

# Practical Problems in Christianity

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*Leonard Ravenhill discusses the transformative power of God in the lives of believers, emphasizing holiness and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:23:19

**Scripture:** Leviticus 20:26, Psalm 45:13, Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 1:1

**Topics:** "Problems in Christianity"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the consistency of a spiritual life and what it means to truly commit to the Lord. He refers to the book of Hebrews, particularly chapter 11, which showcases individuals whom God has chosen despite their flaws and shortcomings. The preacher emphasizes that one's spiritual journey is not determined by their lineage or inherited virtues, but rather by their personal commitment to God. He shares a story of a man named Jerry McCauley, who was once a drunken bum but found redemption and transformation through God's grace. The preacher also uses the analogy of a potter shaping clay to illustrate how God can take someone with no character and mold them into something beautiful.

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## Transcript

There are many ways of, I suppose, describing the Church. One could say that the Church is a hospital, not for people with bruised egos, but for people who are sick spiritually. It could be described as an armoury, where we come to put on the whole armour of God.

It could be described as a school, where we come to learn the things of God. There are many comparisons, and one of them, I think, might be that the Church is really a beauty parlour. Because there is an exaltation, I think in Psalm 45 it says, The King's daughter is all glorious within.

These are days when there's a great deal of emphasis on beauty. I was in a house a while ago, and a lady told me she'd been going to the same beauty parlour for 25 years. I thought, well, heavens, what were you like when you started? They'd been trying to repair her for 25 years, and she was still a sight.

The King's daughter is all glorious within. There is an internal beauty. As a matter of fact, we're exalted, as we said last night, to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

And one of the sad things about the day in which we live, it seems to me, is that we're more afraid of the word holiness than we are of the word sinfulness. We talk about holiness, you start thinking about snake handlers, people who are extremely eccentric and so forth and so on. I want to talk to you tonight with really two things in view.

Not preach, just talk to you. If I can keep there. And the idea is to try to explain some more things about the spiritual life.

What is consistent with the spiritual life, what is not? For those who have already made a commitment to the Lord this week, and already there are crowds gathering, or opposition has come. Others will say, well, I'd like to do that, but you know, I've been to a malter so many times, and I haven't got very far. Well, we've been considering in the morning sessions, the epistles of the Hebrews, at least particularly the 11th chapter.

It seems to me that that's a kind of exhibition place, where God is put on display. Men and women that he has taken hold of, and found them very, almost disreputable characters. Again, when you think of Abraham, you usually think of a man towering, you know, about 12 feet high spiritually.

You think of Abraham, you think of Moses, you think of David. They're a bunch of rogues. David was an adulterer, Abraham was a liar, Noah got drunk.

Jephthah made some ridiculous vows. You go down the list of characters, you'll find them kind of despicable, but then God gets them and makes them. And he's still in the making business.

And I want to talk to you for a little while, anyhow, a little while. I want to talk to you about a character. The epistle of Peter, the first epistle of Peter, the first chapter, the first verse, the first word.

Which again happens to be Peter. And if you know the epistle at all, it says, Peter an apostle. Peter is the apostle who wrote this epistle.

Just in case you're confused, an epistle is not the wife of an apostle. The epistle was written by Peter, and immediately I read that and challenged. Peter was a dropout.

He was a problem boy in a little group that Jesus had. He was very volatile. He was very volcanic too.

And when Jesus found him, he was just a rugged fisherman. I'm glad Jesus didn't go knocking at the door of a theological seminary looking for some smart boys in his day. He totally ignored them, he ignored the temple.

Picked up a tax gatherer, picked up a couple of fishermen, picked up some very, very ordinary material. I sometimes wonder why people are so proud. You're only dust anyhow.

We go back to dust, we started there. And often when I pray I say, Almighty God, if you could take dust and make a man like Adam, what should you be able to do with us already? You've got us made. Peter, an apostle, he got to the highest grade spiritually.

Well, if you'd seen him originally, I think again you wouldn't have wanted to make as much investment in him as Jesus did. But you know what? Jesus spoke to Peter, not only more than he spoke to any other of the twelve apostles, but more than he spoke to all the other apostles put together. And conversely, Peter spoke to Jesus.

He was always ready with an answer. And he spoke to Jesus more than all the other apostles put together. Now he's come to maturity.

Oh, he doesn't mean easy. He clashed once, do you remember, with the apostle Paul? Paul said, I was son Peter and he was to be blamed. Now that's the way to straighten a thing out with a guy.

Not call the pastor, go to somebody else. Go look in, as you say, eyeball to eyeball and straighten the thing out. Takes a bit of courage to do it.

And Peter got straightened out. He could have said, listen Paul, you're the last one to come in this team. I was here years ago, when you were the rich young ruler, which you probably were.

But you know what he writes in his epistle later? He writes about our beloved brother Paul. My, the Lord had sandpapered him down quite a bit. Straightened him out quite a bit.

And so I'm encouraged when I come to Peter to see what material he was and what God made out of him. Often when we were in New York, we were there a couple of years and lived in a ghetto. And as we came into New York over Brooklyn Bridge or New York Bridge onto Canal Street there.

There was a sign hanging outside of a building. I wish they hadn't improved the building. I wish they'd left it with its weather-eaten bricks and its rough windows and its bad architecture.

But you know, you've got to cover it up, put a new facade on it. But I like to look at that sign, and every time I looked at it I was moved. It just said on water street making.

It was there that a man went in one day, just on his wobbly knees, you know, drunk and sick. And sitting in the church and sticking his nose in as vulgar as he could be. And at the end of the meeting somebody said, it doesn't matter what material you are.

God can take clay that has no character and shape it. And I've been in many places in the world and I've seen many things. But in the heart of Ireland, where my dear wife comes from, we went to a pottery there, Belique.

Where they made that gorgeous Belique china. And I watched men take hold of some clay, it had no shape, it had no character, and shape it. Even while they were talking they were shaping it.

And then they'd bake it and then they'd paint it. And when it came out it was a vase maybe this high. And when you saw it, you wouldn't have given the man \$5 for the clay.

And when it finished with it he wouldn't take \$5,000 for it, the way he manipulated it and shaped it. And God did the same with this Belique that came in. I don't know, apart from the Mormons, I think he holds the record for being baptized.

He got saved and baptized and they baptized him and he got saved again. And he hit the deck 19 times. 18 times he'd been saved, 18 times he'd been baptized.

