

Poor in Spirit

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being 'poor in spirit' and the need for moral courage in living out one's faith.

Duration: 1:33:13

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Isaiah 57:15, Matthew 5:3, Matthew 11:28-30, Luke 18:14, Romans 12:3, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Philippians 2:3-4, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5-6

Topics: "Beatitudes", "Dependence On God", "Humility"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the significance of being 'poor in spirit,' illustrating this through a story of a boy who learns to pray amidst peer pressure at a boarding school. He contrasts the humility and emptiness required to truly follow Christ with the pride and self-sufficiency prevalent in society. Ravenhill argues that true poverty of spirit leads to a deeper relationship with God and the realization that we are nothing without Him. He encourages believers to embrace their dependence on God, as this is the pathway to receiving the kingdom of heaven.

Transcript

I've got to tell the children a story, so if you're going to sleep, sleep while I tell the children a story while I do that. It's about a boy that came to a church I pastored in England and his daddy makes, they live in Sheffield which is a city where they, it's noted for two things, they make a lot of beautiful silver there, silverware and they make razor blades and razors and swords and all kinds of things. This boy's daddy owned a factory there and I had gone to preach after being away for a few years and I stayed in this lovely home.

They had a big driveway and it was a gorgeous house. I remember looking out and the gardeners, they had two or three gardeners, they were planting a lot of bulbs and things for springtime and the mother came in with a letter. She was quite excited about it, I want to read you my letter from my boy.

This boy had got to a place where up across people in England send their children to what we call boarding schools. They send them to a school at Christmas, they don't come home till about June and stay home four or five weeks and go back again and come back at Christmas and so forth. And it came time for this boy to go and so they did the usual thing, they took him in town and took him to a tailor's shop and got him some of those little Eton jackets, you know cutaway jackets and striped trousers and deep collars and really got him fixed up.

Got him an outfit for cricket and soccer and rugby and all the other things he needed and they drove up to this magnificent old school, I think it was about six or seven hundred years old. And when the boy got there of course he looked at the great big buildings, it was in a huge park, great big tower in which they had a clock that chimed like this one and everything was lovely. Saw the soccer pitch and the rugby pitch as we say, soccer field you'd say I guess, rugby field, tennis, swimming pool and various other things.

This was alright and then of course like boys he was interested in eating and finally the tour guide took them into the place where they were to eat. And everybody has a number, you sit at that same place, that same table all the years you're at school. And so that was interesting, he found where he was going to sit.

Then they took him upstairs to a bedroom and showed him where he was going to sleep. Well I'd been in the house of that boy and he had a most, he was the only boy and his daddy spoiled him I'm sure, he had a room about as big as this filled with just about every imaginable toy. Aeroplanes suspended from the ceiling and he had a track right round the room, you know, a place where you swung a table top over and so the track could go round, he had trains, he had a huge fish tank.

He got about everything and he had to leave them all of course and go to school. Well, when he got to school he discovered he was going to sleep in a room with nineteen other boys, that's something. So your mothers would like to have twenty boys in one room, they'd really cut up.

And he thought, my this is great, nineteen boys. And it came to saying goodbye, well he'd driven up, I don't know whether they had a Rolls Royce, they had two or three big cars anyhow and of course all the boys were around. Now there were no girls in those schools in England, most of our best schools still do not have girls in them.

But anyhow, it came to the parting of the ways, you know, and when you're about, I think it was about twelve, you know, and there's all the kids looking on and looking at his nice car and they'd loaded up all his stuff to go into his bedroom and then, you know, if mother said, well, see you at Easter, it'll be alright, you know, when she says, oh no, she's not going to kiss me in front of this gang, they will think, I mean, that's all she could have done, she'd kiss me before I left home, she's not going to kiss me in front of this mob, but mothers being mothers, scooped him up and all the kids, oh, how well mother went and then they were shown various other parts of the school and they were shown the place over the hills where there was another famous school and they played this school at soccer and the other games. Well then he sauntered around and it came to bedtime and he hadn't thought too much about it, he was told that, you know, you're not at home now, you don't throw your trousers on the floor and your shirt over there and something here and your socks under the bed, even if your father does, I mean, if other people do, so when you're going to bed, you hang your trousers up here and you hang your shirt there and you put your shoes in here and the bedroom must look spick and span. Oh, so all the kids came in, nineteen other boys, jumping on the bed, having a whale of a time and suddenly this little fellow got his pyjamas on, oh boy, now what do I do? Say my prayers in front of this gang, I know what that guy would do there with the red hair, he'll throw a book at me and that guy will throw that apple core in my ear and this other guy over here, he'll stick some gum on my head or something, I can't kneel and pray here, it just wouldn't happen, but I'll say my prayers, I'll say them when I get in bed.

And he's just getting into bed and you remember the hymn they used to sing a lot, we sang it as kids in England, you know, dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone, dare to have a purpose firm and dare to make it known. Well, of course, that's alright when you're standing up in church and everybody's sweet,

but I mean, with a gang of, you know, little Al Capone's around, what do you do? Well, he got one leg in bed and nearly got the other, he thought, boy, wouldn't I do, hmm, supposing my mummy asked me, supposing the Sunday school teacher says what do you do? So the other kids were really having a time on one of the beds, they were cutting up and having a whale of a time, they thought, you know they won't see me if I slip down here, so, they slipped down the side of the bed. You know, time like you may have had if you were in a barrack room or somewhere.

His mother came in with a letter that morning to read me what he said, he said, mummy, I knelt down and I don't know a thing, I said, I was so scared, I was waiting for a book to hit me here and a boot to hit me here and an apple core in my ear and somebody tickled my feet or something, but, he said, suddenly it went dead still and I thought, they're all coming at once. So then he remembered the scripture, you know, that says watch and pray, so, he decided to watch as well as pray and he looked up and all the kids on the bed were going, and, he said, nobody said a thing. He said, mummy, I can't remember what I said when I knelt down, but I just felt I was going to explode, but he said, you know, when I got in bed I had such a good feeling right down in here, I felt, boy, I don't know, I felt as though I'd fought them all one at a time and licked them all, you know, I felt, boy, I beat the whole gang of you tonight.

She said, but wait, wait, wait, wait a minute, so, the letter went on and he said, mummy, first day, not much doing, but the second day, I got to know one or two other guys, some of them were real rough, and it came to the second night and I thought, well, anyhow, they know I say my prayers, I'm a Christian and I don't need to bother anymore, they even see my Bible there, so, I guess it's OK. And then he said, no, I did it the first night, and if I did it once, I can do it again, and I'm going to have to do it for the next four to five months on the street. So, he said, once again, I got my pyjamas on and I noticed one guy was reading a book like this, you know, another guy was reading one this way, they were all watching to see what was going to happen, and he said, I knelt down and said my prayers, and suddenly, just like that, everything went dead calm, and he said, I waited and I waited, as soon as I waited an hour, and nothing happened, and I thought, well, they're all coming on their hands and knees, they're all going to hit me at once.

Now, she said, listen to this, I said, I opened my eyes and when I looked, every boy in the dorm was on his knees saying his prayers. Oh, he said, I felt so good, I felt, you know, if I hadn't done it right the first night, I'd never have done it the second night, and he said, you know what now, every night when I kneel down, well, one or two of them, you know, they're kind of backslidden, out of fellowship as it were, well, anyhow, they weren't doing it, and he said, but you know, some of the boys said, I promised my mummy I'd do it, but I didn't have the guts really to do it, and I felt really bad, but I'm glad you did it, and he said, you know, I found some real nice boys, and you know, mummy, it really is good that, as that song says, each victory will help you some other time, you know, it's got easier every night since, since I did it.

