

Only Purged Branches Bare More Fruit

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of being purged and abiding in Christ to bear fruit in our spiritual lives.

Duration: 1:07:51

Scripture: John 15:1

Topics: "Bearing Fruit", "Fruitfulness in Christ", "Spiritual Pruning"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the necessity of being purged and pruned by God to bear more fruit in our lives, drawing from John 15. He reflects on the beauty of redemption through Christ's sacrifice and the importance of living a life that glorifies God. Ravenhill encourages believers to cherish the Word of God and to recognize the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. He stresses that true fruitfulness comes from a deep relationship with Christ, who is the true vine, and that God desires to work within us for His good pleasure. Ultimately, he calls for a revival of spiritual fervor and commitment to God's will.

Transcript

Your word declares the Spirit and the bride say come. Lord, we think of that day, that day beyond our understanding, beyond our comprehension, when we shall see the King in all his beauty, brighter than the earthly suns, greater than the greatest, deserving and receiving the honor and the glory due to his name. Lord, we thank you for giving us that vast sweep in those words every knee shall bow.

I believe, Lord, even Adam will be there, everybody from creation until the consummation. At one moment we'll bow and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the glory to the glory of the Father, that he is the Son of God to the glory of the Father. We bless you tonight for this redemption that he purchased for us through the old rugged cross, still despised by the world, but it has a magnetism for us.

It was there on the cross he died, he suffered for us. We unclean things are made clean through that blood. We who are far off were made to draw nigh through the precious blood.

We thank you we can still sing triumphantly what was written 200 years ago, that there is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains. We thank you, Lord, you didn't just redeem us 80 or 90 percent and leave us to work out a salvation we didn't have. We bless you that you accomplished, as Isaac Watters said, in him Christ, the tribes of Adam boast more blessings than their fathers lost.

We thank you that it's in him and in him and through him that we have our being. It's because of him at thy right hand that we dare to come with boldness tonight. We should be standing as it were a million miles away from that throne, but we have boldness to enter in by the blood, not of bulls and goats, not even of martyrs who died for his sake, but through the blood of the everlasting covenant, a covenant that never has to be rewritten, a covenant that cannot be broken, a covenant which you've made for time and eternity, for us poor sinners.

No wonder Lord Wesley said, oh, for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. If we had them, Lord, and we had a thousand vocabularies for every one of the thousand tongues, it would not be enough. If we had a thousand lives to lay at your feet, it would not be adequate.

If we had a thousand hearts to love you with, they would not be enough. If we had a thousand wills to serve you with, they still would be inadequate. But Lord, we sung it so often.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song we'll sing thy power to save. Lord, when every one of us will sing better than any humans ever sang, whether they were opera singers, anything else, we'll we'll outshine them all in that day. We'll out sing them all.

We'll have joy, Lord, joy in five minutes inside eternity than this poor silly world has had in all the years of its drama and opera and theaters and films and other things. Lord, it's a superlative experience you give us, and it's a superlative thing you're going to do in and through us. We bless you, Lord.

Our ambition tonight is to please you, that in all things in our lives, even now, frail as we are with mistakes that we made and misunderstandings that come, yet we bless you that our supreme desire is to bring glory to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We thank you for the going forth of your word today. We dare to think that in some part of this sick, dying world that somebody has heard the name of Jesus for the very first time.

Somebody has taken a pen and translated a word or two out of the scripture. After struggling many years with the vocabulary, giving their genius, not to scholarship as the world knows it, but in cast, putting a bridge between the unknown God and an unknown language as they've struggled to bring light and delight to those who will hear the story. We just pray, Lord, they'll have more acceptance of it and be more faithful to it and be more diligently, diligent in studying it than we have been.

Lord, we bless you for this book tonight, this wonderful book. Lord, it not only has a thin red line from Genesis to Revelation, but Lord, it's very covers are stained with blood, the blood of martyrs, men who died at the stake to give it to us. And yet millions of Christians today have not even opened this book, not even pondered it.

They've opened their bank books, their notebooks and other books, but this book, no. Lord, help us to cherish it. We don't know how long we'll have it.

It could be taken away from us as it's been destroyed in Russia and elsewhere. But Lord, we pray that we may be able to say with the psalmist, thy word have I hid in my heart. It has a controlling factor in our lives because it's truth and you desire truth in the inward part and we can't have it unless it is hidden in our hearts as a psalmist David had it.

Lord, make it our vocabulary. Make it the language, Lord, that we'd like to share with others. We thank you too for the hymn writers.

I thank you today for something that you heard yesterday about this glorious old hymn, Blessed Assurance. What a wonderful thing it's done. Lord, I believe it's brought more blessing than maybe a million sermons.

And to sing not about one, but to sing that Jesus is mine. Can we sing a stanza of that now? Blessed Assurance. Okay, we're going to look for a short time anyhow at the gospel recorded by John chapter 15.

One of the best known chapters in the Bible, I guess. But looking at it for another reason tonight. I think there's a section here of this gospel that goes, begins in the 13th chapter and goes through to the 17th.

But notice the last verse of the previous chapter. The last verse of chapter 13 says, that the world may know I love the Father, as a Father, I love the Father. And as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do arise, let us go hence.

So obviously they're coming out from the Last Supper. Now which way they went, nobody actually knows. But it's right when he says, let us go hence, then he says, I am the true vine.

Someone suggested that he still finish this message while they were still in the, in the room where they had the celebration, which may be true. The other suggestion is, that he went by the, the temple, went past the upper room, crossed the book Kidron, and there on the side of the roadway, he saw the vines. And not only the vines, but it, because it was nighttime, but he saw the branches that had been taken from the vine, that were being burned.

The other thing is, of course, if you go back to Psalm 80, the Lord says, he took a vine out of Egypt. He took the children of Israel out of Egypt, and put them so they'd spread through the whole earth. If you read Isaiah on this same subject, I forget where it is now, where is it? Anyhow it's there in Isaiah.

He calls the, the vine a degenerate plant. The vine is symbolic of Israel as a nation. There's nothing more beautiful than a vine, and there's nothing more prodigal in its growing.

