. It hasn't worked. You find this precious man.

Well, he had contact, let's put it, wanted to contact with Jesus. The first thing that's necessary, lovest thou me, for thou knowest I love thee. The second thing is, feed my sheep.

Don't feed yourself. As I said last week, Jesus didn't say to the rich young ruler, go sell all our harvest and give it to the church. Forget it.

God helped the preachers using all the money that's being used today. I don't know about you, I don't have to respond, be responsible for you. Every day now, I say, Lord, let me get nearer eternity today.

Not the better known, not my books sell better. I'm going to eternity, there's no option about it. There's no option.

We're going to eternity. There'll be no withholding information like we've seen during this week with these guys lying. There'll be no plea bargaining.

There'll be no judgment with hell. It's going to be open right to the very throne of God. The most awesome thing you could ever think about is surely the judgment seat.

First of all, I have to be sure I really love him. I'm not doing out of pity for the heathen. I'm not doing it because they need to be taught how to read, or how to build nice houses, or how to put sewers in their little villages.

First, I have to have a passionate love for Jesus. I think, brother, you're a salvationist? You're not? Oh, you gave me a thing tonight about the salvation. But I used to live in a town, the very town where that old lady lived.

And there's a big stone at the side of the entrance to a building, the largest salvation army meeting house in Great Britain. And on this stone, it says this, uh, I've forgotten the date. William Booth opened this citadel, they called it in military terms.

William Booth opened this citadel on a certain day. On the other one, it says here, the Jackson sisters had revival in this town. It's one of the biggest salvation army buildings in Great Britain.

It holds about 2,000. Those young women went there. They did everything they were taught to do in the salvation army training, you know, offered everybody that came along soup and soap and salvation.

If you came in, you get a bowl of soap. Soup, not soap. Going out, you got a bar of soap.

And if you're really fit for it, you got salvation. It says William Booth opened this citadel on a certain day. At this side, it says the Jackson sisters came here and saw this city shaken from center to circumference.

They tried everything. They tried feeding the poor. They tried giving them money.

They tried house visitations. They tried everything. It wouldn't work.

And they sent a telegram to William Booth in London and said, uh, please, sir, please transfer us to another corps, as they call their churches, a corps. Uh, we used to have a man call it a corpse, but anyhow, it's a corps, C-O-R-P-S. Please transfer us.

We've tried everything. Nothing works. We're tired.

We're exhausted. He sent them a telegram back, boys, like a Scotsman was sent, two words on it, try tears. And they did.

And the city was shaken. They poured their lives out in prayer, in intercession, two frail women. Don't care about your arguments, whether women should preach or not.

Look at Mary Fletcher of Calabar, a great book if you can find it. Look again at Amy Wilson Carmichael. Look at some of the greatest saints down the ages.

Jesus says to Peter three times, love us, love me. That's the first thing I have to know. Then secondly, am I going to feed his sheep? Not entertain them, feed them.

See them come from lambs to become sheep that can bear sheep. Oh, you say, our pastor's a great, our pastor's a great soul winner. Forget it.

I went to Australia where there are 70 million sheep. I talked with a man one day about sheep. I said, I want to ask you a question.

This is a lovely looking guy. I said, sir, have you been a shepherd? Yes, all my life. I said, well, tell me this, you've 70 million sheep, yes.

I said, how often does a, how often does the shepherd give birth to a sheep? He said, what? Where are you from? I said, America. Oh, that explains it, he said. Did you ever know a shepherd give birth to a lamb? The sheep give birth to the lambs.

When did you last give birth to one? I could go to a church if a man was anointed, illuminated, and he fed my soul and took me to eternity. I could go to a church for 10 years without anybody ever hitting the altar. So long as I heard people pray with passion in prayer meetings.

So long as I saw people serving as a shepherd does. After all, Jesus says to this man, and I got to be quick here. Jesus says to this man, what? Feed my sheep, feed my lambs.

Do you remember the first statement of Jesus there in Matthew was what? He talks to Peter and he says, I'm come to seek what? The lost sheep of the house of Israel. Sign two. The pastor is the under shepherd.

Christ is the chief shepherd. One day he's coming to divide the sheep from the goats. He isn't going to divide the Calvinists from the Arminians.

Maybe he will, but I don't think he is. And he's not coming to separate the pre-tribs from the mid-tribs. He's coming to divide the unholy from the holy.

That's what he's coming for. And here he is, he's coming to this man. This man was so vocal and volatile.