I used to do a chaplain's hour in one of the largest air force camps in England, I didn't get paid for it unfortunately, but I did it for kicks, and I remember one night some guys had taken some planes from England over to North Africa, and one of them was a young Christian, and when he got to the camp, they said, well, you take, you know, A, room A1 block and room 7, and when he got in, he was disgusted, there were all girly pictures, mostly nude pictures around, and he thought, oh boy, there must be a rough gang, and he hadn't another Christian buddy with him that separated him because there was only one spare bed in this room, oh well, they're not coming in till late, there's a dance, they won't be in till 12, one o'clock, and he said, I can't wait till they come, what in the world can I do, and I certainly, I think I'll rip all these pictures, no, they're not my property, what shall I do, and he remembered in his, in his billfolds, he had a calendar with a picture of Jesus on the other side, and so he said, I, I found a little space, I found a thumbtack, and I

stuck the picture of Jesus right bang in the middle of them all, and about one o'clock, these boys came in, and they were cutting up where they'd been, and what they'd done, and one of them said, well, I say goodnight to my sweetie, what's that there, well, it looks like a picture of Jesus, doesn't it, in the middle of all those nude women, and what are you going to do about it, one guy said, rip it down, the other guy says, you'll rip it down if you dare, well, he said, they, they, they don't match, what are you going to do, pull one down to the other, right over, he says, the other, this fellow said he was sleeping with one eye open, and they were going round snatching all the pictures down, and folded them up, and put them round outside, and you see, sometimes, as I said, I used to say to those guys, I have courage, I watched them fighting up in the sky, with Spitfires, fighting Messerschmitts, and Heinkels, and all the rest, but I said, when it comes to moral courage, it's a different situation, physical courage is one thing, moral courage is an entirely different thing, spiritual courage, even something else, so remember, it's always good to be a good witness, even how small we are, we can always make a real witness for Jesus Christ, in one way or another, we don't always have to shout from the housetops, sometimes it can be done so quietly, and without, you know, an inoffensive way, and, but in any case, the Lord expects us to be his witnesses.

Here endeth the first lesson. So now, the second lesson. Back into the gospel, as recorded by Matthew again.

Glad to see these new friends, very welcome, hope you can come again. Anybody else back? Daryl hasn't been for a week or two, Ed's been holding the country together, and Kay got home, and quite a few of her friends are away, as you know, down the country. Matthew 5, the, what we often say is the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest man who ever lived.

If somebody asked you to answer in a sentence, what's wrong basically in the world, what would you say? Well, I guess most Christians would say, you sum it up in one word, sin. Okay, that's right, there's no doubt about that at all. What manifestation of it? And I would say, this is my answer to it, the greatest problem in the world is the problem of human relationships.

Whether it's in the home, or in the community, or in the nation. There are still a few nations, we forget about them, but there are still some nations at war. But you know, actually, ever since Adam sinned in the garden, really the world has been in a state of emergency.

We reminded ourselves last week of the contrast between the first book in the Old Testament, the first book in the New Testament. In the first book in the Old Testament, you have a story of course of the first Adam. And in the first book of the New Testament, you have the story of the last Adam.

As we said, the first Adam was made without a father, the second Adam, Jesus Christ, was made without a mother. The first Adam had no choice in coming into the world, he was created. No more choice than you and I have.

And he came into a perfect environment. Again, he had no opposition. He had no option to come in for sure, he just had to come.

But the very opposite is true in the case of the Lord Jesus. He did not have to come in one sense. It was voluntary.

He did not come into an ideal situation. Again, in the case of Adam, there was no thorn to go in his feet, there were no creatures to bite him, there was no opposition, it was the old children's hymns says, always

calm and bright. He was a perfect man with a perfect mind, perfect emotionally, perfect in every other way, in a perfect environment.

And in that perfect environment, he sinned. The Lord Jesus did not come into a perfect environment, he came into a hostile world. And we forget this very often.

People sometimes suggest that men like John the Baptist came to folk who were savages, they certainly were not. Remember, they built some of the greatest buildings in the world, the Greeks have built, and nobody knows when some of the temples in Egypt, or the pyramids of Sheops, or some of those things were built. But this we do know, that when Jesus began to teach, which he did here in the Sermon on the Mount, when he was set, when he was sat down, which was a custom of the rabbis, that immediately he sat down, he was in an antagonistic world.

Everything was going for Adam, everything was going against Jesus Christ. I do not like pictures of Jesus. I don't think we should have them, because you're not to make the likeness of any grave image, and I don't think we should make them.

And nobody has a clue what Jesus was like anyhow. But at least in England and in Europe, if you're going to the great cathedrals, Jesus is usually pictured as a very pathetic character. He looks effeminate.

He has a lamb in his arms. He looks as much as to say, please don't frown on me, I'll melt away. I don't believe Jesus was that at all.

I believe the first Adam was the most, obviously the most perfect specimen of manhood, ever in the world. I think maybe he was about six feet, six or six feet, or seven feet high. Marvelously proportioned, brilliant mind, everything about him was perfect.

I feel that Jesus Christ was the same. I don't think he was handsome, in the sense that we think of a man being handsome, because there was no beauty that we should desire him. But Jesus was a strong man.

And again, I say that I do not like pictures of Jesus, because they're so effeminate. After all, it would take a strong man to do what Jesus did. He sits down, and over here you've got the soldiers are listening, because there's been a story told ever since he was born, that this man was born to be a king, and one day he's going to manifest his kingdom.

And he's been under suspicion all this time, and now they say he's gathered a number of people, not only that, multitudes of people, right, previous to this chapter. The multitude followed him. He fed 5,000 one day, he fed 4,000 another day, besides women and children.

There were maybe 20,000 in those crowds. And again, I remind you, they had no blacktop roads, and they had no bus service. They went there on foot.

They went there because they were hungry and thirsting. There was a form of godliness. There was a temple, there were ceremonies.

I think one of the most ironic and almost diabolical things was, that the very day they crucified Jesus, they were celebrating the Passover in the temple. And he was the fulfillment of the Passover, and those blind dumb priests, hadn't a clue about him at all. And if you think they're crazy, well, what do you think about politicians today? Actually, it isn't the persistent arrogance of men, manifested in the fact that they will not

have Christ to reign over them.

We do not need a League of Nations or United Nations. After all, Christianity has not been weighed in the balances and found wanting, it's been tried, found difficult, and rejected. Whether it's human relationships on this level, that level, or internationally, here is the answer, the Prince of Peace.

We say we want peace, the Prince of Peace has already come. One of the great slogans in the life of Jesus, after all, he died as a king. And he shared his belongings before he died.

I've often thought how poor Jesus was. This first Beatitude is blessed are the poor in spirit. Some people have suggested you can reverse that.

Blessed in spirit are the poor, that's not what it says. But Jesus was poor. After all, kings are not usually born in a stable.

After all, usually a preacher, particularly these days, doesn't say to somebody in the congregation, lend me a penny, I want to use an illustration. That famous quotation of Jesus, rendered to Caesar the things of the Caesars, was proving he hadn't got a dime. He said to somebody in the crowd, you've got a penny, lend me it a minute, whose is a superscription? Poverty when he was born, poverty while he lived, poverty when he died.

There's no blessedness in poverty in itself. I've seen very arrogant people who are poor, but let's stay with this a minute. And he died poor.

Jesus spent all his life borrowing things. Now some people do that because they're too lazy to work, and some people do it for other reasons. It's the cheapest way to live, if you can live on your neighbors.

But Jesus was always borrowing. He wanted to cross the Sea of Galilee, what did he do? He borrowed a boat. He wanted to go down the road on an ass, what did he do? He said, you'll find one at the corner, borrow it for me.

He wanted to celebrate the Passover, he borrowed an upper room. He wanted a drink of water, what did he do? He borrowed it from a woman at the well. Jesus borrowed all his life, and in case you haven't gone far enough in your thinking, do you know what he did? He even borrowed somebody else's sin, because he's none of his own.

Isn't that the most sublime thing of all? Not only borrowed money, not only borrowed an ass, not only borrowed a cup, but actually he borrowed a woman's body to come in in the world. A body is thou prepared for. And yet just before he died, he gives away what he has.

He's a king. He's not a king, he's the king. The king of kings and the lord of lords.

What did he give away? He hadn't a thing. He had no castle, he had no horses. What did he give away? Well, he gave his mother to John.

He says, here's my mother, take care of her, will you do that for me? Must have been very nice. And he gave his benediction to the man on the cross that was dying. What did he give his disciples? He gave them the very thing that the world's wanting.

He gave them the same thing he gave them in the upper room. They were terrified, looking out of the window for fear of the Jews. And Jesus came in and raised his hand and he said, peace.

And then he says, my peace I leave with you, my peace. He didn't give them peace, my peace. The same peace that when they wanted to push him over the edge of the cliff, Jesus didn't get hot and bothered and his temperature didn't go up.