You know, I hear people say it's, it's, something is as American as ice cream and apple pie. So ladies, forget the apple pie. Make a wonderful pie out of grapes.

Makes a gorgeous pie. Remember Martha, we haven't had one for two years, but anyhow. But take the seeds out of the grapes, unless the IRS man's coming to lunch, because you'll have trouble with the seeds.

But it makes a wonderful dish. Okay. Let's look at this, skip through it quickly.

I am the true vine. Now Jesus loves that word, or John loves that word. If you go through his gospel, which I did today, he says true no less than 20 times.

I am the true vine. I am the true light. I am the true bread.

I am the true door. Do you remember that sarcastic statement by, who was it who said, what is truth? Pontius Pilate. He could not believe anybody told the truth.

They didn't in Rome, where he came from, and they still don't in Rome anyhow. But Pontius Pilate said what? What is truth? Come along, what are you talking about? The Buddha died saying, I'm searching for truth. Jesus started by saying, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

Thy word is truth, when he the spirit of truth is come. We're hedged in with truth, eternal truth, truth you can't argue with, truth that never varies. But Jesus says, I am the vine, the true as it is in the Greek.

I am the true vine, and my father is a husband man. Now look at the promise. You've got a promise in verse two.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it. So in verse two, you have a promise of fruit.

Now look at verse eight. Heaven is my father glorified that ye bear much fruit. So first you have the promise of fruit, and then in the eighth verse there, you have a proficiency, if you like, of fruit bearing.

Twice eight is sixteen, go down to sixteen. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go forth and bring fruit, and that your fruit should remain. Verse two, the promise of fruit.

Verse eight, plenty of fruit. Verse sixteen, permanence in fruit bearing. Every branch, is it verse two? Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.

You know, there are many unique things about this study we can't take tonight. You know, there are corresponding chapters in the Old Testament to what you'll find in the New Testament, where it says, hear about abiding. Remember 91st Psalm, how's it begin? Same? Yeah, well it's the same thing said in the Hebrew anyhow.

I'll now go from John 15 over to Ezekiel 15. What does it say? The word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, what is the thine tree more than any other tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? He asked what it is, he answers a question. In verse two, shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? Come on, have you got any furniture at all made of the wood of the vine? Nothing.

Years ago, I was in Canada to speak in a conference with a real old veteran Christian missionary, a lands missionary. He'd been in the Middle East, he had a wonderful display of curios. He had a curved dagger that one of the kings, Saudi Arabia, gave to him.

He had all kinds of wonderful things. He'd been there for 40 years. He had something made of redwood.

I said, is that from a redwood tree? He said, no, it's from a cedar of Lebanon. That was a hundred years old. It was cut down, and I had this kind of dish made out of it.

Well, what's this? This isn't like that. No, this is myrtle tree. I said, myrtle? He said, yes, myrtle trees only grow in two countries in the world.

Palestine, as we used to call it, or Israel. Myrtle only grows in Israel and in America, which I suppose proves you're one of the lost tribes. But anyhow, that wood is not grown in any other country.

But I said, well, that's beautiful, yes? I saw a man make that dish out of myrtle. This was made out of the redwood. Oh no, that's made out of a cedar of Lebanon.

I said, well, tell me this. You've been in the Middle East for 40 years. Have you ever seen anything made out of the wood of the vine? No, I never thought of that.

Scripture says you can't even make a piece straight enough to put a peg on it. It's all twisted and gnarled. The root of the vine.

What does the Word of God say about Jesus? He has no form, no comeliness, no beauty that we should desire him. Boy, it's outrageous today. I can't turn the radio on, but one woman's smiling with her lovely teeth.

Another woman has some show off. If you get this, you'll have a complexion like mine. So you know I didn't buy it.

I'm proved. Just look at you. You know I didn't buy it.

I'd be so beautiful. That beauty. And yet Psalm 45 says what? The king's daughter is what? Fun? Good.

All glorious within. Inward cosmetics. I can't tell you to go to the pharmaceutical store and get that.

I can tell you how to get inward beauty. And that's what the Lord's after. You know we have a saying in England, beauty is only skin deep.

An old friend of mine said most of us mustn't eat skinning. Let me go back now to the John again. I am the vine, the true.

My father is a husband. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he take it away. But notice this.

Millions of people read this and skip it. It's the branch that bears the fruit that gets the knife. He doesn't bother with the dead branch.

If you go out west, you'll see all along the road, call it this vinery, call it that. Free sample. The first time you went out, I thought, goodness, what's it like? If you go to every place.

Do you know what they have? Literally. They have cups not as big as your finger and they half fill them. That's your sample.

You better not have a cavity, you'll lose it all. Free wine. I looked at those vines.

Sometimes, not if I can help it, I sometimes clip the hedge. Otherwise I let Martha do it, in honor of preferring one another. But you know when I get it, I clip like this.

But I notice when a man is trimming a vine, he doesn't do it that way. He selects a piece here, he selects a piece there. He does it tediously, carefully.

Do you know a branch that is born, a cluster of grapes this year, will never grow another bunch. He has to sever it. Every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.

I remember a Monday afternoon in 1941, going into a big Baptist church in the city of Bath. There was what was called a Second Advent Testimony League. And Guy King, there were two guys called Guy.

The old Guy King and the younger Guy King. And he spoke that afternoon on John 15. I remember only one thing that he said.

Every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away. But men gather them, not God, men gather them. He interpreted that as a Roman Catholic church which is so corrupt that at the end, men are going to gather it and put it to death and burn it up.

And I believe he's right. It's the most prostituted interpretation of Christianity the world has ever known. It's a lying, lying system.

But every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. But every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. What's God doing in your life? I've had so many young ministers this week.

And yet they say, I'm doing this, I'm doing that, I'm doing that. Do you know what I'm after? I say, do you mind shutting up? What for? I say, God Almighty isn't interested that much in your ministry. He's not? No.

He's interested in your Christian character. He doesn't care what church you build. In one sense, it's you that he's after.

It's refining your personality. It's pruning your personality. It's cutting this off, that it may bring forth more fruit.

You see, the vine will run away. If you let it grow, it would fill a room like this with leaves. I remember at Cliff College once, I was sent to the gardener.