One day he staggers down to the front there and somebody says, pray with that old bum. Nah, I prayed with him three times. Jack, did you pray with him? Nah, I prayed with him twice.

You pray with him, pray with him twice. You pray with him, oh I prayed with him once, months ago. Can't do what with him, his mind is unhinged, he's demon possessed.

Somebody went up to the side of him and said, you know what, I hit that altar a few times till I really made it and prayed with him. And he got up that day, completely transformed. If he'd been a Methodist, he would have sung, My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth and followed thee.

And after that man was saved, you see, the reason you don't get excited maybe about the things of God is you never felt you were right at the bottom of the pile. You were so proud and self-righteous your daddy was a bishop. He could have gone to hell if he'd been an archbishop.

No credit to you what your grandfather was or somebody else. You don't inherit any virtue because of that necessarily. And this man went after the last.

Alright, let's abbreviate the story. Hundreds, thousands of people lined up outside of a building. They're going to bury somebody.

Is it the mayor of New York? No. It's the drunken bum, Jerry McCauley, that came to the altar. And the church is packed.

And he's lying in a couch with his drawers open and his eyes are sunken. And he's lying there, poor little shriveled dead man. Somebody opened the door.

About a hundred women came all wearing a little white flower. Every one of them had been brought to Jesus through this old drunken wretched bum. And then they opened the door at this side and a hundred men came out.

Perverse of every kind. Name it, they did it. And like the women who came and bent and kissed him until those hollow eyes there were filled with tears.

Not his, theirs. He was too happy up there to cry. But they shed their tears and washed his face with their tears.

I remember a man coming to King's Challenge when I was working there and he was a smarty. He said, you can do the same thing psychologically. I said, you're a liar, you can't.

If you can straighten them out. Why did the government spend ten million dollars down in a place for restoring derelicts who had been fouled up with drugs? They had it in Kentucky. They spent ten million dollars and admitted they could not show one case of a complete transformation with all the psychological and drug reformation.

We used to see kids come out of the mire and out of the clay. I remember one day, there was a fellow leaning near the wall and I said, can I help you? He said, no, help her. That's my wife.

Is this your wife? Well, this is not my wife. She's a woman I've lived with a few years. And I got her on drugs.

I can't get her off. And she's dying. Do something.

And I said, we can help you. You go up there in the men's dorm. She goes in the women's dorm.

About three days after, Mary went into a prayer meeting. Oh, she was pale. Looked as though she'd washed her hair with something out of a prankster.

Smell? She didn't smell. She skunked. She was so bad, a skunk would have walked away from her.

What a mess. She went in that prayer meeting. She came out with a face like an angel.

And he looked at her amazed. He said, I don't altogether know what happened. She said, but you know, I feel all clean and new and changed inside.

And he said to me, will it last? I said, sure it'll last. Three days after, he went into the same place in a prayer meeting and came out transformed. They decided to get married, so we married them.

Dave Wilkerson, good old Dave, gave them \$20 to have a honeymoon. Maybe yours costs more than that, but he gave them \$20 to have a honeymoon. And they went to a hotel in town and stayed there one day, had some meals, came back.

Okay, we sent them to Bible School. That boy came. That boy would live for crime.

He plotted it, designed it. He'd done every devilish thing. And you know, by the time he'd been in Bible School one year, they asked him to leave.

You know why? I remember they came back to the Teen Challenge on Clinton Avenue. And I said, Mary, how are you getting on? She said, oh, wonderful. We've such a lovely home.

It's about as big as a hen box. When you've been sleeping in the gutter two or three years, it's a palace. I said, how's Bunny getting on? That was his nickname.

She said, wonderful. I just had one problem with him. I said, what's that? She said, he won't go to sleep.

She said, I wake up and there he is at two in the morning and all I can hear is the rustle of the leaves. Go to sleep, wake up at three, he's still working on his Bible. You know, in a year that fellow got the highest grade.

He taught himself some Greek, which he didn't have to do. He put such questions to the professors, they asked him to leave. You're an embellishment to it.

Isn't that something? Some of those professors end up and you've taught for ten years. And there's a guy that's been to hell and back, he's been through the gutters and he sees the wonder of God's word and he says, this next sentence, what does this mean? No, you're wrong, the Greek says that. I'm saying that to say this again, you see, God can take something that has no character, something that has no value or character, and take it and shape it.

And the better he takes and he makes, and the better he makes he cleanses, and what he cleanses he uses. Here's a classical example again, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. When Paul writes to the church at Rome, he talks about the people who are sanctified.

He calls them saints. If a mailman brought a letter to your house tomorrow and your husband's called John Brown and it said on the letter, Saint John Brown, would you say, I'm sorry, got the wrong place, my husband's just a deacon, he's not a saint, would you hand the letter back and say there are no saints

here? We, you know, we've got such lofty ideas of sainthood. I'm reminded of when they were building the church in Scotland and they planned everything and didn't know what to do with the windows, and they were arguing one day, well, oh, I'll tell you what we'll do, put stained glass windows, let's put pictures of the saints in the windows.

A little lady there was cleaning up the rubbish, you know, and she heard the architect talking about putting saints in the windows. She said, sir, don't you think they'd be better in the pews? I think they would too. Our idea of sainthood is you go live on an island, you keep yourself unspotted from the world, you know, our idea of sanctification is isolation.

One of the great classic pictures in the world is Raphael's picture of the miraculous draft of fishes. Oh, artists went from all over the world to see it. And they wanted to take the shoes off their feet, it was holy grass.

Oh, oh, oh, they would all fell down with it. Look at the colours, look at everything in it. One day an Englishman went on, some of them are rough, I guess he never met one, but some of them are, and they went and, his name was Ruskin.

You may have seen his book, *Modern Painters*, two great volumes. And he looked at the picture and he burst out laughing, what's wrong with it? He said, I don't know, will you tell me what's right with it? Or what's wrong with it? Where did the miraculous draft of fishes take place? On the Sea of Galilee. Well, why has he painted the dome of St. Peter's in the background? That's a long way off.

How many men were in the boat at the miraculous draft of fishes? Oh, well, let me look. Seven. Why has he got eleven men in the boat? So, number one, the background's wrong, number two, you've too many men in the boat.

Who's that fellow leaning over a boat with beautifully crocheted cuffs and a crocheted collar around his neck and a halo? Pulling in fishing nets. Now, if you've never fished with a crocheted collar and a halo, you've never fished. But you see, our idea of Sainthood is, if you're a saint, you wear special garments and you have a halo, and you do this and the other.