When they cast his name out as an evil thing, he didn't worry Jesus at all. And he said, that same peace which has governed and characterized my life is the peace which I'm going to give, the peace which I'm passing on to you. After all, that's what the world wants.

I think since 1850, the nations have made about 8,500 peace pacts and we haven't kept any of them. Well, what makes you think we're going to keep the next one? As I said last week, we have a United Nations, before that we have the League of Nations, before that we have a Conference of Nations in The Hague in Holland. And one of the most dangerous people in the world, he's not a man with a bomb in his pocket, the most dangerous man in the world is the man who thinks.

This again is why we have radio 24 hours a day and now TV in many cities we go to, there's a TV program 24 hours a day. Do you know why? Because if you sat down and thought you might rebel against some things, that they're saturators, satiators. As Dr. Tozer used to say to me sometimes, he used to say, Len, we're laughing our way to hell.

It's always interesting to me when I think again of the courage of Jesus. Do you think it took courage to go into a festival where the temple was crowded and make a little whip which was only an imitation whip and whip the money changers out. Don't you think on the last day, the great day of the feast, it was the greatest day of the greatest feast, it was the last feast which was the greatest, it was the last day which was the greatest.

And Jesus went right in the middle of the temple. For six days, the temple orchestra and the priests, at a given hour, they went out of the temple and they went down to the pool of Siloam and the priest had on his shoulder a golden vessel, not too large but it was pure gold. And he dipped it in the pool of Siloam and he carried it on his shoulder and they clapped their hands and they sang marching to Zion.

And he went right in the middle of the temple and he poured that water out for six days. One after the other, after the other, after the other, he poured out the water on the seventh day. The last great day of the feast, he didn't pour any water out.

And there the temple, there is a record, a historic record, that when Janitus was the high priest, there was a disturbance because one of the priests that was taking that water, tripped and he spilled it and there was a panic. And if I remember right, more than 2,000 people were killed in that building, there were over 6,000 people in it, it was no little back street mission hall, you know. And with 5 or 6,000 people looking on, Jesus stood in the very place where they poured out water and he said, listen, I am the water of life.

Huh? Why did they celebrate that water? Because one day God split a rock and out of that rock, water followed them and that rock was Christ. Why did Jesus say, I'm the light of the world? At that feast they had what looked like a cross with two big baskets of fire lit at night because there was no other illumination in the city. And they said, look how this illuminates the city, but Jesus says, I am the light of the world.

They said, you know what God did for our parents? He gave us manna in the wilderness and we lived. And Jesus says, I'll tell you something. You see, here he's knocking their theology sky high, he bursts it like sticking a pin in a balloon.

Why? Because he says, whosoever cometh unto me. Now they believe the Jews had a monopoly on God. God split the rock for us, that's why we pour the water.

Now Jesus says, your fathers ate manna and they drank that water but they perished. But he that drinketh of me shall have everlasting life. And more than that, afterwards the Spirit will come.

That's what he's talking about. The Spirit will come and indwell you, and out of his inmost being. And people say, now you get the Holy Spirit and out of your inmost being there'll be a river of water.

That's not what it says. It says when the Spirit comes and dwells in you, out of his inmost being, not your inmost being. He is the source of life.

And as long as you walk in the Spirit, that's true they'll proceed out of you, but it's coming out of him who is the indweller. Because if he moves out of you, brother you'll dry up like that. You can put all the emphasis you like on gifts and fruits of the Spirit, but the essence is the abiding presence of the Spirit of God himself.

Not the gift but the giver. A. B. Simpson wrote, I don't know too much of his poetry, let me think, he wrote something like this. Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord.

Once it was the feeling, now it is his word. Once his gifts I wanted, now the giver own. You see, he's changed the whole accent.

Now again I say Jesus here is demonstrating his courage. Standing in the midst, who is this man anyhow? I doubt if Isaiah dare have done this. What would Moses have done if he was? This is the fellow that goes around healing the sick, and straightening withered arms, and unplugging deaf ears, and touching blind eyes.

Who is he that stands here and says, I am the water of life. Would you like to do that in the midst of a synagogue with 6,000 people in? Do you think you have the guts to do it? Did I have? If he wasn't a son of God he was crazy, but he was a son of God. He's the God of very God.

And I say again, I see his courage in doing that. I see his courage here again, sitting in the midst of hostility. There are the Romans listening, what he's going to say about the kingdom.

Over here are some Pharisees and Sadducees. You see the Pharisees believed in the resurrection, the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. That's why they were Sadducees.

All right, think of that tomorrow. But anyhow, he had all these different people around him, you see, ready to pounce on him and tear away his doctrine. So here is Jesus surrounded with the multitude.

And many of them go up in the hill, and many of them are listening to his words. And again, as I say, he comes out with the greatest thing that was ever said. I said a few minutes ago, and still say that we would say sin is the first problem.

And if you say, first problem in the world, people say you're too theological. All right, the problem of human relationships, otherwise why do you have wars and strikes and all the divisions you have? But when you

get right down to the center of the whole thing, what is the cause? Well, as this good book says, the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. And the heart of the problem is the heart.

Isn't that it? The heart of our problem today is the human heart. If you put it right, you put the rest right. They used to tell us in Sunday school, when we were kids, about the man who had little boys that weren't quiet.

I don't know who they were, but some little fellows couldn't be quiet. And one day Daddy came home with a jigsaw puzzle, you know, and he thought, boy, you'll keep the little fellow quiet and send him in a room, and five minutes he comes in, Daddy, come in. Oh, I want to be quiet for another hour.

You haven't put it together again. Yes, I have. You couldn't.

Daddy went in and saw he got the thing right. Perfect map of the world. Didn't know the kid knew any geography anyhow.

Well, every piece is in place. It's beautiful. Have you done geography? No.

Well, how did he do it? Well, Daddy, it must have been made on an old piece of wood. On the other side, there's a picture of a man. And I put the man together.

And when I got the man together, I got the world right. Isn't that simple? Again, it's tragic. When you think of it, it costs billions and billions and billions a year to try and keep this world clean.

Have you ever tried to scrub a mud floor? You think you've got problems, you try doing that tomorrow. Go in the backyard on the garden with a bucket and water and you can take Amway stuff. Don't mention that, but it won't work.

Even Amway won't scrub a mud floor. Or if you could take some great big refrigerators with blocks of ice prefabricated and go right down where our pool is right now there on the equator practically and put an igloo up. And just walk away.

How long do you think it would last? An igloo on the equator? Melt away pretty quickly. I think I remind you last week that Toynbee, the greatest modern historian, says there have been 19 attempts to build a permanent civilization and 19 times the house has fallen down. Now we're making another big struggle at it.

Do you think it's going to stand up? Of course it won't. Why? Because there's something chronically wrong with the human heart. It's deceitful, it's diseased.

And there is no answer to the problem. You see, this turns all our thinking around really. Whatever psychologists and others say about your brain and your memory and the repressed complex of your subconscious or what.

The problem is the heart. The Bible says that out of the heart proceedeth. And as a man thinketh in his heart, even so he is.

And if you get the man right, the little guy says, I turned it over, I got the world right. Well, if you get the heart right, you'll get your personality right. I'm sure you wise people who went to university and college, at least maybe you've read some Greek mythology.

Ulysses in Greek mythology, how he captured Troy and then he put his men on board a boat and somewhere off the coast of Italy or Sicily somewhere there was an island with the sirens on. You know, when the siren wails on top of your automobile or the police thing, it comes from the sirens. These very beautiful women with very beautiful voices.

And every time they were coming down this channel, the boat would drift nearer and nearer and men would jump overboard because of the singing of these women, their beautiful looks and their singing and they'd jump overboard. So Ulysses says, my crew isn't going to be destroyed like that. So as they got nearer, he brought each man down into the cabin and he filled his ears with wax.

Sent him upstairs, he couldn't hear a thing. And then as they got near the island, he took a rope and he tied himself to the mast of the ship and they got by. Pretty painful, I guess.

I wouldn't like anybody sticking wax in my ears. Mother used to dig to get it out, but getting it in, that must be awful. But he got by, he didn't lose one member of the crew.

Everybody got back. And then, you remember, there was a fellow called Jason and the quest for the, what was he? He went for the Golden Fleece? I was going to say the Holy Fleece, it was the Holy Grail. The Golden Fleece.