When I got to the glass house, about as big as this room, he was up there somewhere. I said, Mr. Slinn, I have a note. He came down, and I'm trudging through leaves.

He cut this side, he pruned this side of the, of the vine, and the leaves are about this thick. And I went trudging through. This side was all cut, like a man who has half his hair shaved, and the other not.

I said, you're doing quite a job. He said, yes. He said, you come back in August or September, and you'll see there, all those things will be growing, and they'll be bearing fruit.

I went back in September, and he let me look at them. What good is it looking at them? He never offered me a sample. There they were, though.

He had done his pruning so well. And every branch that beareth not fruit, he takes it away. Every branch that beareth fruit, he works on it.

What's he doing? I was talking with Bracey. He was coming. He's not here tonight.

Bracey was telling me the other day, something I said to him about growing something. And he said, I read, I heard something the other day. I read something.

It was very good. I love it now. An acorn.

No, an oak tree is an acorn that stood its ground. Isn't that good? So if you're on an acorn, stick your ground. Our teacher had us go into the northern part of Sherwood Forest, which came up to the edge of our city, gathering acorns.

When we came, we put one on each desk. And the teacher said, now come here, tell me, what's in this acorn? Smart me, I had the answer right away. I said, an oak tree.

No. Well, surely, what is it? It's not an onion. There's not an oak tree in that acorn.

No, there's a forest in it. There's a tree at the other end of our city, which is over a thousand years old, so we're told. It has a fence all round, so nobody can get near to it.

It has one branch that still produces. The tree's about this width, the middle's all hollow. That one branch, every year, came out and it bore one or two acorns.

How many had it borne in a hundred, or a thousand years, as I said? Isn't that the truth of life? I've told you about a man that got saved in a meeting, not in a meeting, in a hospital. The wildest, wickedest man in the world. And the poor guy was just humiliated to death.

There he's in bed with 30 other people in the ward, 30 other men, rather. Well, he got saved one night. Do you know why? Somebody gave him a testament, and the lady said, this can mean your salvation.

Not me, I'm the wickedest man in the British Empire. Well, all you have to do is really mean it, say, Lord Jesus, I'm wicked, sinful, I deserve to go to hell, save me. And he'll save you.

Thank you, he said. And he, she put the testament at the side of the bed. So just before he went to sleep, he took a little view of it.

Well, that woman said, and she's a lovely face, she must be a good woman. And before he slept, he said, Lord Jesus, I'm the wickedest man in the British Empire, or in the world, save me. You know, he woke up in the morning, quite early in the morning, and all the bells of heaven had been transferred from heaven into his heart.

He was so excited, he was so, well, that was a word, excited. So he reached out of bed, and he got all his testament, and he just opened it like this, and he read it. What do you think it said? Here is a man, the biggest drunkard in the British Empire, the biggest liar, the biggest thief, the biggest everything.

When he opened the scripture, he read, the prayer of faith shall save the sick. He said, God, what a book. Last night I prayed, all my sins went away.

All I say is, heal me, and you'll do it. Heal me, Lord Jesus. And he said, nurse.

Oh, she ran. She'd seen him get wild and mad. Come back.

What's wrong with you? Hallelujah. Well, he never said hallelujah, it's usually profane. What's wrong with you? He said, last night I said, Jesus saved me, and he saved me, and just now I said, Jesus heal me, how do you know? I feel it inside.

Call the doctor, I'm going home. He wore a nightshirt, you know, the old ones they had. Like these ladies wear ruffles up here.

Right up there, and treading on the ground. They brought the doctor, the matron of the hospital, the general of the hospital, and made him sign that he was taking himself out of their hands. Finally, after arguing, they brought his trousers, as you say, or slacks if you want.

I said, what if they hadn't have brought them? He said, I've gone home in my nightshirt, and I believe he would. I'd love to have seen him going through that stately city of Perth in Scotland, trailing his bridal gown

behind him. Everybody saying, what's that nut doing? Didn't I just said, he'd have said what he did before me so often, I was embarrassed to death.

He got blessed in a streetcar. That's no place to get blessed. You get blessed amongst nice people with lovely clothes on.

In the streetcar he said, I got a blood red, snow white, sky blue experience. I'm as happy as a lark, and as free as an eagle, and it's sunshine, and smiles, and strawberries, and cream. Hallelujah.

The guy in front of me looking at his newspaper goes, fella down there going this way, fellow going that way. All listening to the dear old man. Boy, he got blessed in a shop too.

You know, you may say the spirit, what do you say, the spirit is under control of the spirit of prophets, and the control of the prophet or something. Well, he must have lost control. He forever getting blessed.

He woke me up one morning too as well. Hit me in the ribs with his elbow. We were sleeping in a bed.

You think that king size beds are new. Good night, we had them in England. That's as big as a field.

I could hardly see him. And it's one of those, you know, where you sink right down in feathers. I saw the top of his head, and he jammed.

He said, come on brother, let's praise God. I said, it's too shocking. That doesn't matter.

He said, it won't make any difference. I said, there are people next door. Well, let them come and join us, he said.

That man was the most thrilled. He never lost the joy of his salvation. He had trials and tribulations.

The preacher in the church that he was in almost hated the sight of him, because people would say, hey, that strange old man was in our shop the other day. You know, he came in to buy something, and he stayed nearly an hour magnifying the Lord. Boy, there's going to be a noise when he gets to heaven.

Well, why did I tell you all that? Well, anyhow, because of the joy of God's salvation. Oh, because that one woman led him to Christ. He led another man to Christ.

That man went to China, took a tent, seating a thousand people, and had some of the biggest revivals. I'll tell you who said that. How many of you have read the book, Streams in the Desert? Good.

I was going to say another thing, I won't. But the lady that wrote Streams in the Desert said that he, what was his name? Burns, was it Martha? Briggs, dear, that's right, Briggs. Mr. Briggs was saved, because this man that wore immaculate clothing walked down the gutter in London, because God told him in the middle of the night, watch it, I love you Jesus, I'll do anything.