Here is old rough Peter pulling in the fishing nets, with crocheted cuffs. That's our idea of Sainthood, isn't it? Hey, you've got a man as rugged as they come, Peter. He's been hewn out of the rock.

He's been shaped. He's been in the furnace of the upper room. Let thy mantle fall on me.

And not many days before, a girl says, Oh, I know you. Your language gives you away. And he says, You're a liar.

I don't know him at all. A girl put up her finger and he ran. A few days after, he's saying to the hierarchy, to the bishops and the dignified people, the people who had authority to do so much in the church, You crucified the Lord of glory.

What made the difference? Like taking a piece of metal. It isn't very valuable until you put it in a furnace and temper it. And the more pressure and resistance you're going to get, the more you temper that steel.

And that's exactly what God did with Peter. And Peter here is writing, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. And he writes to the strangers scattered abroad.

Not only to Cappadocia and Pamphylia and everywhere else, but to the people right down here. And he's writing to people who are elect in verse 2 of 1 Peter 1. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit and through obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Did you get that? Because that verse has in it the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

The work of the triune God. God is there to pardon us. Jesus Christ is there to cleanse.

The Holy Spirit is there to inspire. Now what does he say? Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. You see that's the kingpicture.

There isn't a religion in the world that has a resurrection like that. Men have written volumes against the resurrection of Jesus. They didn't need to bother.

Christianity could have been destroyed the first day. All they had to do was produce the body. There'd be nothing left.

You see Jesus died. He died to save us. Did he? You say we're saved by his death.

We're not. Did we say we're not? We're saved by his life. If he was still dead we'd have no redemption.

As I said the other night, the most momentous thing that had happened up to that period was that Jesus was there lying on a slab. And I remind you again the Holy Spirit of God is totally incapable of doing anything that's moral. Everything he does is majestic.

He made this world. He made this book. And because of him Jesus was risen from the dead.

See him again? There he is lying on a slab. The stone is rolled against the grave. And then they put wax against the stone.

And then they put seals against the wax. And then the devil rolls the sin of the world against that. And then he calls every demon and says, Hold him.

Hold him there. Because if he gets out of there we're done. We're not saved by his death.

We're saved by his life. He must do more than die. He must ascend.

And lead, capture, and give gifts unto men. We make all this fuss about gifts of the Spirit. There will be no gifts of the Spirit except he purchased them for us.

That's what the word of God says. He died. He rose again from the dead.

He led, captured, and he captured. He took death and put it to death. Led, captured, and he captured.

And he gave gifts unto men. And the Holy Spirit just works out the will of God. He's the executor.

He's God's attorney. He makes and passes unto you what God, Jesus, what Jesus purchased for us. We're begotten again to a life of hope.

By the resurrection of Jesus. You see, I think it must have been wonderful to live when Jesus was on earth. And instead of going to work, you'd go watch Jesus work.

And somebody says, Were you there yesterday? No. Oh, he cleansed the leper. Somebody bought a man in chains.

And he brought his chains, delivered him. Oh, that's not all. No.

I believe that he can do greater things. Do you remember he went to a house one day. When he got there, an impetuous young Jewess said, Oh, so you've come at last, eh? I thought you loved my brother.

Why didn't you come earlier? My brother's dead. Been buried three days. By this time he's changed.

Jesus said, OK, well, let's take a walk through the cemetery. Take him some flowers. I don't know how to take dead people flowers.

They can't smell them anyhow. Take him some flowers. Go to the cemetery.

Jesus says, My dear, your brother's going to rise again. Oh, she was a fundamentalist. She believed in the 9th of Daniel.

And she says, I know my brother's going to rise at the last day. There's going to be a resurrection. You say the resurrection is a vital part of our theology.

Forget it. The resurrection is not theology. Jesus says, I'm the resurrection.

And he says, come out to the cemetery. He goes out and says, I wish I could have been there. I'd have loved to have been there.

I'd have shouted hallelujah. It shouldn't have been the cemetery, but I would anyhow. I can see Jesus just going up there and he says, which is the grave? She says, that one there.

You know, it's all nice and white. That's where my brother's buried. And I don't know how Jesus said it.

I don't know whether he shouted with a trumpet voice or whether he just whispered, but I know what he said. I don't know how he said it. He just said, Lazarus.

You see, if he just said, come forth, all the cemetery would have come and it wasn't time for them to come yet. So he just had to be careful what he said, because he was the resurrection. So he just said, Lazarus, come forth.

And immediately he came to life. And they said, isn't that amazing? Listen to what Jesus says. If you think that's amazing, listen to this.

There's coming a day when I, the son of man, will say to every person that lived from Adam right down to the final trumpet blast. Whoever he is, whoever she is. Caesar's, Alexander's, the star of Persia, the caliphs of Baghdad, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler.

At the voice of the son of God, every grave, whether a man's buried under a pyramid or he was rubbed out in the sand like Moses rubbed a man. At the voice of the son of God, at the voice of the son of God, he says, every one of them is right. I am the resurrection.

I have the keys of death and of hell. And some people are smart. They say, well, when I die, will you please burn me? Have me cremated and throw my dust to the wind? You won't give God any headaches.

That's how he started with you anyhow. You're only dust to start. If you saw the bits away, you'd just gather them up anyhow.

So don't be foolish enough. When I was a kid, they used to say, tell us about people in heathen countries. They're so heathen, do you know what they do? When people die, they burn them.

So they do around here, don't they now? It's a classic thing, be cremated. All they do is do something in fifteen minutes that nature does in about a hundred years, so you don't present any problems to God. Don't worry about that.

Now the apostles said, this is what we have. If you're a true believer, you have an inheritance. Did you ever receive an inheritance? I hear about people inheriting money from an old aunt.

Well, I've got no old aunt, so I won't get any money. But I'll tell you what, I've got an inheritance. Do you want to know what it's like? It's got three things to it.

An inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away. Incorruptible, beyond the reach of death. Undefiled, beyond the reach of sin.

That fadeth not away, beyond the reach of time. That's my inheritance. An inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away.

Reserved in heaven for you. When we lived in Ireland, across the fields from us, there was a beautiful castle. In fact, there were castles all around nearly.