And he had to go that way too and he thought, well, I don't know. I don't know if I could make it. Oh yes, yes, yes, I could.

And just before they left the dock, he took Orpheus on board. As Greek mythology says, the greatest singer that ever was, the man that played the lyre, you know. Not the lyre, it's there in Washington.

But the lyre, L-Y-R-E, the lyre. You pluck the strings and you play the harp. And he took Orpheus on board.

And when they got to the mouth of the channel, they were going, oh, they could see all these siren, gorgeous women, lining up on the rocks there, waving. And they had their garlands on and they began to sing. And he said, gave him the signal and he struck upon his harp.

And he sang and he sang and he sang as though his lungs would burst. And he just out sang the whole mob of them. And the ship went past and according to mythology, the women were so mad, they jumped in the sea and they were metamorphosed into the rocks.

That's why the rocks are so jagged there. As you know, women are jagged. But anyhow, they became the jagged rocks on the side of the sea.

But the point is, you see, they were beaten at their own game. He didn't have to fill their ears, he put a greater enchantment on board than the enchantment that was out there. Now, as long as we're in the flesh, there's going to be a tug of war.

I don't believe it has to be on the inside, in the sense of an old nature and a new, and I don't go for that. But this is sure that that world outside won't give up on you until they put you in a casket. And the devil won't give up.

You can get rid of your old man, but you can't get rid of the old devil. He's going to chase you, he's going to try and trap you. You give up one inch of ground in your life, spiritually, and he'll try and get three inches

back for it.

He's not going to give up. So we're in enemy territory. As long as we're in the flesh, there's going to be sniping and shooting and temptation and try and get us back into the old way of life.

One of the old hymns I like so much, I need thee every hour most gracious Lord, I need thee every hour, stay thou nearby, temptations lose their power when thou art nigh. Well, they're still there, but the pull isn't as great, because the good book says, if we're really where God wants us, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Now, you know, there's a lot of, I call stupid theology, some people think mine's stupid, which proves they're stupid, but apart from that.

Some of the theology looks stupid, you know, and the things that people say, and often they quote a hymn. Well, hymns, poets, I write some poetry now and again, it doesn't mean that you're the smartest person in the world, it doesn't mean it's true. You can get emotionally carried away.

There's one hymn that we sing a great deal, Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe. Well, that's true to a degree, and it's not true. It's true in the sense that you cannot do anything to merit salvation.

You see, you talk about works, watch it, watch it, watch it, you know, you can't do anything good. Well, you better read the Sermon on the Mount, the 16th verse of this chapter says, let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. You say, but Abraham was not justified by works.

No, he wasn't if you follow the Apostle Paul, but he was if you follow the Apostle James. The Apostle Paul says, Abraham was what? Justified by faith. James says, your father Abraham was justified by works.

What do you mean? Isn't that a violation? Doesn't one cancel the other? No, it doesn't. Why? I'm only justified by faith before God. But if my faith doesn't work, you can sing your head off, and shout your head off, and pray your head off, and do miracles.

But if your life is not consistent, if there are not fruits of the Spirit there, your neighbor doesn't have to believe you, and I don't blame them for doing it anyhow. Your mouth will never convince anybody, so you better watch out. As a matter of fact, I was thinking of this today.

My mother was a very quiet woman. They're very rare, but my mother was a very, very quiet woman. She really was.

And she insisted on us. She would say, now come on, we're going to have visitors for meals, and you know what it is in this house? Children are seen and not heard. You want to ask any questions, ask after supper tonight.

And so you sat dumb at the table and listened, and it's true, you know. So the saying is that, what was it? A wise old owl lived in an oak. The more he saw, the less he spoke.

The less he spoke, the more he heard. Why don't we all like that little bird? Pretty good, isn't it, for a dumb owl? But anyhow, you know the Bible has a lot to say. I was thinking about this from this fact, that Jesus does come down to the heart eventually.

You see, if Christianity or Christ can't deal with the heart, you better give up. Hang a sign up outside bankruptcy, because Mohammedanism can't do all for you. And Zen Buddhism won't do anything, and

they don't want much of Jesus up at Washington.

But I read in the Pentagon, now they've reserved a room, because so many of the people there want to sit in transcendental meditation in the lunch time. Isn't that something? Huh? They're going to Buddhism, not Christianity. As I said last week, out on the West Coast now, in school, they're teaching witchcraft, and yoga, and what's the other? Transcendental meditation.

In school. And I'm just waiting every day, when I read the news, to see that Madeleine Murray is objecting to that lousy stuff. No, she objects to the Bible.

She can put up with that junk. She can't put up with Jesus Christ and the Bible. You see, Christ is the enemy of everything which is wrong with human nature.

I don't care where it is. He's the enemy of sickness. He's the enemy of all our disturbances mentally.

He's the enemy of all our disturbances socially. Theologically, he's the enemy of it all. And he puts it all right down to one thing.

He doesn't say your environment's wrong for you. If you're in a better environment, you'll be a better person. It's like the guy saying, you may as well take an old hog, and wash him, and put him a dinner suit on, and a tall hat, and put him at the table.

Well, see if he lives like a hog, because you put him a tall hat on. He'll still be a hog. And a man is still the same, until his heart is cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God goes to abide in him.

But you see again, there's a responsibility on me, as well as on God. For instance, the word says, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. I remember one day, we were discussing a certain thing, and a brother said, well, I think we all talk too much.

So most of us said, well, I guess we do. And then he brought a text out, that I haven't thought of again for a while, but I was reading it just yesterday or today. In the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

That, in case you want it, is in Proverbs chapter 10 and verse 19, but in Proverbs 4, 23, it says, keep thy heart with all diligence. Now, it doesn't say God will keep it, it says you keep it. You keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

Now, in the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin. John Wesley said, he wouldn't stay in anybody's company, if he went to a house to visit. He said, I won't stay more than 15 minutes, because the conversation drifts.

People start becoming critical, and there's gossip and backsliding. Now, it doesn't have to be, but often it gets that way. Now, if it does, kiss them goodbye and go, or go without kissing them.

Pick your hat up and get out. You see. One of the most difficult things, maybe at the judgment seat again, will be that when we have to answer for every idle word that we've spoken, since the day that we were saved.

Brother, isn't that something? Now, the heart, out of the heart proceedeth. You see, Jesus here says, blessed are the poor in spirit. Now, there are all kinds of poverty.

It's a good thing he put poor in spirit. If he said, blessed are the poor, well, of course, that would give us a tremendous area to work in, but he doesn't say that. What was it? Was it Plato that went to see Diogenes, the philosopher who lived in rags? No, it was Diogenes who went to see Plato.

That was it. And Plato had gorgeous, gorgeous rugs. And the philosopher came in in his rags, and he wiped the dust of his feet on the beautiful, gorgeous carpet, and he says, you see my contempt for riches.

Well, they used to say to us sometimes, my mother used to say sometimes, now, think twice before you speak once. My mother had an awful lot of wisdom. I don't know where I got it.

I know I take after, well, anyhow, I take after my father. But anyhow, she used to say a lot of wonderful things, and she would say, think twice before you speak once. You know, that got stuck in my mind, but a bit later, I developed it a little myself, and I said, if mother says, think twice before you speak once, maybe if you think three times, you won't speak at all.

You know, you say to some, some people are more talkative than others. I'm not so sure that's right. I think very often people that you say are more talkative, perhaps they're not, but you know what, they all want to say the first word and the last.

That's why you think they're talkative. You know, well, I'll tell you what I think, or this is my, no, no, hold your horses. A good conversationalist is not somebody that sit and talk for hours, I could do that, now one time I used to do it, but now I know when to stop, I hope.

You think I don't, but I do. But in a conversation, a good conversationalist is one who gives his two cents worth, and he listens to the other man give his two cents worth. That's how you develop friendship, that's how you develop intelligence too.

Poverty of spirit. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed is the spirit of the poor.

No, no, no, no. Romans 8, 28 is one of the most quoted verses in the Bible, isn't it? To them all things work together for good. Everybody seems to know it.

All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. Now there's one text that is best read backwards way. To them who are called according to his purpose.