So Jesus, just wind it up here. Jesus, just emphasize this. Jesus said unto them, bring the fish which, no, it doesn't say bring the fish.

He said, bring the fish which you have now caught. Why had they caught it? Because they obeyed him. Bring it now, let me see it.

And they had a fish, they had a ship loaded, overloaded with fish. You see, this man, isn't it amazing that these men had seen the mighty works of Jesus? If you read the, where is it, in Luke, oh, Matthew 28. Don't read it now.

But this is the end of the 40 days, remember. And in Matthew 28, Jesus says to his disciples, go to Galilee and there I'll meet with you. It was in Galilee where they first, the first story, when the nets broke.

It was in Galilee that Jesus spoke to him and said, I'll make you a fisher of men. But in that 28th chapter, he had said to his disciples after his resurrection, go to Galilee and there I'll meet with you. Well, why are they only seven men here? Where are the other five? Where are they? There should be four.

Judas had gone, of course. Where were they? But notice when he found them, when they found him, he didn't upbraid them. He didn't beat them up with words.

He didn't say, I thought you'd be waiting for the Holy Ghost to come. They'd already received the Holy Ghost. He breathed on them.

They received the Holy Ghost before Pentecost. Then they received an endowment in the upper room that sent them out to lay their lives out. But these men, for some reason, I don't understand it, they'd slipped away to fish.

And what happened? Failure, failure, failure. He comes to them in an hour of failure. Why did they go? Let me just guess for one thing.

This is the 40 days in between, as I say, between the resurrection and the ascension. What had Jesus said? You see, they'd only seen him once or twice. They didn't see him every day.

Read the story, sees them in and out. He had said one day, he'd raise all the dead. As we sang that hymn tonight, it stirred me.

You know, people hear the voice of Jesus today. Preacher says, don't put it off till tomorrow. Forget it, you may go to hell.

What does God owe you, you should come a second time. If you get an invitation to go on Monday and have dinner at the White House, your wife says, oh I can't go, there's a sale at Penny's. Tell the president and his wife, we'll be there Wednesday night, about half past seven.

If you get a command, you go. You see, it's no fun preaching. We used to sing a hymn, tomorrow's sun may never shine, to bless thy long deluded sight.

This is the time, oh then be wise, thou wouldst be saved, why not tonight? Read in Hebrews, today he will hear your voice. Dear God, America's up for more judgment than Russia. Three men came in my office, all quoted the same thing, I'm reading Jeremiah, I said forget Jeremiah.

Why? It's the Laodiceum period. In Jeremiah's day, was there a church at every street corner? Was there six million Bibles? There was maybe one Bible in the whole nation. We today are drowning in knowledge, we're drowning in light, we're drowning in gospel tract, we're drowning in broadcast.

How many camps do you think there have been this summer for the youth, and thank God for them. How many conventions are there now, old-fashioned camp meetings, all over America, and yet we're accumulating truth. You see, you can increase your church, while a thousand people have not increased the kingdom by one.

You get the disgruntled from every other church. Thank God if you can do something. But you see, this is, this is an awful thing, to have ever had this Bible in my hand, every day I read it, I tremble more now than ever in my life.

Oh yes, I'm reading a book, it's changed my life, so what? I get down. If I get 10,000 telegrams tomorrow, it's still a lost world, it's a doomed world. And the last awful thing is this, we're not living in Jeremiah's day, we're living in the day of the Laodicean church.

A rich church, a prosperous church, nice people, well-dressed people, could quote the scriptures. You know what Jesus says about them? You're not the greatest church on earth, you're poor and wretched and naked and blind. Blind, she's lost sight of the judgment seat.

She's lost sight of a responsibility. She's lost sight of a lost world, they were so happy, clapping, having a good time, come on. At the end of the old Sabbath day, do you say I'm glad that hell has been rocked

today? I'm glad that we smote the devil? I wouldn't join a church, nobody wants me anyhow.

I wouldn't join a church that didn't have a night of prayer every week. I wouldn't join a church that didn't have a street meeting. I passed at the largest church in England for three years, in my early 20s, and that was in 1930.

You know why it throbbed? You know why people stood in the line outside to get a seat like a movie house? Because we had seven prayer meetings. It wasn't my preaching, seven prayer meetings. We had four or five street meetings in the center of the city, and we found a place every week, till everybody in town knew Ravenhill, thought I was nuts of course, that's okay.