He said, well, in the morning, get on your hands and knees and crawl down the gutter. Don't think I'm mad. You said you'd do anything, do it.

He got down on his hands and knees in the gutter with all the dirt. People on those open streetcars looked down, look at that poor idiot. Then he stopped and knelt up and talked to about 20 men, gave them his testimony.

They sat in the factory afterwards, they didn't talk football. All they talked about was the crazy man at the door. But somebody said, I'll tell you what, that man's real, otherwise he wouldn't do that.

He must have been the biggest liar and the biggest drunkard and the most obscene vocabulary. It must have been true. Well, I wouldn't hear a nut like him.

Well, Briggs said, I'll go, and Briggs went. And that night Briggs got saved. The little woman dared to give this drunken man, this fighting man, a try.

He in turn spoke to Briggs, God help him. Briggs went to China and had revivals. Young men in China were set on fire.

Why? There's the chain reaction. It's the, it's the acorn bringing forth, not just an oak tree, but bringing forth a forest. Notice there's a fellow here singing the hymns without a hymn book tonight.

That was good. Give you an A+. Get the hymns into the children's minds.

Get the truth into the children's mind. Okay. Abide in me, abide in me, and I in you.

Well, we, we separate the two to say, you know what? We, we labor the point, I am the vine and you are the branches, but he's the vine, and he's the branches, and he's the root, he's everything. We sing such extravagant things. Jesus, lover of my soul, thou, O Christ, art all I want, plus what? Plus nothing.

If Christ isn't Lord of all, he isn't Lord at all. It's all or nothing. I'm satisfied with him.

The question is, is he satisfied with me? He gave himself unreservedly. Have I given myself unreservedly? Take my life and let it be my life, I say. He wants me entirely.

Well, the, the, the, the husbandman is looking all the time. He sees where fruit will come, and so he cuts this off. He'll separate you from a friendship, maybe.

He'll separate you from a career, maybe. His ambition is that you may bring forth much fruit, maximum fruit, for his glory. Let me just look here a minute.

In Philippians chapter 2, Philippians chapter 2, verse 13. Now notice, this is, if you, if you take it carefully, this is breathtaking. Philippians 2, 13.

What does it say? It is God. Not Gabriel, not circumstances, not the enemy. It is God that worketh in you.

It's God that's doing the pruning. It is God that worketh in you. For what reason? To will and to do of his good pleasure.

Is anything more wonderful than to relax as you go to bed tonight and say, I brought pleasure to the heart of God. It didn't make a new world. It didn't make a new set of planets.

It didn't put another sun there. He said out of that one man in Texas, that one woman in Texas, they gave me pleasure today. Doesn't say they're angels that give him pleasure, or archangels, maybe they do.

It says what he's working in you is for, you say I don't get much pleasure in it, that's not what he's after. He's after working something in you for his good pleasure. You sang about the old rugged cross.

I don't know why we skipped the verse, somebody jumped it, we missed the third verse. The old rugged cross, what did it die for? To pardon and sanctify me. Not merely to get me out of sins, but to get sin out of me.

As I've said so often, it's one thing for the boat to be in the sea, it's another thing for the sea to be in the boat. You see, we don't preach full salvation anymore. You know, some of these business boys thought they got a jump on God and established full gospel business, but that's okay.

The banner of the salvation army, do you know what it was? Full salvation, full salvation, lower fountain, deep and wide, streams for every land and nation from the Savior's wounded side, none need perish, all may live for Christ hath died. Love's resistless current sweeping, cleansing me from all my sins, so forth. I picked up a magazine the other day, I didn't pick it up, it's mailed to me.

It showed some young Americans, I think, or English maybe, I don't know, girls with their skirts, you know, swinging and dancing, playing music, right by the Eiffel Tower or that other stupid place there, Notre Dame Cathedral. In front of Notre Dame Cathedral, I think they were, and it said the French people were so engrossed in watching these young people dance. Isn't that thrilling? I guess the devil trembles when girls dance and sing music.

I couldn't help but think of a precious old lady, the daughter of the founder of the Salvation Army, I've mentioned her before, the Mara Shaw, 20 years of age, at 28, 19 years of age, she was a feminine Billy Graham in England. She went and rented halls seating four or five thousand, where no woman had ever done it except her mother, and she preached and saw the glory of God. She didn't go and dance in the streets and play the Salvation Army music, she rented a basement in a lousy building, and those pretty ladies had never even put up their own hair.

They had servants, they came from mansions, they came from castles. You never have to advertise a fire. They were so thrilled.

William Booth had written this Salvation Army song, Thou Christ of burning cleansing flame, send the fire. Thy blood-bought gift today we claim, send the fire. Look down and see this waiting host, give us the promised Holy Ghost.

We want another Pentecost, I'm not sure we want it, we need it. To make these weak hearts strong and brave, send the fire. To live a dying world, to save, send the fire.

The fire will burn up every trace of sin, the fire will bring the light and glory in. The revolution now begins, send the fire. Do you know when the men came from the Sorbonne, the Greddish universities, all around Paris, and they listened to this precious frail looking English young woman, that inherited a curvature of the spine from a brilliant mother, Mrs Booth.

And before long the whole city was rocking, the hell holes. We're talking about this pretty little English lady, the taverns, the nightclubs, the society. The front bench might be filled with long bearded men who were teachers in a Sorbonne, taught other languages, taught mathematics, taught science.

They were spellbound, no singing, no conjuring, no fancy stuff. The glory of God fills a temple. You don't need a showmanship.

Every time you have your mimes and those stuff, you're advertising bankruptcy. Having God's name did these men move the generation. You pretty women don't forget, whether you're pretty or not, whether you're rich or poor.

The fact is this, if God gets you and anoints you, he'll use you. The greatest need we have at this point, I believe, are mothers in Israel. By that I mean, that if somebody handed a newborn spiritual child, you could nurture it and say, yes, I'll show the steps that you need, the study you need, I'll pray with you, I'll be your comfort, I'll be your strength until you find your feet spiritually.

But that precious woman came back to me when I saw that newspaper this week. I was so angry. You pay the fare for 20 college kids to go to France to dance? Go to France to give out a few francs? When one woman, two or three women actually, could go in a filthy basement, the queen of a prostitute came to hear them.