To them that love God, all things work together for good. If your neighbor's house is burned out and they get news the same day that daddy was killed coming home, you can't rush to an ungodly person and say all things work together for good, it's got nothing to do with them at all. God pities if you've got a cheap answer for explaining the will of God in everything.

It shows we've no sense, if you try and do that, you can't do that. But to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose, all things do work together for good. It may take you ten years to find out what God was doing last week, but nevertheless, he's working everything after the counts with his own will and he doesn't have to show you the proofs.

Maybe he took the photograph this week and he's got the negative and he'll develop it when he wants. Mind your own business. And maybe when he shows it, it won't be too good and maybe it will.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. I think that's the opposite. Maybe I said this last week.

I think that's the opposite side of faith. It's a negative side of faith. You say, well, Brother Ravenhill, I'm not so sure whether I'm poor in spirit or not.

I struggle with this a bit. It's always easy to quote a scripture, but then when you get to think, just a minute, let's stop here, break this up. Blessed are the poor.

What is poverty? Let's say this might be a good definition. Poverty is, in this particular situation, it's a sign of emptiness. Again, to quote a hymn, Nothing in my hands I bring.

There was a very saintly man in Scotland, I don't know, a hundred years back roughly, Robert Mary McShane. He died at the ripe old age of 29. He was a great scholar of Hebrew and Greek.

He had been a missionary to Jews in Palestine, and a fabulous kind of character. If you ever see his life, buy it. And who wrote it? Bonner, didn't he? Bonner wrote that.

Fabulous books about that size. Could somebody write a book that thick on your life when you're over 29? 29 years of age? He wrote lovely hymns like Jehovah said can you, I once was a stranger to grace and to God, I knew not my danger, I felt not my load. Christ my Saviour died on the tree, Jehovah said can you, meant nothing to me.

Jesus Saviour meant nothing to me. And then he becomes, he does a complete 100 percent, 100 degree turn, and he becomes a passionate lover, devoted of the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not so sure if he wrote the other hymn, O to be nothing, nothing, simply to lie at thy feet.

You see, in this case, oh let me say what I was going to say about it before. He said this in one of his sermons I read, I guess 50 years ago. And I've always remembered it.

He said, you know, the chief sin of mankind, which we've said before, the chief sin started in heaven when Adam said I'm going to be as God. The chief sin is not drunkenness or adultery or the devilish things that fill jails. The chief sin is saying, I'm going to run my life, God's not going to run it.

That's what Satan got kicked out of heaven for. Read, read Rutherford's letters, some of the most amazing things ever written spiritually. Let me step back a minute and think of a Lutheran preacher.

I think it was Seitz, Dr. Seitz who said that pride is the last thing to leave the human heart and the first thing to return, if you backslide. MacShane said, pride, pride of face he said, pride of race, pride of lace, pride of pace, pride of grace, you can get proud of almost everything. Diogenes says, look at my contempt for your rich carpets.

But Plato went back to the house of Diogenes and he had great big holes in the rug. When Plato went in, he said, I can see your pride peeping through the holes in the carpet. You can be proud of your poverty.

You can be proud of your spirituality. You can be proud of your pedigree. But when you come to Christ, everything goes, out he goes.

I come as a bankrupt to him. Nothing in my hands I bring. I'm poor.

You read it and see how often the psalmist says, bow down thine ear and hear me. I'm poor and needy. And yet he was one of the greatest men that ever lived.

He was a king. He was a ruler. Gave us these matchless psalms.

He gave us roughly, what half of the 150 psalms, about 75 of David. And yet he says, bow down thine ear and hear me. Remember that beautiful psalm when he says, this poor man cried.

Wouldn't it be horrible if you had to get to a certain degree of morality or a certain degree socially or a certain degree intellectually or a certain degree theologically before God would accept you? Nothing in my hands I bring. I don't want to bring my lousy record. Oh, that's too bad.

Forget it. But just as I am, without one plea. I don't know why we always sing the first verse.

I like the other verse that says, just as I am and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot, but to thee whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Well, how do you know you're poor in spirit? You see, if God's going to fill you, he's got to empty you.

Do you remember the prayer of Simeon when he prayed over Jesus in his arms? He said, this child came for the what? The pulling down and the building up. Wasn't that what he said? This child has come for the fall and rise of many generations. But you have to fall before you rise.

You have to be empty before you can be filled. You have to be unclothed before you can be clothed. You see, the work of the Spirit is this, first of all, it's conviction.

That conviction may bring confusion, confusion and condemnation. I think one of the weaknesses of modern evangelism, as I said before, is this, we preach a message for 20 minutes, and we expect to break up the stony heart of a man, sow the seed, water it, reap a harvest in 20 minutes. Wouldn't it be nice if you could do that in Kansas? Just sow your corn and reap it in the same day.

That would be nice for you, Brother Joe, wouldn't it? Been struggling with his hay crop. Man, if you could only get the hay up in a day, put the seed in and say, we'll be ready by tonight. Call the gang in and let's get it all up.

Amway folk will be in to help us. That would be nice, but you can't do it. Hmm? But you see, the modern evangelist lives on his love offering and his prestige.

So he's got to report how many people came every night, how many came to the altar, how many did that. We're so statistically minded, we're so stupid. You know, we could do it the whole year, we're passing a law somewhere, I don't know where they pass it, make no altar calls for a year.

I wish they'd do that. Kill some of the evangelists. They live on the, they're like the serpent that lives on its own tail, eating its own tail.

They live on their statistics, they're inflated and conceited. You know, it used to be in the old days, there was a period of conviction and trouble and strife. Paul writes to, wasn't it Corinthians, when he says, little children for whom I travailed in birth until Christ was born.

And you can say what you like, you'll never change my poor old mind, I mean, I'm too old, you know, you never teach an old dog new tricks anyhow. But you'll never change my mind. You can't have revival without travail.

The church could have revival, she will not travail for it. There are three things, in normal, in normal, childbirth, there's conception, and congestion, and gestation, and sometimes other things too. But, and then the last one's what? Birth.

You can't change the order. You can't change, there never has been an earth-shaking revival, that has not been preceded by months, and sometimes years, of prevailing, prevailing, prayer and agony. Who wants to do it? Forget it.

Why do it, when you can say a few words, and tell people you'll perish before you go home, or Jesus may come, and you kind of like to run off the road, and you'll go to heaven, and what will happen before you get home tonight? We didn't belong it. You see, Finley and these other men, could so preach, and shoot the arrows of God, into the hearts of men. As a matter of fact, George Whitfield one day said, I'm going to shoot the arrows of God into your heart.

And he says, here is an arrow from the Almighty, here it comes, and the whole congregation ducked their heads, they said. Now that's preaching. But you see, you cannot build up, until God will not do it.

He could, but he won't. This child, in the temple, Jesus is held up there, in the arms of Simon. He says, this child has come for the fall, and rise, of many people.

And before God is ever going to lift a man, he's going to cast him down. Before ever he clothes him, he's going to strip him. Strip him of all his self-righteousness.

You see, this servant of the man, is playing insanity, to a world in which we live. What chance is a man who's poor in spirit? Ours isn't a culture of blessed are the poor, it's blessed are the prosperous. Blessed are the meek? No, no, no.

Blessed are the mighty. Blessed are those who stand and say, the Lord will work it. No, blessed are the go-getters.

You see, this is one reason why this book will never be popular, because it goes against all the philosophy, and reasoning of the world. This is a day of self-expression, isn't it? Getting on, putting on, going on. Where? What are you putting on? Where are you going on to? Now I don't believe prosperity is a sin.

I remind you of this, the scripture does say this. How hardly, shall they that have riches, enter the kingdom of heaven. I didn't say that, so don't argue with me about it, I'm telling you what the scripture says.

There are more chances of people becoming arrogant, and self-confident in riches, than in poverty. Though people can be as rebellious in their poverty, no question about that at all. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

This is that one superior everlasting kingdom. Again, as Revelation 11, I like that. Boy, I just feel as I, I wish the voice were like a trumpet, and I could stand on top of Mount Everest, and tell the whole world in every language.

Listen you dumb folk around there, do you know what? This whole mess one day, these islands of the sea, these vast continents, are going to become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ. You better, you better watch out. You've rubbed your name, put a name on God, he's going to rub your name off.

It was God's world when he started, the devil jumped in, the old usurper, the cheater, and he's got pretty good control. And again, Jesus recognized the prince of this world. The kingdoms of this world, shall become the kingdoms of our God.