But we rescued the perishing and care for the dying. You don't need entertainment and concerts when you have that. When you have the joy of the Lord, you don't need entertainment.

Entertainment is a sign of being back slim and weak and helpless. Sure I'd like to have a dozen people and train them like Jesus did. I'm not sure they'd stay too long.

Anyhow, the Lord has mercy on this fellow. He wanted to be like Jesus. Let me look at the 18th verse.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, when thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth. What do you do with your hands? You do it this way.

You either stretch them that way or this way. Jesus said, you want to be like me? Stretch forth your hands. So they nailed him to a cross, but crucified him upside down.

I'm not sure history says that, tradition says that. When they wanted to crucify him, no I'm not worthy to be crucified like my master. Crucify me upside down.

Now look what the Lord says to him. Verse 19 says, He spake this signifying by what death he should die, and glorify God. And when he had spoken, he said unto him, follow me.

Do you get that? He didn't say, come with me. He didn't say, come with me. He said, follow me.

So the first requirement is this. If you're going to really know him, you must love him supremely, and only him. Wesley's favorite hymn, I believe, was written by a lady, a petite little French lady, a hundred years before he was born.

It begins like this. Come save your Jesus from above. Assist me with thy heavenly grace.

Empty my heart of earthly love. That's where it begins. My love for sport.

My love for this. My love for that. Get, get it to the cross.

Empty my heart of earthly love, and for thyself prepare a place. This is where it comes tight. Nothing, in the face of God you say, nothing on earth do I desire, but thy pure love within my breast.

This, only this will I require, and freely give up all the rest. Wealth, honor, pleasure, and what else this short enduring world can give. Tempt as ye will, my soul rebels, for Christ alone is all to live.

Thee will I love, and thee alone, with pure delight and inward bliss. The very thing that Madame Guillen had said. And this is the thing that's demanded.

First of all, I need a passionate, a total love for the Lord Jesus Christ. The second thing, I have a desire to feed the sheep, feed the lambs, whatever he gives me to do. And the third thing, I have to follow him.

Now look, what a, what a switch. I'm reading out from the end of verse 19. When he had spoken this, he said unto him, follow me.

There's Jesus, and Jesus says, follow me. What did Peter do? Well, look at the next two words. Peter turning round about, seeth a disciple immediately.

He said, Lord, you know I love you. You know, Lord, there's nothing I'd withhold. You know that you consume me.

And he hasn't got the, the words haven't died on his lip when he turns, and he's looking at another man that's going somewhere. And he says, what shall this man do? Verse 21, Peter said unto him, Lord, what shall this man do? What did Jesus say to him? Jesus said unto him, if I tally, will that he tally, so I come, what is that to thee? But do you see what it is? In the excitement, in the joy, he says, Lord, you know I love you. I'll feed your lambs.

I'll feed your sheep. I don't care what it costs me. Jesus says, okay, if you've got there, first of all, you have an assurance I called you, a commission which he had.

And then he says, you're going to feed my lambs? Follow me. And immediately he turns and he says, what shall this man do? What's that got to do with anybody? God's making you, not that man. We get our eyes on an ideal preacher, an ideal self, forget it.

Before long we become idolaters without knowing it. I think we should have our heroes. I don't think there's anything wrong in that, but it's wrong to have idols.

You know, you can't for a moment judge people, neither can I. You heard people say that silly thing? Of course you have, you've said it yourself, you silly thing. What's the silly thing? The silly thing says, oh, it's easy to judge. That's the hardest thing in the world.

It's easy to misjudge. How can you judge? You don't have all the evidence. You don't have all the wisdom.

There's a stack of information you don't have. What is that to thee? Jesus says, follow me, and immediately he turned. And he seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, and who laid his head on his breast at the supper.

What shall this man do? Mind your own business, Jesus says. What did Jesus say unto him? Jesus says unto him, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. You see, it's not your business what that man is doing.

Unless he's doing something wrong, you can counsel him, and guide him, and help him. What is that to thee? God's making you. He's giving you the privilege of fasting and praying.

That man may never shed a tear from here to eternity. I get you fast while he's feasting. You're getting away alone with God, while they're having a party at churches somewhere.

What is that to thee? In essence, Jesus says, mind your own business. It's a hundred percent job for all of us to walk in the light that God gives. You get misunderstood.

You get criticized. Well as I've said to you before, why in the world do you expect better treatment from this lousy world than he got? Why do you expect a pat on the back of something else? Jesus wasn't received well by anybody. Spotless son of God.