Lifted her skirts up and danced and the Marashal said, if you want to dance, just wait a minute, let's clear off. They cleared hundreds of chairs away and those salvation army instruments played and the women danced and kicked up their legs and shouted. And the Marashal said, you can dance 20 minutes, as long as I can talk 20 minutes.

So they danced for 20 minutes, she talked for 80 minutes and they were spellbound. And they came to the altar, they pulled daggers from out of the socks of those men. Those prostitute women wept as they'd never wept before.

They'd never heard, they'd gone to Notre Dame and paying their lousy sins in and out again. They'd paid Peter's pence, but they knew nothing of salvation. They knew nothing of a witness of the Spirit.

They knew nothing of peace that comes through pardon. And you know what God wants to do? It's exactly the same thing again. There's only one thing will save America, that's a Holy Ghost revival.

I hear these fellows on TV say, you know, America, only America is sending food to Ethiopia. I'll tell you something else, America is sending food to Russia at a reduced rate. So Russia can be strong enough to rape Ethiopia every day, to rape Afghanistan every day.

A few weeks, was it two weeks ago, Mr. Schultz said, yesterday I was at a meeting of so many nations and we're not asking the Iranians, we're not asking the people of Iran, we're not asking them to stop fighting, we've told them to stop. Stop that war. Never sent a word to Russia.

Why don't we go to the help of Afghanistan? Because we have oil there. We're defending our oil investment, which we don't like to hear, but that it is. But you know what, God's going to do a super work.

And I tell these young guys that come in my room, I say, listen my hair's faded. Somewhere we missed it. I'm glad I've burned my life out for God.

20 hours a day when I was younger, walked the length of England, walked the breadth of England. Never went to bed for months and months and months, slept on the floor, slept in the fields, preached at midday in the streets, preached at midnight in the street, saw people yield to Christ, got my team of young men, six of them, they'd take their coats off, put them on the ground, and that we'd kneel on coats, young men and women coming out of movie houses, listen spellbound and weep and kneel in the streets. That's how Wesley turned England upside down.

They kicked him out of the cathedral. The Bishop of Gloucester wouldn't allow the greatest preacher of his day to enter Gloucester, enter the churches. That was George Whitefield.

Well, dear Lord, I guess when you'd heard George Whitefield and then you heard the Bishop, you'd think the Bishop was serving ice cream. Maybe he was a Bishop that said, he said, you know, wherever Paul the Apostle went, he had revival. Or when he went, they had revival.

He said, wherever I go, they serve tea. That's about the right difference. But God wants us to bring forth fruit, not just necessarily fruit in the sense of soul winning.

But what does it say? In the sixth chapter of Romans, it says that when you've been crucified with Christ and you're risen with Christ, you bring forth fruit unto what? Holiness, wholesomeness, peace, joy, rest, sweetness. So remember, let's read again when you go home quietly. It is God which is working in you.

Don't blame the devil, don't blame circumstances. Just today, and I've never preached on the 23rd Psalm. Well, we rejoice.

The 23rd Psalm, the Lord is my shepherd. He leads me where? Besides still waters. He leads me where? In the green paths.

He leads me where? Into the valley of the shadow of death. It's the same leader. It's not my choice to say, Lord, I'd rather be by the still waters.

Oh, I love waters, they're reflecting. I'd rather be in the green pastures. He says, listen, what you need is a valley of the shadow of death.

You need to die to your own ambition. You need to die to success. You need to die to your own ability.

Leads me into, into the valley of the shadow of death as much as it leads me into green pastures. So it's God that worketh in you. To will and to do of his good pleasure.

Notice what it says now. Do all things without murmurings. Do all things without murmurings or disputings.

Not some things, all things, that you may be blameless and harmless as sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. You know, somebody came to me last Saturday, said something to me. You know, I don't think anything's hurt me as much in my life as something that person said.

Now, if they'd said it just once, you know, I've said things I'm sorry for. I could have, I wish I could recall, I can't. But if this person said it once about me, but this person constantly says it to certain people.

I've told you what Paul said, none of these things move me. He didn't say none of these things hurt me. They hurt me, but they don't move me.

But we need to be blameless and harmless. Notice we're not faultless. He's going to present us faultless.

But we're blameless. I may say something, but if I'm not vindictive, if I know my own spirit, I'll grieve over some things. But by the same token, I had no bitterness, I had no wrong intention in saying it.

But one day he's going to present us before his father's throne faultless. I remember that one of the teachers we had at school, he lived in an old mansion down the road away from the little college. The

house he lived in is about 300 years old.

He had a magnificent garden and the back door opened onto the River Derwent. But he grew some exotic flowers that had never been grown in England. He got a lovely bed of them.

And the last thing he did, he taught us part of the day. He taught the wiser people at Sheffield University the other part of the day. The last thing he did was shut those great big gates about eight feet or ten feet high, put them together and locked the gates so nobody could take his exotic flowers.

One morning he rushed through the gates, went to the university. A little girl was looking through the window and saw a man come in. He took out his pen and began to cut some of the flowers.

Oh, she was enraged. There's a long corridor in the house. She went down the corridor, did a few things, came back.

When he came back at night in the sunset, he thought, oh my flowers would look gorgeous. When he looked, every one had disappeared. He pulled the bell, it rang down the corridor.

Little girl came running up, she said, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, close your eyes, close your eyes, Daddy, no peeking, give me a hand. And he held her hand and she went down, opened the door, and every jar she had in the house and every bottle had all his flowers. She'd take them out of the garden.

He said, what do you do this for? These cost a lot of money, they're beautiful. She said, Daddy, I saw a man steal a bunch of them. So I thought, well, I'll stop that.

So I brought them all in the house, Daddy. So he wouldn't steal them. She wasn't faultless, but she was blameless.

She didn't do it vindictively. She did the wrong thing, she did it with love. Let me go over now, just for a minute, the Acts of the Apostles.

I've got it marked here, I think. Okay, Acts chapter 16, verse 35. Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also.