Lord Belmore lived here, Lord Enniskillen lived there. I went to Lord Belmore's castle one day. He had an office about as big as this room.

Big, beautiful place, you know, with lions in like, these big rich cellars house. And I remember there was a big harp there. A lot of lovely things.

And there were a pair of chairs. And I went up to one chair, there was a little tag on it. I went to the other, there was a tag on there.

And it said on this, Lord Belmore. It said on this, Lady Belmore. They went to the coronation of the Queen of England in 1900, and I forgot when it was, 52.

The Abbey only holds 3,000 people, Westminster Abbey, and so they put chairs down the aisle. And the people who sat on the chairs were allowed to buy them. And they brought them home so that they could show their children they were at the coronation.

And you see the tag there? It's reserved for Lord Belmore. I think it's reserved for Lady Belmore. And I remember that day that the Queen was crowned.

I happened to go into New York. Planned me to Chicago, and Kate, the great artist, met me and took me to dinner in his lovely home. And his wife said, if you'd been in England, would you have been at Westminster to see the Queen crowned? And I said, no.

She said, well, why not? Well, I don't know all the answers. I said, one of them might be because I'm Ravenhill and not Churchill. And she said, would you like to have done that particularly? What would have

happened if you had done? Well, I'd have gone to the door and they'd say, who are you? I'd say, well, who do you think I am? I'm the child of a king.

Oh, you're the child of a king. Yes. King of kings, as a matter of fact.

What's your name? Ravenhill. Well, just let me check with the social register. Social register.

No Ravenhill, sir. Lord Ravenscar? Lord Ravenscroft? I think there's a Lord Ravenspeed. No Lord Ravenscroft.

Just look here a minute. You see those tags on every seat? Over 3,000 reserved seats. If you got in, you couldn't sit down.

There's no seat reserved for me. Thanks. I suppose you're really upset.

Upset? I'm a bit worried. You're not a bit worried to come to one of the greatest coronations? I say, who are you? Oh, he says, I'm Lord somebody. And I say, well, listen here, Lord, sir.

I'm going to a coronation soon that will make this coronation look like the dishes in the kitchen sink. And you know what? I've got a reserved seat already. That's what it says.

There's a place reserved in heaven for you. Who are kept by the power of God. Oh, you say, that's one reason why I won't make a commitment.

Because, well, you see, I go back in the world as an officer full of blasphemy and sin. And I meet wicked men and I'm not sure they can keep me. That's my problem.

You know, I was out, we spent a lot of the last three, four years down in the Bahamas with some friends. And they own yachts and whatnot. I wanted to actually, we've gone out fishing.

We went out fishing one day and, oh, I thought I got something that swallowed Jonah. Could hardly pull the thing. It's forfeit life.

When I pulled it in, it was a fish about that length. Evangelically about this length, really. And it weighed 34 pounds.

A king fish. Oh, it was a beauty. And we took it home.

And the home where we live with these friends. They have servants. They have a cook.

And this wonderful lady made a meal out of this fish. And when they served it on the table they said, Now, the preacher taught it, we're going to give him the first slice. So they took a piece out of the fish and packed up.

Have you eaten king fish before? No, I've started eating it. Don't like it, no? Put any salt on it? Salt? The thing's been living in salt for 30 years. What do you want salt for? That's the saltiest.

The salt you get, Morton's salt, it all comes out of the sea down there. Thousands of tons of it. You put your finger in the water and lick it, there.

The salt will dry on your lips. Here's a fish been living for 20 years, maybe, in water. That's the heaviest degree of salt anywhere.

And all it has is a skin about as thick as that paper. And do you know what? The skin on that fish won't let the salt go through. No, sorry.

You never get a fish out of the sea that tastes salty? Tastes fishy? Well, what do you want it to taste? Like a turkey? Sure it tastes fishy. But it never tastes salty. I used to get, let me say this.

In my office, I have a thing up. We've got a good friend here tonight from Baton Rouge. I guess he saw it.

I've got a picture frame like that. There's a little thing an inch and a quarter by an inch and a quarter. That's all it is.

And you look at it and say, what is it? Well, I'll tell you what it is. It's this whole Bible. A microfilm by the National Catch Registry Company.

Three quarters of a million words put into an inch and a quarter of film. Now, you could buy those in some of the Bible bookstores for a dollar and a half. You couldn't buy mine for a hundred dollars.

Offer me a thousand and I'll consider it. But you couldn't have it for a hundred. What does it say underneath? It says, this Bible is the first Bible to be taken from planet Earth to another planet.

They sent it to me from the Space Center in Houston. One of the Apollo 15 crew went out. One of them slipped this in his pocket and he walked on the moon.

And I have this little Bible in my office. You know those fellows said going up to the moon, what amazed them? When they looked back they saw, they saw the world hanging on nothing, a sphere. And as they went up they saw this ball.

Isn't that funny? I have a sphere in my, in my home. I have it set so I can see where my boys are in different parts of the world. And you know what I noticed? The bottom part of the world is water.

Why doesn't it fall off? Hmm? You think it isn't difficult to get water to, to, to? Well you'll try it tomorrow with a bucket. Try a handful of water. If you didn't stick it on it'll drop off.

Most likely. Pardon my limited knowledge of science. But not only is the water there underneath, there's a ship on it.

And it doesn't drop off into space. And the scientist said, you know I thought that was amazing. Poor guy.

Isn't it amazing how ignorant these learned people are? Why didn't you read the book of Job? Job said 5,000 years ago he'd hang up the world on nothing. The world is a sphere in space. And you're suggesting that God can hang the world on nothing? He can keep a fish in, in a salty atmosphere, but he can't take you to a nothing? He can keep you pure there, eh? The apostle says if you're really redeemed you can be kept by the power of God.

We used to sing a hymn, He will keep me till the river rolls its waters at my feet. And that's all right, if he keeps you till there you'll make it. Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye, oh now we like this part of the verse don't we? Wherein ye greatly rejoice. Well I go for that, you see I go for the happy part all right.

But then the other half of the text says, Though now for a season it may be, We are in heaviness through manifold temptation. Oh boy I don't like that too much. Ye rejoice, Though now for a season it may be, Ye are in heaviness.

Ah well somebody told me if you got saved and filled with the Spirit, You're all bubbly over from here to eternity. It's always bubbly, every morning you get up bubbly, bubbly, bubbly. Great time, always happy, no shadows ever come over your sky.