Poorest man. Never had a roof over his head. Never had a penny in his pocket.

He had to borrow one one day. He said, lend me a penny. And then he used it, uh, used it as a superscription.

Render to Caesar the things of the Caesars. And yet the wealthiest man that ever lived. And after him, that blessed apostle Paul, he says, I have nothing, but I possess all things.

Now the church has all things and possesses nothing. Do you think demon forces are afraid of us? Huh? Either individually or collectively? Follow me. No, we follow church doctrine.

We follow somebody's ideas of being a missionary. I don't know what you do about this town. I'd be happy to slip to heaven right away.

But I want to see God move in Tyler. I want to see young people that won't play games, even in church, are out of it saying, we must pray. We must pray.

We must pray. Just the other day, a fellow called me. Boy, was I thrilled.

He told me the young people in his church are meeting without anybody supervising them. They're meeting for prayer. Another man said, in our church, there are 20 people meet at five o'clock every morning in the year, praying for revival in this city.

And all over the country, there are people are waking. And that stirs me. As a matter of fact, a week tonight, I don't know how many are coming.

They called me yesterday. There's a little place called Little Texas, but it's not in Texas. It's in Alabama.

These people are getting up at midnight, Thursday night, and driving to the prayer meeting. Want to come to a prayer meeting? Somebody from our church was there a couple of weeks ago, and they got so blessed. They're going to drive nearly 12 hours to come to a prayer meeting.

Why in God's name do they have to? I'm glad they come. They'll pass a hundred churches, locked and bolted. For what reason? You don't find taverns locked and bolted every day in the week.

You don't find a tavern that says, oh, we only open Sunday morning, 11 to 12, and Sunday night, 6 to 7, and Wednesday night, because, you see, the deacons will be so tired, and it costs so much to buy gas. Forget it. Boy, they go hell for leather.

When you go to sleep at night, as I've said to you, sleep as little as you can, eat as little as you can, within reason. Pray and seek God's face as much as you can. I try to do that.

I don't want anybody pointing to me at judgment, and saying, if you'd really cared down in Tyler. You know, I've been teenagers, saying to me, Ravel, I saw you on the street. I'd be on the street every day if I

had the energy.

I mean, it's, I guess I've spent as many hours in my life on the streets of England, Scotland, being hauled to jail for stopping the traffic with crowds, being belted with rotten eggs and rotten fruit. I had a new tie on one day, and a new shirt. I'd just got over the box, and a guy threw a tomato this size.

Boy, it burst like a bomb all over the place. I said, brother, I'm having a fruit full time, but I don't enjoy it. I said, I don't like it.

I said, but you're a good shot that you can do that. Then they started throwing rotten plum. You know what happened? We stayed there till nearly midnight, and when we, before we went, we made an altar call.

We took our coats off and laid them in the rotten fruit, and a whole bunch of men repented, sought God while other people were standing outside. That happened night after night. Where did Jesus go? I can't get him any churches.

They don't want me in. What's true, I don't want them to tell me the truth. I'm sick of talking to, casting my pearls, you know where.

Let me go to the streets where people don't hear the gospel. They want to hear, but they don't hear it. If I had the energy, I'd tell you, I'd be out there at least twice a week.

So if you pray, maybe I'll get my energy back and my voice. I'd be love to go. If I do, you'll find Bracey and I there.

I'm booking him now. That's a great thing. These precious fellows are going up to, where are they going up to? Oklahoma in what, two weeks? Two weeks time they're going.

Are you going up there, Sonny, too? Huh? Forget about probably. Say, yes, I'm going to have my vacation up there. But they're going to face the enemy in a territory where 24 hours a day is given over to seduction and fornication and drinking and lying and witchcraft.

Two and a quarter American Indians and nobody's reaching them in God's name. I'm not excited about crusades except like that. I'm glad Dave Wilkerson and the gang have gone to New York.

I remember the times we went up there into areas. Prostitutes would come and put their arms in you while you were standing there. Offered to take you to the homes, all the rest of it.

The cops even said we wouldn't stand here. We come in twos in the daytime and threes at nighttime. Well, where did Jesus go? He went to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

They were buying and selling, eating and drinking. And then he went and interrupted their program. But listen, you better have a holy anointing or you'll get sick.