Now notice what they'd been doing. They'd been preaching and teaching the word of God. Some days after, Paul said to Barnabas, let us, who's us? Paul, Barnabas, and who had just joined them? Luke, I believe.

Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city that we have preached the word of the Lord and see how they do. You know, let's go and see the nice dear folk that love us so much. We've been through a stormy passage.

Let's relax a little and visit these dear old friends. This is after they preached the word of God and taught the word of God. What happened? Verse 37 says, Barnabas determined to take with him John, whose name was Mark, but Paul thought not to take him with him.

And the two departed from Pamphylia and went not with them to work. And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed. That's something.

The contention, it wasn't just, you know, let's pray about this. No, boy, they got their hands up as it were at each other, even after preaching and teaching. There's a stern difference here.

Nobody's allowed to give way, wants to give way. Paul thought not good to take him with them. And they departed from Pamphylia and went not with them.

And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder, one from the other. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed into Cyprus and Paul chose Silas and departed. So these two mighty men of God were split.

One went one way, the other went the other. I'm trying to think of a scripture here, I can't just think of it. Anyhow, a bit later, look at Philippians 2. No, no, it's not there.

But there's a, it won't come to my mind now. Do you remember where Paul says, he writes and says, look, bring Mark with him, with you, because he's profitable to me. He cast him out.

He's no good, he'll be in the way. And here you find this amazing man with all his theology and all his love. For after you've said everything you can about John the Apostle, he's the Apostle of love.

But he wasn't the one that wrote 1 Corinthians 13. The Apostle Paul had a more profound concept of the love of God than anybody. And yet there was time when he made mistakes, he was wrong, even parted with us.

That's the toughest thing. Some things you can see the Lord take out of your life, but when the Lord comes and takes a friend out of your life that you've leaned on, boy that's very, very costly. I've seen brethren divide.

I couldn't understand it. And I don't think we should do it. Some people say, oh we'll test this sanctification.

Listen, the world of flesh and the devil will test him. You keep your fingers out of it. Let the Lord do it.

It is God that worketh in you. I'm not going to assist the enemy if I can help it. I want to be a helper.

I want to bring forth fruit. That personality of yours can be governed by God. It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.

For some reason I thought of a thing we used to call often in England, Mendelsohn the great, I say pianist, he wasn't a pianist, there were no pianos then. He didn't even play a harpsichord. He played the great cathedral organ.

And one day he went in when the organist was playing this fabulous organ. And he climbed up into the organ loft and slipped on the edge of the seat. And he listened to this mouse, but you know they had to kick all the, they played as fast with their feet as with their hands.

My sister used to do that. I love to watch her. This man sat spellbound, this young man.

And finally said, sir, would you mind if I just played your organ for maybe five minutes? He said, young man, this is one of the greatest organs in the world. I've played it for so many years. How old are you? I thought he was about 22 or something.

No, no sir, you can't play my organ. Finally Mendelsohn said something that made the man prick his ears up, about music. And he said, discuss with a little one.

And he said, all right young man, just five minutes. So he slipped up the organ, shiny seat, you know. And the young man moved over and Mendelsohn began to play and he brought the house down.

The man sat weeping. He said, who are you? Well sir, he said, my name is Mendelsohn. Did you write this, write that, write the other? Yes.

Playing my organ? To think, I almost missed the one opportunity of a lifetime to let you take over this organ and bring out of it what I've never brought out of it. It just needed your genius on my person, on my organ. You know, I see that as your personality.

Things in it you don't know a thing about. God isn't trying to make you happy about yourself. It's trying to get you to the place where you will, to will his will.

We sing that hymn, breathe on me breath of God, till I'm holy thine, till all this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine. Breathe on me breath of God. What's the other verse? Until my heart is pure, until with thee I will one will.

One final thing. One, my dear Martha, she was supervising a hospital over in Manchester, near Manchester. And I was in Sheffield about 45 miles away.

I had a little English car. It'd go in the, it'd go in the, in the boot or what you call, it'd go in the trunk of a Cadillac today. Little thing like an orange box.

Poor thing, it couldn't get over the hills. I put it in the bottom gear, he couldn't get it, over the mountain. Those staggering mountains in England, you know the 1200 feet high? I put it in bottom gear and struggled up and everything in it was groaning.

It had indigestion in the motor and rickets in the wheels. The most horrible thing I ever drove in my life. But one night, one day going over, I noticed, I looked across the valley and there were two streams coming down, bouncing down the hillside.

They'd been heavy rain. It looked like milk being poured out. And suddenly they became one.

And I just stood and looked at them. When I was coming back some days afterwards, the rainfall had ended and so the streams were very small. But I got a lesson out of them.

Those two, two beautiful streams suddenly converged. You couldn't tell the one from the other. And that's what God wants.

My will in His will. Take my will and make it thine. It should be no longer mine.

We sing that, don't we? Take my life and take my will. And then immediately we become stubborn. I'm going to do this.

Well, you better read James. What does James say in his epistle? Before you say I'll do this, don't say I'll do this. You say, if God wills, I'll do this.

If God wills, I'll do that. What we do, we bring our plans and say, Lord, I want you to will this with me. And he says, I won't.

So then you get into trouble. He's a husbandman. And in case you don't know, there's no complete maturity for any of us this side of eternity.

We'll be growing. And maybe I could say we'll be groaning. There'll be times when he clips, Lord, I needed that.

He says, you don't need it. It's hindering fruit. You let this thing go up here like this, all of it.

And up here you get leaves, and God cuts it off here. Then all the energy that we're doing there, he drives it into here, and the fruit is better. But wait a minute, the last thing.

We're to be his fruit. What does a husbandman? The husbandman has to be the first one, partaker of the fruit. When I saw those grapes in California, I was astounded.

Grapes, bunches this size, Texas size, awfully big bunches of grapes. They were beautiful. And a guy comes along, he has a kind of a wheelbarrow, a basket there, and he takes a knife, goes through like that.

These tender grapes with such a blue, you know, blush on them, beautiful. He just threw them down like that. I thought, my, gentle, gentle, lay them down.

No, he's got 500 other bunches. Oh, bang, bang. Then he takes them in his shoulder, and he puts them where? Oh, they had a lovely velvet settee there, and he laid them on the side.