So there you've got the two kingdoms, they're opposing kingdoms. One's a kingdom of darkness, the other kingdom of light. One's a kingdom of death, the other's a kingdom of life.

There is a broad way, that leadeth to destruction. There are many people on it. There is a narrow way, and few there be that find it.

Do you know what? As you get further up the road, you'll find that the way gets narrower, not broader. And it not only gets narrower, that wouldn't be so bad if it got narrower, but rather it gets steeper, and it gets lonelier. And so they say, well who do you think you are, the apostle Paul? Who are you trying to be? You can't be a Christian, I mean look at this beautiful house we're in now.

It's an Amway product in one sense. Alright, so what? The house in itself, is neither evil nor good. We suggested, if there was more poverty.

You see, the church fell for that, about the 12th century, didn't it? When folks started going into monasteries, Saint Francis of Assisi is a supreme example. Put on rags, and went down the road, and he talked to the birds. Nothing now, people talk to plants.

But apart from that, everything that he did was so wonderful. Dirty, lousy creature. Pity Amway wasn't around then, they might have sold him some soap.

He never washed, a lot of things he didn't do, and he became a supreme example of the Christian life. So he did. Before long, monasticism became one of the richest things in the world.

It was destroyed by riches. What did Jesus say? If you're going to be saved and sanctified, get six acres in the middle of a desert, somewhere in Arizona, and put a windmill up, and dig a well, and live there happily ever after. Jesus didn't say that, he says you'll be in the world, but don't be of the world.

You'll be in the world, but don't let the world get in you, or you'll sink. You see those big ships, we don't have many of them left, but I remember in New York, we used to sometimes go down, and you'd see the Ile de France there, that vast vessel, about a thousand feet long, and next to it the United States, and next to it, of course, the best of all ships, the Queen Elizabeth, and next to it another ship, and oh, those magnificent boats. Don't have them anymore.

Sold them for scrap. Maybe you'll shave with one tomorrow morning. But, you know, those boats are all right, in the middle of the Atlantic.

While they were in the Atlantic, they were all right, but if the Atlantic got in them, brother, you were in trouble. And you're all right in the world. You don't need to fear the world, the flesh, the devil, your nerves, or anything else, as long as Jesus has cleansed your heart, and he's living inside of it.

Brother, let the world go to hell if it wants. You stay on course with him, and say, Christ is in the vessel. I smile at the storm.

And I've told you about that famous fish I caught one day. It was about as long as that. Well, that's evangelistically, it was about that length, but it weighed 34 pounds.

And we took it home, and the cook at the house where we live in the Bahamas, she's a great cook, and she made a great job of it. And when we cut it up to be eaten, they said, well, now, give brother Ray the first slice, so the fish, he caught it. Well, it was a big kingfish, beautiful thing.

I enjoyed catching it, I'll tell you that. But you know, when I taste it, oh boy, I didn't get to, have you eaten kingfish before? No. I don't want to eat it again, if it's like this.

Did you put any lemon on it? No, pass the lemon, so squeeze the lemon on it. It reminds me of a little girl, who lived next door to us, when I was a kid, and I was about five, and she was about four, and she couldn't say my name. She used to knock at the door, and say, Mrs. Ray, can your lemon come out? But Leonard, she should have known that, but she got it mixed up.

But anyhow, we put lemon on the fish, and then somebody said, it needs salt. What do you mean it needs salt? How old is that fish? It's 34 inches long, 34 pounds. How old is it? Oh, maybe 15 years.

Well, it's been in the saltiest part of the ocean of the world, for 15 years. What do you mean it needs salt in it? Are you suggesting the salt hasn't gone through its skin into the fish? The skin is no thicker than the page of my Bible. And yet the salt doesn't go through.

Are you suggesting God can keep a fish in the ocean without salt in it? But he can't keep you in a rotten world like this, without sin getting in? The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. And as long as you stay in the place of submission, obedience to God, you'll be kept cleansed from sin. When you get out of his will, you get messed up and soiled up again.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Yeah, but Mr. Raymond, you're not getting too far. How do you know when you're empty? I'll tell you how you know when you're empty.

If somebody does something that irritates you, if there's nothing in you to be irritated, you'll not be irritated. That simple logic? This finger, I got something on it in the garden. If I walk in the garden, I get bitten somehow.

And I was in it just before we went away. And man, it ached. I walk in the night, something had nipped it.

Now if I cut it off, it wouldn't ache. It'd ache for a while till it got healed up. But I mean, when I had no finger, how could it be bitten? After all, if there's nothing in you, it can't come out.

Do you remember what Jesus said? The prince of this world cometh and findeth nothing in me. Isn't that in John 14? Right, John 14, 30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me.

Now, jump over to John, 1st John, 1st John, chapter 4 and verse 18. Herein is our love made perfect, for that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. Now you're getting in deep water, aren't you, if you tie those two together.

The prince of this world cometh and findeth nothing in me. I read a book this week, and I knew what the man was talking about in one sense, because he said, you see, he was talking about physical material prosperity, and he said some people don't make it because they shoot at nothing and hit it. Now how can you shoot at nothing and hit it? The devil can't do that, as cute as he is.

You can't shoot at nothing and hit it. Now, supposing somebody comes along, you see, it's easy again, as I've said very often, it's very easy to stand in church and sing, you know, when I surveyed a wondrous cross, isn't it, on which the prince of glory died, and you go on a little bit further, I can't just think of the phrase I was wanting to think of there. Maybe I'll come in a minute, but anyhow, it's easy in a situation to sing a hymn or to say, well, as some people say, you know, I'll tell you one thing, I know I'm nothing and nobody.

Well, hold your horses, because an hour from now, somebody may tread on your toes, metaphorically, and you'll burst out in anger. Well, if you're nobody, you couldn't answer, could you? If you've no opinion of yourself, nobody can shoot what isn't there. If you've no pride, nobody can offend your pride.

You see, if I'm empty, if I'm poor in spirit, somebody says, I don't think much to her, she's nobody. Do you know what will make them mad if you say you're right? Oh, the phrase I was thinking of is, when we're singing, when I surveyed the wondrous cross, I'm poor contempt on all my pride. Oh, it's easy to do that in church before you take communion.

You can pour contempt on your pride. Your trouble is when somebody else pours contempt on your pride, isn't it? Now, if you've no opinion of yourself, let's put it in the language of, was it Martin Luther that said, he that is low needs fear no fall. If you were sitting on the floor, could you fall? You can slip off your chair, I hope you don't, but if you're on the floor, you couldn't fall.

Now, if you've no opinion of yourself, nobody will ever offend you. There's a wonderful verse, I always forget whether it's 156, 165, in Psalm 119. Jesus, the Psalmist says, Great peace, peace again, have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.

Are you in that state? Hmm? Do you never get offended about anything? Because if you're offended, there's something in you hasn't died yet. The Prince of this world comes, Jesus says, and he finds nothing in me, there's no territory. And remember, Jesus went from A to Z in temptation, and Satan pounded him day after day, night after night, forty days, forty nights.

He had nobody to go to, he didn't sing hymns with somebody, he didn't call somebody on the phone, he didn't say, I hope I can meet a friend. Jesus was battered in the wilderness, in the temptation, physical, mental, sexual, everything as a man is. And he won every round of the temptation.

And therefore he smiles, he laughs in the face of the devil, he says, the Prince of this world cometh, and he finds nothing in me. You know, Jesus taught once about sitting down and counting the cost. We often enter into things we don't count the cost for, don't we? Somewhere along the line we've all done it I guess.

I know people who say, you know, well I put too much in that automobile, I should have spent far less, I wish I had, alright, somebody does it in something else. And we're warned in the word of God about entering into something without first sitting down to count the cost. Wesley has a hymn in which he says of Jesus, he emptied himself of all but love.

You remember, when it says that he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but he emptied himself, the theologians call it the kenosis theory, they argue about it, of how much did he empty himself. Again, in that old Christmas hymn, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, you remember, Charles Wesley says, Mild he laid his glory by, born that man no more may die. He laid his glory by.

You remember his disciples were competing for something and what Jesus did, he took a towel and girded himself. I guess they wish it stood on a chair and thundered at them for about an hour, but to see him quietly say nothing but take a towel and some soap and say, you're not washing my feet. Good old Peter always has something to say.