You'll get sick of the people. You think they're waiting for you to tell them about Jesus? You're going to upset their lifestyle? They're handing everything over, not their rotten dirty lives. They have to hand over their personalities and be God-controlled instead of self-controlled and sin-controlled.

Follow thou me. That's our great commission. We're going to pray.

I'm going to ask you tonight. Let's really have some target praying. Now last week it got noisy and I don't believe it was of the spirit at all.

You say, well it was of the devil. No, it was of the flesh. It was human energy, like shouting at a football match.

I don't mind you praying loud, but let's hear what a fellow says, wait till he finishes praying, then you pray. You don't have to pray loud. God isn't deaf.

Of course he's not nervous either, so if you shout you won't upset him. But this is urgent business. If there's a bigger job in the world, I'd go for it.

The biggest honor in the world is to have a message from the Living Christ and to live for nothing else. I want to see some young groups in the Tyler area where they're meeting for prayer, for intercession. I mean really praying, seeking the face of God, not just watching the clock.

I want you to pray tonight for a real anointing for these precious Indian fellows that are going up there, and for wherever I need. Any teams of yours going out Sunday? Oh yes, Pacific Guard, there's a place to spend a vacation. You'll see the biggest derelicts in America there.

A glorious place. Oh this Sunday. Oh yes, well I mentioned it, Dave Wilkinson's crusade too.

Let's pray for them. And pray for Bracey. You're going away for how long? Just a week.

Sunday through Wednesday. Jacob is leaving tomorrow for what, about a two week? Corpus Christi. Let's remember them.

You know we can have an investment in them. I hope you pray at home. I hope you don't just pray here to be heard.

Pray at home. Pray your long prayers at home and your short ones here. I want you to come really charged up next Thursday night.

I want God to get, Sunday, Wednesday night, uh pardon me, Friday night. These people driving for 12 hours to this prayer meeting. I want God to touch them all.

I want them to go back with a new vision, a new passion like that young man did last week. His life was transformed he said. That's our business.

Others can get the crowds. That's great. I don't worry.

I preach the crowds in my time. But my heart aches for these people on the streets. They've no sense of eternity.

Dear God, most people impugn of no sense of eternity. I have a slogan on my desk, side of my desk, Lord keep me eternity conscious. Make it.

Stick it on your mirror where you always look to see your pretty self. Lord make, keep me eternity conscious. We're all bound for eternity.

There's no option about it. We have a date. You have a date at the judgment seat.

It's your day in court. It's the bottom line and everything in your life, every thought you've ever thought, every act is going to be revealed. If it's not under the blood, it's an awesome thing.

Dear Lord, I hope when God opens the book, when he says to Gabriel, open the book on prayer, open it to 1734, what do you see? Oh, he says, well King Jesus, I'm just reading the record of a young man that died at 29, about what 1734. His name is David Braynard. He weighed about 95 pounds when he died.

He sweat, he prayed, he wept, he prayed in the snow, he prayed for the Indians and he goes for his reward. Do you think thousands of Indians will yell their hallelujahs louder than ever held a yell in a war? To see this little frail man and he receives a crown from Jesus and I get on the box after him? No, thank you. Put the big preacher in town on the box after him.

When you bring the bottle that stores up the tears of those who cried, as Psalmist says, store my tears in my bottle. How many preachers will, will, how many tears will be shaken out of the bottle of preachers in our community or any other community that weep for the lost, that groan for the lost? It's got to come back. I want you to pray with real earnestness tonight.

Don't pray long, please, somebody else wants to pray after you. Get up and pray what your burden is. If it's for the mission field, pray for the field.

If it's for the Indians, pray for the Indians. If it's for Dave and the crowd on Sunday up in New York, pray for them. If it's for Jacob going on his own or somebody else, pray for them.

Remember, we can't overburden God. The last thing this young man said in the letter to me this week, he said, I came back and shared some of the things you shared with me about eternity and burden, and some of the deacons or somebody in the church said, listen, you're only a young man, you're 24, athletic, fine, educated, you're going to make yourself into an old man. You're talking like an old man now.

I'm going to write back and congratulate him. They say your burden's too big for your age. Forget it.

Jesus didn't get a bunch of old age pensioners, did he? He got young fishermen strong, and they went and spent their lives. It's going to be eternity before long. I want to live in the light of it every day of my life.

What is that to be what that man's doing? Follow thou me, I'm making you. Your crown won't go on him unless you're unfaithful. Well, we're going to pray.

If you have to go, leave quietly.

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