Forget it. He had a dump truck, and he threw them all in a dump truck. I thought, my goodness, what kind of civilization is this? Then they took the dump truck and dumped it, as you would expect, in a factory.

If you go to Italy, you'll see they have a block of stone, something like this, and it's carved out, it's hollow. And at the front, there's a tiny little hole. They bring the grapes and put them in there, and the man rolls his trousers up, and he jumps in and did he wash his feet? Of course he didn't.

He's washing them in the grapes. And he treads the grapes, crushing, and out comes a juice. It's tortured, it's pulverized.

Hold your horses, friend. You think you're going through it now. You wait till a bit later.

When the Lord says, now it's ready for you to graduate into another degree, boy, you'll think you've been a baby the rest of your life. What does Paul mean? Tell me some of you theologians. What does Paul mean when he suddenly cuts off that love story in 1 Corinthians 13, and says, when I became a man, I put away childish things in God's name? What does he mean? Is that the moment he was crucified with Christ? Jesus, when he was 13, went into the temple.

Is that what Paul's speaking of? I don't think so. He's talking about spiritual things. I've told you, you've heard me weep.

I've cried over it many times in this room. When I stand by myself before billions of people at the judgment seat, I don't want God to point to me and say, Ravenhill, when you were in Texas, I had many things to tell you, but you couldn't bear them. You weren't mature enough.

I don't need to say that. I don't believe there'll be any maturing the other side of eternity. I believe your rewards will finish, at least your opportunity to mature will end at the judgment seat.

It won't all be crowns, it'll be condemnation for some, because he says clearly in his word, some will suffer loss. Did you ever smile when you lost anything? Before billions of people, the Apostle Paul's looking, Jeremiah, Isaiah's looking, all the saints of the ages are looking at Paul and the Ravenhill, standing before the judgment seat of Christ. Listen, friend, you're only here to eternity, to mature.

And once you slip over the edge of time into eternity, whether you're on the broad way or the narrow way, there's no u-turn to go back. It's direct to the throne, direct to the throne. And what a hallelujah time it's going to be for men like the Apostle Paul and the heroes of faith.

And then how embarrassed some of these guys are going to be making fortunes out of the gospel. The Lord wants you and I to become mature. He wants us to be, accept his burdens.

Don't anybody else, I'm through with this one thing. A lady that used to come to the prayer meeting with Martha, when she was in hospital, this lovely Scots girl, Molly, what was her name, Molly, Martha, Molly, doesn't matter. Anyhow, it was Molly.

And she had a broad Scottish, you know, a broad like some people have. And I remember she came in and the floor of the building was wood, it was a wooden building anyhow. And I remember she got down with a bang that night and she began to pray with a lovely brogue from Glasgow of all places.

Lord, she'd say Lord, with about four R's in it, Lord. And she rolled all her R's, this world. And I remember that one night she prayed, Lord, she said, I do not want to carry burdens the devil makes for me.

I will not carry burdens the church makes for me. I will not carry burdens the pastor wants to put on me. Lord, I'll carry all the burdens you want to put on me.

Boy, I learned more in that message than all the broadcast sermons I've heard in my life, I think. It stuck anyhow, that one night she prayed so passionately. She's a beautiful character.

Do you know, the measure of your maturity can be measured by what God burdens you with. You say, I'm carrying bigger burdens than ever. Well, God's more confidence in you.

Doesn't he say? If you think the burden's getting too heavy, he'll make with the burden, he'll make a way of escape. But if he thinks you're mature enough, he'll let you carry the thing. He may not ask your wife to carry it or your friends or your pastor.

He's asking you. Again, he's making you. He's not making the deacon in your church.

He's not making that friend of you. He's making you. He doesn't care what house you live in, how big it is, how small it is.

He's concerned with the size of your head, no, the size of your heart. How much you love him, how much you adore him, how much you're living for him, for his will, for his glory. I'm so sick of men getting the glory of God.

I believe there's going to be an outpouring of God's Spirit, and fellows, we don't even know the names of them. I don't expect these star preachers on TV to be, the first should be last. They've been first long

enough, they'll be last.

There'll be some old washerwomen and widows at the judgment seat with crowns glittering beyond all the crowns of other people. Why? Because humbly, meekly, I could give you the names of some. A hundred years old lady I went to see, her fingers, her arms were about as thick as my two fingers.

When I went to see her, her daughter said, my mother is totally blind, totally deaf, and we don't have much weather in here. When you go in the house, don't look around. So we went up these winding steps in a stone old building.

Here's this little lady lying on the bed. Her face was as yellow as could be, and her fingers, her arms about this width, balmy arms. I put my hand out, she was blind as I told you.

Ah, she said, a hundred years of age, and I was, to tell the truth, I was, I didn't know what to say. I just squeezed her hand, and I tried to holler in her ear, but she couldn't hear me. But she knew there was somebody there.

Do you know what she said? She had no sight, no ears, no teeth, nothing in the house. You wouldn't have given her five dollars for everything in the room. The bed was the bedroom, living room, everything.

And as I held her hand, that balmy hand, she said this, croon him, croon him, croon him. I said to my friend, what in the world does she mean? Then she started saying, croon him, croon him, Lord of all. Do you think I stood there? I was melted to tears.

Here's a blind, poverty-stricken, deaf woman, no teeth, no anything, nothing she can see, nothing she can enjoy, and yet she, and her son was a tremendous preacher, she said, he, her delight every day is to say, croon him, Lord of all. All that with yonder sacred throng. She said it in Scots, so you could understand it, I couldn't.

All that is yonder, we are to, he may fall. Is it a bit late to do it when you get there? In God's name, why don't we do it now? Why don't you take a time out every day to croon him? Don't come begging, say, I haven't come for anything. As I tell you, prayer is preoccupation with our needs, praise is preoccupation with our blessings, worship is preoccupation with God himself.

My goal is God himself, not joy, not peace, not even blessing, but thee. And to get there, he's going to do a lot of pruning, so be cautious, be careful. But if you mean business, God means business.