Always chirped up first and said his piece and said it last, and that's why we think he said so much, and he did. He spoke to Jesus more often, not only than any other individual disciple and all the other disciples put together, and conversely, Jesus spoke to him more than the other. But you see, if you sing, I don't think it's in our hymn book, but there's a lovely hymn, O to be like thee, blessed Redeemer.

Ever sing it? Do you know it? O to be like thee, blessed Redeemer, full of compassion, pure as thou art, and so forth. So it goes, O to be like thee, loving and gentle. All right, all right, but wait a minute, before you put it in print, before you shoot it to heaven and say, Lord, I want to, I want to get to the heights of spirituality in this life.

I don't want to die as dumb as I am now. Take me on to maturity. And the Lord says, well all right, but wait a minute, you're saying, O to be like thee, blessed Redeemer.

Do you really mean that? I mean, are you a candidate for the next 40 days of temptation rougher than any period you've ever had? Or think of the worst day you've ever had in your life in temptation and trial, and you say, Lord, give me another 39, add it on to it like that. I'm ready for it. Let's go.

Hmm? Fasting alone in the desert, or having a Thomas that doubts you, or having a, having a Judas that betrays you. You see, Jesus, so completely sold out to the will of God, there wasn't one pull that Satan couldn't get on him. Satan couldn't get a pull on him.

The prince of this world comes to him and he finds every error he comes. The door, the room's empty, the door's boarded up, gone out of business, bankrupt on Jesus, on, on God the Father. I don't want anything for myself.

My supreme delight is to do the will of him that sent me. As he was, so we in this world. Peter follows it by saying he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

When he was reviled, he reviled not again. He did no sin, after all, what's in comes out. There's no question about it.

We, we give ourselves away most often in our unguarded moments, don't we? I mean, if somebody's coming and say, well, let's be real spiritual tonight. I mean, you know, let's put it on and let them know how much we read our Bibles and we do this and put on a good show. We'll be cat and dog tomorrow.

But anyhow, but let's put a good appearance on, hmm? If I walked across this room with a, a tumbler full of water and I tripped, what would come out of it? Water. When I go back and I fill it with oil and I trip, what's it? Oil. Whatever is in will come out.

If there's nothing in, nothing comes out. You see, if somebody rubs your nose in the dust, as you say, it won't worry you if you've already said, well, Lord, when you found me, I was a chief of sinners and I'm still unworthy and I'm not living for the honors of this world anyhow. The prince of this world cometh and he findeth nothing in me.

John, that, that was first John 4 we're in. Let me look at this before we finish here. John, I was reading John 4 again today.

It's a lovely, um, I think it's John 4. It's John 5. John 5, verse 41. I receive not honor from men. Verse 43.

I am come in my Father's name and you receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe which receive honor one of another and seek not the honor that cometh from God only? Isn't that lovely? Jesus never expected while he was in this earth he was going to receive honor from anybody.

He was, he was, he was trading something if you like, which was antagonistic to this world in which we live, a materialistic world that measures everybody by the great God's success. Now again, there's nothing wrong with success but there's wrong, there's something wrong with success if you get success at the price of sacrificing some principles you have in Christ or sacrificing your prayer life or sacrificing your family life then brother, you're on the wrong road. I don't care if it's paved with gold the whole way.

Jesus said, I don't expect any honor of this world. How can I? I'm in enemy territory. Now you get that clear in your mind you're in enemy territory.

It's a narrow way. Few there be that find it. What are you going to get? You're going to get opposition from the right, from the left, from the front, behind everywhere it's opposition.

But you see, one day you sat down and counted the cost and said, Lord, I do not care what it costs on this pilgrim journey. I'm prepared to take up my cross. I'm prepared to be enlisted with those who are poor in spirit.

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. I have nothing of myself. I'm totally dependent on him.

I have nothing to commend myself. I've tried to serve the Lord more than fifty years. I've been preaching more than fifty years now.

And I'm happy. I've enjoyed an awful lot of it, all of it. It's been very wonderful.

But what have I, as the apostle says, what have I that I didn't receive? If I had anything it's only that it's I've been able to take it and turn it over in God, for God, through God, that somebody else might be reached and somebody else might be blessed. So poverty of spirit means an emptiness. I've no opinion of myself.

These days are self-assertiveness. You know, push to the front, get on. It's very, that's just about the philosophy of the world, isn't it? Self-expression.

Aggressiveness. Project yourself. You've got to make your way.

Well again, I don't think you honor God by sitting in the side of the road begging either. But it's again, it's a case, again a case of getting your values, your priorities right. And realizing while I'm in this world, if I'm going to follow the way of Christ, I'm going to be considered by somebody a numbskull.

Even if you're money, you can be considered that too. You've changed your values, you've changed your total interest. There came a day when you were stripped of your self-righteousness and your self-opinions and your self-interest and your self-glory and self-everything else.

And you laid it all on one side and say, well if that's the price I'm willing to pay, I'm gladly, I'd be glad to be stripped if God's going to clothe me. Clothe me with meekness. Clothe me with gentleness.

What does the apostle, I forget the scripture, where it is right now, he talks about the gentleness and meekness of Christ. Brother, you can't find too much of that in the church, never mind outside of it. There's an awful lot of politics as you know.

There's an awful lot of place seeking. But you see, if you get downgraded like that, do you know what, it will make a bit of difference. Amy Wilson Carmichael has a beautiful poem.

Sometime I get it written out for you, give you all a copy of it. This is victory. When your name is cast out as an evil thing.

When you haven't done anything wrong and yet somebody distorts. You know, even the good that you've done is looked upon with contempt and they twist it and something. Jesus says, How can you believe which receive honor one over another? I got sick to death.

I don't go to many conventions anymore. It takes about 15 minutes to blow the speaker up that's just coming in. He's this, he's that, he's the other, he's written all these books, he's been the president of this, he's been the head of something else.

Blah, blah, blah, blah. On you go, on you go, on you go. It's a day of personality.

It's a cursed thing. Even in the church you've gone. It's almost like watching an Emmy award on TV.

This man has done this, been in so many films. She's done this, she's done that, she's done the other. There's some lovely books.

My wife's reading one or two of them now by Amy Wilson Carmichael. She's a little Irish lady. I preached in the church.

She, she used to preach in a church in Ireland. She had a curvature of the spine. If I remember right, she went to India and stayed there 35 years without ever coming home for a furlough.

She adopted about 350 children. And part of the philosophy and teaching was to, to print lovely books like Goldcord and she put a gorgeous mountain scene. And then you turn over and there'll be a picture of maybe two or three beautiful flowers.

You know, you can kind of see them blowing in the breeze. And the books are profusely and beautifully illustrated. And they've sold, they've sold for the last I don't know how many years, 30, 40 years.

Sold very well. Somebody made an observation one day. They said, you know what, she's given us some of the most beautiful pictures in the world in all her books but she has never published her own photograph.

In other words, she tried to keep out of the picture. She isn't interested that she was at the front and say, look, this is the woman that's done this. This is the woman who's the last I forget how many last was it, last 10 years she never got out of bed to lift her up and put her back and yet she still went on with that orphanage and did a fabulous job there in India.

But she didn't want to project herself, you see. Oh, I've been with, I've heard Peter saying, hey listen, you, could you get me in so and so's church? If you do, you know, boy, they love offering that, like that. If you get in there, I'll get you in with so and so because I just finished with him, you know.

There's an awful lot of politics and business done in this wretched stunt of evangelism very often. How can you receive honour from God if you're already so full of honour from each other? Nearly everywhere I go, of course, just I guess because I'm grey, getting old and grey, wiser of course, but anyhow. And nearly always when I stand up to preach, they say, well, here's Dr. Ravenel.

Well, I'm not a doctor. I usually say, well, yes, I'm your doctor. Your theology is so sick, it needs one.

But I don't have a degree in that sense and nobody's ever bothered to give me one. I don't suppose that they ever will. Honours don't matter.

I've heard men say, you know, they say, do you know how I could get one? Somebody says, well, I'll tell you where I got mine. Don't mention this, but you've only 10 questions to answer, send \$50. You get it like that.