When you get up there the devil runs it back to hell and he said, I didn't touch that man or woman, they're sanctified, filled with the Spirit. What he's really saying is not worth bothering with. But anyhow.

No, no, no, he's going to attack you all the more because you're really spiritual. At least he did with Jesus. Jesus was anointed of the Spirit and immediately was led of the Spirit into the wilderness and was emptied for forty days and forty nights.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, that's great. Though now for a season it may be. If you haven't learned this you'd better learn it.

You know there are seasons in the Christian life just like there are seasons in the weather. There are times when you may get up and you may feel the whole world on top of you and there's no way that you can, whether you take out yourself or anything else, it won't lift your spirit. You may be in heaviness through manifold, not through temptation, through multiplied temptation.

Do you remember singing a hymn, I need thee every hour. Do you remember a part of that verse says, I need thee every hour. Stay thou nearby, temptations lose their power.

There's nothing wrong with temptation. The only trouble is if you capitulate to it. If you bow to it, temptation is normal.

It's for a season. Somebody told a preacher down in the south, there's an old colored lady came to the church and she wasn't too smart. But they said she's a nice woman and very often she dropped little pearls of fruit.

And so the preacher went along and said, I understand Susanna that you never, never, never get upset. She said, oh sure, that's right boss, I never get upset. Well he said, what's your secret? He was a smart boy, he knowed a few degrees, so he hadn't anything to learn.

And so he said, well what's, I mean why are you always the same? Do you have a favorite scripture? And she said, yes I do. What is it? She said, it came to pass. It what? It came to pass.

That's my, that's my favorite scripture. It came to pass. Yeah, she said, you know boss, when trouble comes I say, well don't get upset, it came to pass.

And if I get overwhelmed with joy I say, watch it, watch it. You know like those men in the bible said, oh lord, this is what we thought you'd do for us. Oh, we want to stay up here and build three tabernacles.

You know, go to a breakfast every Saturday morning and a supper every Saturday night. Which is the best way. Just the \$25 a week to do it.

But some people say, oh I want to go live there, I like to go to these big banquets. What about the people in the valley that the devil possess? Let's stay here and build three tabernacles. Easy street.

For a season you may be in heaviness through, through multiplied temptations. Temptations to your mind, temptations to your body, temptations to your spirit. Why some temptations won't work on other people.

I thought, when I was a little boy, would you believe a nice looking guy like me, I used to be a thief. My mother made jelly. Boy, she was the best jelly maker in Great Britain.

If not the British Empire. And she kept it on a shelf, a little narrow doorway we had in the house. And it was built with stone so it would keep cool.

And I found the little chair and I climbed up and I got the jelly and I took the lid off and put a spoon in. Mmm. Won't take any.

Yeah, better. Better just have one more, you know. You may as well be hunting for the cheapest lamb anyhow.

So I'll take one more and, boy that's great. Well, just a little bit more she'll hardly notice. You know my mother began to get a habit of, I put the jar right at the back of the shelf.

And my mother started getting a habit of reaching at the back of the shelf first. I don't know why. You know sometimes I'd be in the garden and Mother would take one of these jars of jelly and I'd seen her, she's starting to make what we call little tarts, you know, little things, nice little tarts.

And she'd say, Lamb? I'd say, Yes, Mother. Come in, dear. She'd say, Mummy, I'm busy, just a little.

Alright. It's all a bit later. Lamb? Yeah.

Well, I've not finished. She said, Okay, it doesn't matter. Leave it.

We'll wait till your Dad comes up. Oh boy. Better get in there quick.

Dad's coming. As I say, my Dad believed in the laying on of hands and he could lay them on, I'll tell you that. And, you know what? I can remember the times I got a beating for stealing jelly like that.

But I kind of got philosophical. I said, you know, it's worth it. My Mother's jelly's worth anything.

I got a tanning and a tanning and a beating time after time. But my wife and I stayed in a house not long ago. We were there seven days.

And could you really believe this? I lived in victory every day. I didn't steal a jelly once. Isn't that great? Each victory will help you.

Some of us will win. Well, why didn't I steal jelly? Because jelly tempted me when I was six years of age. And now I'm over thirty-six, it doesn't.

There are temptations that Satan brings. Do you remember at the end of Romans 8 where Paul says, What shall separate us from the love of God? Tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sword. Sort them out.

Don't swallow the whole book. Tribulation and distress may belong to your spirit and to your mind. Nakedness and sword belong to your body.

You can't put a sword through my spirit. And it may come a time of temptation. And those people you didn't think about today at all.

You're opposite number in the gulag archipelago. You're opposite number over in China today. Hasn't had a decent meal for years.

Hasn't got a fair shirt. Christians oppressed. Not only oppression, depression.

Wondering just why God doesn't move. I mean we'd be waiting here. Why doesn't God deliver a bit more quickly than this? There are temptations to the flesh.

There are temptations to the spirit. There are temptations to the mind. And yet it says here that you may be in heaviness.

We used to sing an old hymn, I'm living on the mountain underneath a cloudless sky. Any of you remember that? Lady is nodding her head. She's over 60.

Well that's a good old hymn. I'm living on the mountain underneath a cloudless sky. Well bless you, stay there if you can.

I don't live on a mountain underneath a cloudless sky. I've got to say days of darkness still come o'er me. And sorrow's path I often tread.

But, the Savior still is with me. He didn't say I'll send a bulldozer. I'll make all the mountains away, in one sense.

He says I'll give you strength and grace. I'll never leave you or forsake you. You may be in heaviness.

What's that got to do with your spirit? That's got nothing to do with your mind. It's nothing to do with your spirit relationship. It may be oppression from the enemy.

It may be a problem that you have. As I said last Sunday, David Asami says, My heart is fixed. Your emotions may not be fixed.

Your income may not be fixed. Your bodily health may not be fixed. This human personality is so strange.

But my heart is fixed. I'm going to do God's will, whatever it costs. There are temptations, sometimes more fierce than others, sometimes more strong, to certain people.

And you may be in heaviness. You're getting worn down in heaviness through manifold temptations. And then he switches from temptations and says that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth.

Remember this man Peter that wrote there? Remember him going down the road and Jesus met him and said, Simon, Satan hath desired thee, but I have prayed for you that thy faith faileth. And now he says, The trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth. Faith doesn't perish.

Your faith doesn't have to perish. It can flourish. Somebody else may capitulate, but according to your faith.