He doesn't want you to be mediocre, God help us, the church is so mediocre today. I'm so sick of walking amongst dwarves, I want to see some giants. All three meetings, I want to see them explode with the power and glory of God, and I believe it's going to happen.

We've got some real things to pray for tonight. I didn't hear that, any of you take, what was it, United, what do you call it, US News and World Report, any of you take that? Nobody. In one issue of July, there's an article that I understand on Shirley MacLaine, she's a woman that's gone off the deep end, you know, in talking with spirits.

I don't doubt she's talking with spirits, lying spirits, cheating spirits, filthy spirits. She's building an auditorium up in the hills, where the skiing community go, they're up in, what do you call it, Colorado, what do you call the place? I can't hear very well. There, Aspen, Aspen, I think it's up there.

You know she's building, boy, when I read it, I was so rebuked. She's building a place for meditation, and even now, when people go, they are from, what time is it, from eight o'clock to ten, two solid hours of meditation, then in the afternoon, two o'clock till four, then at night, six till eight, and young people are going. Do you realize, these young people are sick to death of noise? Everywhere you go, everything's blasting as loud as they can, they turn the car radios on as loud as they can, and now they're finally, they can sit and meditate and be taught and instructed.

And this woman's putting up this awesome thing at millions of dollars, and these rich people are going, and young people are going to flock there, because people are tired of noise. And this good old book says, be still and know that I'm God. But we're not still.

The noisier, we mistake noise for power, and there is no power in it. God is looking for a holy people, a pure people. A people that give him delight, a people that give him pleasure.

When he does that, he responds. Well, another thing we really need to pray for tonight is for the Indian brothers, mostly are gone. How many went up, you know? You don't know exactly.

The bosses here, how many went up? Oh, four, I thought there were more. Anyhow, those Indian brothers are usually here, and they've gone up to Oklahoma, to what the Indians call it the Pow Wow, for two weeks, isn't it? And I understand it's not much different from a just 24 hours, the debauchery, drunkenness, wild sex, every damnable thing. And these fellows are actually threatened, not just morally, but physically going in there.

On that very, on that very reservation, two weeks ago, two men were murdered. White men didn't go, he says, you can't go, they'd tear you apart. And they're going right into the midst of that heathen darkness.

We need to pray and protect them. And believe God, not just they'll be saved physically, but that other people will be born again of the Spirit of God. Melodies going up to that big affair that they have in Washington this week, let's pray about that.

Even the banners could bring conviction. Boy, I'd like to have 10 minutes there, I sure would. Remind every woman that every baby she aborted, she'll see it face to face at the judgment seat.

The mother will see the baby she killed, the child will see the mother that murdered it. And that's true for evangelists. Everybody they bring to the front and leave them without being born again of the Spirit, they'll see that child at the judgment seat.

We've turned the altar into a confessional, like the Romans. You don't get saved because you confess your lousy sins. Judas did that, he even brought the money back.

Did it save him? No it didn't. We've got to get back dear friends again. You teach young people, every birth physically is a miracle.

I understand there are 2,000 possible things can happen to a babe before it leaves its womb. But look at the dangers there are when we leave spiritual children without spiritual mothers, if they're really born again. It's an awesome thing.

The most astounding miracle in the world to me is a person to be born again. To be completely delivered from bondage, from sin, from uncleanness, putting off the old man, putting on the new man, renouncing

the world of flesh and the devil, renouncing all of its pleasure, its pomp and its pride, and saying give me Jesus my Lord crucified. I very much doubt people are saved if they don't have an intoxicating love with Jesus.

If they don't quit the world of flesh and the devil, love not the world. You can't love the world and love Christ, it's not possible. Some of you guys, football season's coming, God pity you.

I almost said I hope you have a stroke Sunday afternoon with your feet up. If the sermon is a bit too long, people can't stand the sermon. Oh, oh, the cowboys are playing.

Sure they are. Friend, if you can't stand an hour's sermon, how in God's name do you think you're going to stand all eternity with him? Utterly impossible. But we love the world.

We love the ways of the world, we love the things of the world. And until we wash our hands completely and say Lord, all I need is Christ. I want him 24 hours of the day.

I want to live, move, and have my being in the spiritual realm. As little of the world as I can have in order to earn your living. But you don't have to love anything except the Lord Jesus.

And love his word and love his will. We've got some folk coming from where? Michigan next Friday night coming to the prayer meeting, isn't that nice? So they'll get warm twice I hope. Texas weather and Texas prayer meeting.

Well, let's really lay this to heart now for Melody and I don't know how many Christians are converging up there, but lots of them are going to testify and carry banners. Let's hope some of the politicians get stricken and smitten in their hearts for supporting abortion. Let's pray for these dear brothers amongst the Indians tonight.

And pray that somehow some church, you have a church in town, where is it brother? Good, isn't that nice? This brother was really singing and smiling. I haven't seen a smiling Presbyterian in 20 years. Singing with a big smile, blessed assurance.

That's great. I knew some great Presbyterian preachers. No, no, not now.

I changed it. No. No, I'm the boss when I'm here.

No, I said we can't change it. No, we're going to stay here, that's okay. The place will be open, we'll be here and tonight and tomorrow.

Good, wonderful, wonderful. Somebody else has been asking, it doesn't matter. The Lord will remind you.

You know another thing, it's not just those people are lost. That's terrible. But you know, every one of them that, they don't run their own lives, Satan runs them.

And those lives, those minds, those wills, could all be in the area where Christ uses them. They're being wasted and they don't know it. I know, I want the sin awakening amongst the young people.

Young men shall see visions, old ones dream dreams. I dream as little as I can. I hate going to bed, ask Martha.

Praise the Lord. The river of God is full of water. God has no problems, we have them.

We're his problem. We're the biggest problem the Lord has. It's not Rome, it's not humanism, Mormonism, any other ism.

It's the Christians that are holding up the blessing. So let's go to prayer as the Lord enables us to pray. Let's sing a chorus and then you can go out if you like as we sing.

What shall we sing? Okay, turn your eyes upon Jesus. If you need to leave, leave as we kneel and stay as long as you can and pray with us.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20928.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/only-purged-branches-bare-more-fruit/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net