You know, they're going to give them with Amway coupons soon. But apart from that, you can nearly get them with soap coupons these days. And that's about all they're worth anyhow.

That's all they're worth. You receive honour one of another. Now, there is really in your heart, right down in that little corner where your husband, your son, your sweet daughter, Frank Carnesby, in the deep core of your heart, can you look up to God today and say, Lord, there isn't an honour in the world I want except your smile on my life.

If you gave me a check for \$25,000, I'm limiting it to two, but anyhow, if two of you do, do you know, I wouldn't feel any happier going through that door this afternoon. Sometimes, I wonder what's wrong with myself. I say, but Martha, you know, sweetie, I don't know there's a thing in the world I want except the glory of God and revival.

But if you offer me anything else, I'm not interested. I don't think we should be. You know, when it comes right down to the good old book here, it's pretty severe in the things it says.

It says, um, what? Well, I'll tell you what it says. It says having food and raiment. Let's be content.

And you know what it says? Your bread and water is sure. It doesn't even say peanut butter. Not even in the amplifier.

Your bread and water is sure. Anything you get over bread and water is a luxury. If you have two coats in your closet, you're wealthy.

If you have You see, he puts it right down to the bare, bare necessities of life. As I told you the other day, that guy on TV was, I found him profoundly moving about two weeks ago when he'd been up there, he'd been speechwriter for Goldwater, he'd been in and out of the White House and politics and everything else up there and, er, he refuses to pay taxes to the nation because they waste, they've wasted so much money. He'll pay it for the local tax, he'll pay it state tax, he will not pay it to the government.

So they've taken everything away from him except his house. What have you learned out of this? He says, it's been the greatest lesson in my life. I've learned how much I can live without.

That's what Socrates said. They brought Socrates into a banquet. The table was bending in the middle with golden candelabras and fruits and exotic things and all the men lined up with the chaplets on the hair and the beautiful white coats and he came in and they applauded and they walked round to the table and they said, Your Excellency, Socrates, the greatest thinker in the world today, this, this splendid banquet costs, you know, fabulous money is on your behalf.

They said, he just waved his hand and turned from it and said, Look what Socrates can live without. It's amazing how much you can live without. Oh, I'm not just thinking of having one less car, I mean, it's amazing how much of other things you can live without.

You're in bad position if you have to treat, trying to impress people, you're spiritual. You better go to the cross and get another dealing. Or if you like to boast of how many folk you testified to, or how many tracts you gave out, you're getting off course.

The thing that really matters is, do you day by day, say as Wesley said, Jesus, you lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly. If you can find consolation and comfort in anything you can stick your name on, or write your name on, or put in the bank as you missed it, you missed it, you better turn back, you missed the bend in the road. He has to be my joy, he has to be my peace, he has to be my total satisfaction.

As I say, we stand in church and sing so, you know, look like angels. Jesus, you lover of my soul, we sing, thou, oh Christ, art all I want. Yesterday I was irritable because I was guaranteed I'd get that thing in gauchos, you know, some savage woman grabbed it just before me.

Instead of letting you be savage and grabbing it. And that other thing we were going to get, you know, when we got there it had gone, oh brother, brother, I tell you, when you drive 20 miles and get cheated like that, it's enough to try the patience of Job, isn't it? No, wait a minute, you may have to try it in a concentration camp, so cheer up. That was just a lesson to prepare you for something bigger, you see.

God's ways are so different from our ways. Blessed is he that is successful, not necessarily blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom. The kingdom is not merely some island we're going to live on in eternity.

The kingdom of God is within you. And the kingdom of God, says the apostle Paul, is not meat and drink, it's not your social standing, but it's righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. You can get into a place where you might never see a stake for 10 years.

You might get into a place where you don't see another Christian. And as I've said before, you can wall me in, but you can't roof me in. Paul gets arrogant almost at the end of Romans 8, we quit right here, and he says, what shall separate us from the love of Christ? He goes down that terrible list, tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, and sword, height, depth, and then he puts his shoulders back and says to those shouting into hell itself, the devil, not any other creature shall separate me.

He's gone through an awful lot, tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sword, height, or depth, anything, no, and he says, not any other creature, devil, do you worse. You haven't got a fire in hell, you haven't got anything you can make a weapon out of when you're forged in hell, and you can stick it into my life, and you can separate me from friends, and separate me from my church, and separate me from my Bible, but I'll tell you what, you can't separate me from him, because he said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Now those are riches.

You see, there are some things that the moth and the rust can corrupt, and thieves can break through and steal. You can take everything I have right up to the skin of my body, but from the skin inward, brother, I'm the boss. From the skin outward, the world is the boss, the devil might be the boss, but from the skin inward, I've got some things, again, that no moth nor rust can corrupt.

No thief can break through and steal them. I can shake my fist in the face of calamity and tragedy and adversity and say, these things are mine. When Jesus said, what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? You know what the evangelist does? He stacks all the wealth of the world and he goes chasing around old museums and gold mines and stacks them all up on one side of the scale and says, that's the wealth of the world, here is the soul of a man and notice what he does it, it's worth more than the whole world.

Isn't that what it means? I don't think so. What does it mean? Well, we put the emphasis on the gold and the value of the soul. I think it's right bang in the middle.

What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world? After all, the world isn't going to be thrown at you. The government isn't going to sign America over to you. If you gain the world, if you gain a thousand more acres to your land and a million more dollars next year at this time brother, you'll have grafted, you'll have, I don't mean grafted the wrong way, you'll have worked for it and sweat for it, nobody's going to give it.

And if you gain the whole world, you'll gain it and if you lose your soul you lose it. Because nobody can take it from you. If the Pope put us in hell he put us in hell this afternoon.

Forget the old bachelor, he can't do anything. Who's going to worry about him? It's my soul. So that haughty Henley, the proud pagan defying deity said out of the night that troubles me black as the pit from pole to pole I thank whatever gods there be for my unconquerable soul.

It matters not how straight the gate, how charged with punishment the scroll, I am the master of my fate, I'm the captain of my soul. Exactly. From here till you shuffle off this mortal coil as Shakespeare said you're the boss.

You can tell God to go on his way he don't know what to do with him and you know what? He won't knock your brains in and he won't snap your will and he won't knock down the door of your heart. He'll stand by you can blaspheme you can curse his name you can break every commandment in the book and God won't even put his finger on you. He'll let you do it.

You gain the world maybe you lose your soul nobody can lose it for you. Your mother your father your in-laws your outlaws no sorry it's your soul do with it as you will. There's only one way to enter the kingdom of heaven thank God there are not two ways otherwise the boys out there would be after us.

The richest man comes the same way nothing in my hands I bring I'm poor in spirit I have nothing to merit salvation except of other lousy sins a record I'm not proud of but I bring it to you and again the miracle that that precious red blood of Jesus red blood on a black heart can wash it as white as snow and the kingdom of God can come in us because the king comes in. Not only is the king coming but if we're really born again of the spirit the king has already come. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness and joy and peace and when all the other things dry up you can still have a constant supply of righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

Blessed are the poor in spirit I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold wrote old Bev Shea wrote that hymn didn't he? How true it is. He sang it to the king of England or was it the queen? The king I think when the no it was the queen when the queen came through somebody came through Canada anyhow and an Indian chief was asked to sing and he sang it right in front of the royal family there. I'd rather have Jesus than silver and gold I'd rather be his than have riches untold.

I'm the child of a king and some of God's kingly children are in jails this afternoon in prisons in Russia beating it out on the side of a road or in a forest in Vietnam so let's thank God for what we've got and let's by the grace of God stay in that place of humility because this is part of what it is the poor are always humble the poor in spirit I mean not the poor one of the ingredients of true poverty of spirit is humility gentleness meekness the spirit of Christ being in us oh now we thank you this afternoon for all that you've given us in Jesus Christ it's only through him that anything is possible but he is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption we're going back into a hostile world it doesn't love thee but it won't love us if we love thee properly it may not respect us but we're so glad that with Christ in us we can go out to all its arrogance its militant godlessness and all that belongs to the world the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life we want to go and live as children of God by faith in Jesus Christ we want to be like a white lily that floats on a the scum of a pond and it looks more beautiful because of its environment help us to show forth the beauty and the praise of him who has called us out of darkness into his most marvelous light we give you thanks in Jesus name Amen.

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