And you build your faith again according to Romans. How do you build up your faith? Well you build it according to Romans again. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

I believe there can be a place in your life where temptation, Satan won't bother you too much with temptation, but he'll bother you with trial. He changes his method of attack. There may be people again in those prison camps in Russia and China and elsewhere that don't know temptation in the way you know it, but oh, the trial.

They've heard some stories about how people live in America or England or somewhere and say, Here we are, we're Christians. We've been here for years. We don't have a Bible.

We can't have fellowship. The trial of your faith being much more precious to God than gold that perisheth, nor it be tried with fire. May be found to the praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

You see, that's when God's going to pay the bills and straighten everything out. Now the center of this argument really is there in the 15th verse where God says, As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy. You see, if we didn't say that, every religion has its holy men.

Some of them are filthy men. But our holiness is related to his holiness. As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.

God only has one standard for his people and that standard is holiness of life. Again, we back off from the word. We get nervous about holiness.

It comes from the same Greek word as healthiness. It means moral and spiritual health. And as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.

In all manner of conversation, which really is in all manner of living, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. Now as I said the other day, it's not all God's job to keep you holy. In the epistle of Jude, the writer says this, Keep yourself in the love of God.

Keep yourself in the love of God. Not that God doesn't want to keep you, but you should appropriate what God has made possible to keep yourself in the love of God. Keep yourself from idols, he says.

Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh. Let us lay aside every weight. Now I will have to be in this.

In the second chapter, first Peter here, beginning at verse one, he says, Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and all hypocrisy, and menace, and evil speaking. Oh I see that's something we have. Something we have to do, that's what it says.

Laying aside all malice. That's grudges. And all guile.

No grudges, no guile, and no gossip. No evil speaking. No communication which will destroy someone else.

We will end them. You know one of the greatest things in the world is to keep this little thing here. The tongue.

When I watch a congregation sing all for a thousand tongues, I always praise the Lord, none of them humble. If you did 999 times more damage with the other tongues as you do with the one you have, if you gossip 999 times more, that would be a bit of a mess, wouldn't it? I was in a house two years back, and I got there, the man said to me, sit in my chair. A new recliner, sit there, enjoy it, beautiful chair.

I said, no, that's your chair. No, he said, you sit in it. I said, no, I won't.

He said, I can sit in it when you've gone, sit in it, and I'll tell you something. He said, last night my wife told me we were having Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so from the church. He said, she's got the longest tongue in the country.

Gossip, criticism, slander. Do you know what I did? I said, no, he said, I pinned the microphone on the back of the chair, and I had a tape recorder. Then she talked a little, then she slandered somebody in the church, then she criticised the preacher, then she got on to somebody else, and oh, brother, did she have a time.

When it got to ten o'clock, ooh, ooh, we'll have to go, he said, just a minute. Stay and have some coffee and cake. No, we can't do that, we've to get across the city.

Well, won't you take coffee when you get home? Yes, well, take it here, we've got some good coffee. Oh, well, we may as well, George, let's stay. He said, by the way, would you like to, would you like to hear a tape? I mean, you are a gossip, aren't you? Well, yes, people say that I'm a gossip.

I suppose, I suppose they do. I have been known to talk a bit too much. So he said, well, while I get the coffee, let me play this tape.

And he switched the thing on and she heard herself talking, and it went on and on. And he was in the kitchen and he kept peeping and she was in a stew. Oh, she was in a mess.

She said to her husband, you buy that tape, give him ten dollars for it, give him twenty if you have, we're going to get it. What will he do with it? He replaced a lot of people that come to the house. Came in with the coffee and on said, she says, this tape, this is me, isn't it? He said, yes.

What is he going to do with the tape? Well, it would make a nice Christmas gift for the pastor. You wouldn't give it to the pastor, would you? Why not? You're a member of his flock. Would you sell it? No.

Would you give him twenty dollars for it? No. When he thought she was distressed and wouldn't even drink her coffee, he said, I'll give it to you. Really? You don't have another coffee, do you? No.

Oh. I knew you were teasing and she's going out of the door holding the tape that I'm sure she was going to burn and she said, you did say there wasn't another coffee, didn't you? He said, no, I didn't. Yes, you did, didn't he say there wasn't another coffee? No, you asked me if I had another.

I don't have one. There is another one there. Where? Up there, he said.

Up there. You can't get to that one. No.

He says, keep yourself, keep yourself controlled. Do you know the greatest possession in the world? What is it? Owning a, owning the coin or a diamond that's worth fifteen million dollars? No, the greatest possession in the world is self-possession. When you have your body under control and your appetite under control and your will under control and your passion, when by the grace of God you have the whole empire of your personality under control.

My mother used to say to us sometimes when we children, my sister and I got arguing, keep your tongue between your teeth because you're smart. The tongue is an unruly member. Oh yes, James says, we take the wind and we harness it to our windmill.

We go to Niagara Falls and tie a knot in it and make it to make electricity for us. We've got nature under control almost but this thing you can't control. It's worse than trying to control a horse.

And some of us we need a bit of a bridle in our mouth. No you don't. No you do not.

N.O.T. if the Holy Spirit of God is there because immediately you start getting out of line immediately the red light begins to flash inside and the Lord cautions you. John Wesley said in his day that gossip was the greatest offence in the church. When David Livingstone stood at the side of his wife's grave in Africa buried his wife, buried a couple of them kids at the side of her and people were saying she died because of the mosquitoes.

He stood there and looked and he said Mary Moffat as you died there as you lied there history may say you died of malaria you died because of the gossiping tongues of people in Scotland. Why? What was she doing on a jungle path where there was no path? What was she doing in a heathen hostile place where there was no good food? Trying to nourish make milk enough to feed a babe and slogging it through the jungle with beasts and every devilish thing around her. Why? Why did she die there? Because the people in Scotland said she wrote and said they say you don't love me.

If you did you'd have me with you but you keep saying no I can't come home and you can't come here. Finally he said Mary if it's breaking your heart come and she went on a boat you wouldn't let cattle go on today. She went where there were wild beasts and everything else and finally he took that gorgeous young woman and he laid her in the dust and he said over her it was tons of people that killed you.

The tongue is an unruly member full of deadly poison the word of God says. With it we bless God and with it we curse men. Wouldn't it be something if we had a gorgeous wedding here tomorrow and somebody says you see that dress it's made of Brussels lace it cost ten thousand dollars and I understand she's marrying a multimillionaire and oh the diamonds and things she has isn't she beautiful and while she's standing there somebody brings a garbage can down the aisle full of stinking lettuce and dead fish and puts it by the happy couple wouldn't it look nice.

And sometimes when I look at congregations I think yes you're singing right now a beautiful hymn maybe of as much garbage on your lips during the week as that old garbage can had. And you start talking about God and singing hymns and your lips are dripping with gossip and slander and maybe dirty stories or some other thing forget it. He has unclean lips and when God purges a man he purges the fountain of his heart for out of the heart the mouth speaks.

You see the young people today are up against opposition you don't know a thing about me it's easy to criticize them. The sin that's done on the beach used to be done in the back corner in the dark and now it's done openly it's legal to bathe in America news. All you have to do is go to Fire Island in New York you'll see people by the hundreds there.

Go to Jones's Beach a bit further up there in New York go to New England with all it's puritanism. And 600 people were there the other side of the afternoon. And the cops couldn't arrest them there were too many.

You go to a beach my wife and I were out west I went to a Bible college to speak and there was a newspaper sign and it said bathing suits are not N.O.T. compulsory beyond this point. You pick up magazines, newspapers there's dirt in them dirty pictures you go in a hairdresser's shop there are girly magazines themselves. And young people having more battles on this level than any period in history.

We're breaking the morale of the country down other people are anyhow. Now you say now that's one thing that's one thing I keep saying I want the Lord to cleanse me I ask him to cleanse me and then immediately the devil comes and remember he is the accuser of the brethren he'll accuse you till you get to the pearly gate. Didn't he accuse Job before God? Oh well I know why he served you he's the richest man in the world his piety is tied up with his purity is tied up with his piety.

You take the rug under him and he'll curse you to your face and blaspheme you which he didn't do. Come on you young people tell me the difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil. Any difference? A vast difference.

Is there any difference between a boat house and a houseboat? Is there any difference between a negro spiritual and a spiritual negro? Negro spiritual I've got shoes you know or feel a way to they don't sing them anymore they're too proud the man from a slave date. Negro spiritual spiritual negro thoughts of evil evil thoughts where do evil thoughts come out of the heart? Proceed Jesus says evil thoughts and if your heart is evil evil thoughts will come out. Now where do thoughts of evil come? They come from the devil.

One comes from the inside the other comes from the outside. You say well how do you know which is which? Oh that's pretty easy. When Satan comes and throws something against your mind or he may try to persist and you'll say you're wasting your time.

I've no interest in that. I lost it all at the cross. Remember as long as you're this side of eternity you'll be a human being anyhow.

You'll have a mind, you'll have sex appetite, you'll have sex temptations, you'll have everything else. The devil won't quit on you just because you want to live a holy life. He'll put more pressure than ever on and that's where you'll prove the power of the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

Evil thoughts thoughts of evil. Keep your mind busy. My mother was a smart woman.

How could she have had a son like me if she wasn't? But anyhow my mother was a smart woman. I used to enjoy her philosophy. She was really great.

When I went out to work I went out to work at thirteen years of age I left school went to a factory. My mother took me on one side and she said Len when you get in that factory there'll be a lot of things they'll surprise you. And I want you to keep your mind busy because Satan can't get in when your mind's engaged.

And I've used the illustration very often of having a phonograph. And you lift the lid and there's your particular whatever you put on you know gospel blues or whoever's singing you put their record on and you don't start it. You just pour some sugar on it and it piles up.

Well you say what do you expect it to do? Well just that pile up. And then you take it and throw the sugar off and clean it and you put it on again you put that disc on again and you set the thing going. And then you pour sugar on.

What happens? Does it pile up? No it slides in the opposite direction. Why? Because it's busy, it's engaged, you can't get anything in. Keep your mind like that.

Your subconscious mind stayed upon Jehovah. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace of mind if stayed on thee. I may be doing other things but deep in my mind, in my being, my mind is stayed on him.

I'm going to please him, I'm going to do his will. The enemy may come, sure he may come. You can't stop birds flying over your head.

You can stop them building nests in your hair though. You can't stop the enemy attacking your mind. You can beat him again by pleading the blood and by the power of the Holy Spirit and the word of God.

Thy word have I hid in my heart that I may not sin against thee. No, there's no escaping temptation, there's no escaping trial. The trial of your faith being much more precious than of gall that perisheth though it be tried with fire.

The apostle goes on in the next chapter, he says, this is thankworthy if a man for conscience toward God. Endure grief, suffering wrongfully. What glory is it if he, when you be buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently.

But if you do well and you get buffeted for that, now is there anything different, your faults? Well you may not have any. Maybe your husband has them all. But if your faults, some of them you can correct, and some are easier to correct, more easy to correct than others.

If he be buffeted for your faults. Now look, the devil can accuse you of being blameless. You may not be faultless, but you may be blameless.

And that's what we're told. We're not told to be faultless, be blameless and harmless, not faultless, be blameless and harmless. And somebody will take something you do, it's so innocent, and maybe you didn't understand them.

You thought they said that, they didn't say that. You thought they meant that, they didn't mean that. When I was a little boy I was very small and I had a big head.

And the boys used to tease me, ah come on big head, going to play soccer, come on big head. And I remember one day they ganged up on me and I felt so bad and I went in the house and I sat for a while and I started crying. I was only a tiny little guy.

And when I said what's wrong, I said the boys. What about them? They're calling, come on Len, come on, I said, they weren't saying that a minute ago. They were calling me big head, big head.

Oh Len, she said don't worry, there's nothing in it. Well, you know, I didn't quite get it. I thought she was worse than the boys.

I thought she'd say I got nothing between my ears, there's nothing in it. No, she meant she's nothing in what they, don't bother in what they say. Oh, sometimes, you know, sometimes I think the only exercise some of you folks take is jumping to conclusions.

Now look here, I'm not dumb, I saw that. I mean I saw it with my own eyes. No, I didn't listen to anybody, I saw it.

You did. Good old you. A man comes in, he's been away on a military expedition, he comes in and his wife says, you know who owned that? Where did you get it? I know who owns that, it's the only coat in the world, Joseph's coat.

How did you get it? Oh, hold your horses a minute. You told me he was a holy man, he serves a great mysterious God. He opens his window three times a day to pray to his God.

And last night he came in my bedroom and if I hadn't have screamed there would have been another story. And as he ran away I snatched his coat. And poor Joseph went to jail for thirteen years because the woman lied and he was as innocent as the stars above, but she got circumstantial evidence.

Isn't it easy to judge? That's what we say, don't we always say that? Oh it's easy to judge. Don't be so stupid, you must be the most stupid person on earth if you say that. It isn't easy to judge, easy to misjudge.

And poor Joseph went to jail for thirteen years because the woman lied and he was as innocent as the stars above, but she got circumstantial evidence. Isn't it easy to judge? That's what we say, don't we always say that? Oh it's easy to judge. Don't be so stupid, you must be the most stupid person on earth if you say that.

It isn't easy to judge, easy to misjudge. To judge is the hardest thing in the world, to misjudge, but I mean I try, I try, yeah. One of our greatest preachers in London had been to a hospital, coming home at two o'clock in the morning, the street cars had stopped, there were no cabs, and he's going through the street, it's wet and dirty, and he took a shortcut and as he went there, there's a beautiful girl, the most beautiful girl in London there, and the most famous prostitute.

Two o'clock in the morning and there she is, she's got expensive fur and lovely clothes and a handbag, and he went past, oh she's there again, and as he went past he heard a urgh, and a scripeter came, he passed by on the other side, so he went back. Could I help you? I wish you could, I have such a pain, I can't make it home. Where do you live? I live another block down the street.

Do you think you could walk if I help you? Well I'll try. He said stand up. He stood up and he put his arm, his fur over his arm, he took a handbag and he said put your left hand in mine, he put his arm round the waist, and he went down the street.

And he came to the end of the block, and there was another street and she lived in the next block. It was half past two in the morning now. And he had his arm round the most notorious beautiful little prostitute in London.

And as he goes round the corner, oh, it wouldn't have been so bad if he met the devil, but he met a deacon. Oh. He didn't let on, he just walked on and he saw the deacon go, you know how deacons can do that.

And the deacon thought, I'm going to see this through, so he stood there in the rain by the wall, and he noticed when he opened the girl's purse and he opened the door and he walked and he noticed the bedroom light go on and the deacon stood there shivering about an hour and two hours and I'm going to get, I'm going to die if I stay here. You know, he did like the rest of folk next morning, first thing he got up, Brother Jones, yes, I want to tell you something. I mean, just between us two, you know.

Like the woman said, you didn't tell me, did you? No, because you don't trust me. She said, I can trust you, it's the people you tell I can't trust. All right.

You know, by Wednesday night, it was all over the church where the pastor was at two o'clock Monday morning. When the pastor got to church, all the deacons were there. He said, we must be having revival, we haven't had all the deacons here for two years.

Man, it's great to see you all tonight. How are you, all stiff and reduced? So he said, what's wrong? Tell him. You tell him.

Well, you tell him, you're the chairman of the deacons. Well, you tell him, you tried, didn't you? And he said, brethren, let me tell you. He said, let me quote the words of Jesus.

Brethren, have I been so long with you? You saw me helping a sick girl to bed. No, but that's not the point. You stayed up there for over two hours, you never came out.

He said, I was in her bedroom about five minutes. Five minutes? I stood there two hours. I lifted the girl on the bed, she fainted.

I knocked up the lady that looked after that section of that big house. She asked me, would I go to the doctors? And she said, if you go out to the back door of the house and down the street and go left and go about three blocks, you'll see a blue light shining outside of the house. There's the doctor.

He's been to this girl before. And so, where do you lay? So and so. Well, you know, by the time you get there at four o'clock the subway will have started.

You can just go down there. And do you know that pastor was actually at home sleeping in peace while the old deacon was shivering there, served him right anyhow. He'd gone out to the back door, he was asked, what has he done? He'd done what Jesus told him to do and he risked something.

Oh, you've got to be careful with your reputation. Well, if you have, you better go to the cross. I lost mine there years ago.

He made himself of no reputation, but you've got to watch your reputation. Reputation is what men think we are. Character is what God knows we are.

And as for reputation, forget it. If you're not dead to the opinions of men, you need to get to the altar. If you get upset because somebody criticizes you, oh brother, you need, you need another dip.

Keep yourself in the love of God. When people start criticizing, hold your tongue. We talk about power as all you have to do is fly up to the chandeliers and show off in church.

Sometimes you need a lot more power to keep your mouth shut than to open it. That most time we open them we don't show much power except how silly we are. God wants you to be holy in life, holy in character, holy in speech, holy in attitude, holy in your aspirations, holy in your desires.

Yes, you may be in heaven sometimes. Yes, you might get buffeted. You know, again, you talk about the baptism of the spirit and people think, well, you know, the baptism is wonderful.

I mean, you may be weak and frail, but oh, off you get it. Boy, you, you must like get called to the ministry. You'll do this, that and the other.

There was an old holiness preacher years ago in this country, Smith his name was. He was going to a big convention and a pastor wrote to him, he said, I've only a country church. And he said, your train comes past our village and if you would step off on a Saturday night before you start there Sunday, it would be such a blessing to the church.

Would you do that for me? And Smith said, I'd be happy to do it. And he went to the church and it was jammed out. And Smith got up to preach his classic sermon on Romans, on Acts 1.8, you shall receive power.

And he gave the text out, you shall receive power, the Holy Ghost coming upon you. And he got a mental block, he couldn't get clear, but he said, I'll tell you something, you need as much power to get up in the morning at two o'clock. Those were the days before they had wall-to-wall carpeting.

You remember when you used to have stuff that was like blocks of ice, you know, that old linoleum. And you walk around the room with a baby and you weren't quite sure if there was any circulation left. And he said, you need grace to walk around the bedroom with a scrawling baby and get into bed and say, well, hallelujah, I still retain my peace and joy.

And he was fighting all the time to try and get a train of thought and it wouldn't come. And he said, let us pray. You know, it didn't take long about ten minutes.

And while they were praying he slipped off the platform and he got a man to drive him to the depot and he got the train. The next train overnight went to the place where he was to preach. About three years after he got a letter from the same man, would you please come and preach at our church on Saturday night.

We had such a fantastic service last time you were there. He said, yeah, you sure did. You sure did.

You had some service the last time I was there. Oh, I know what you mean. The church was jammed when you got a big offering.

He couldn't get easy about it. And he said, okay, I'll come. And he went.

When he got to the train depot this young preacher met him and he said, you know, you know, Brother Smith, you slipped away, I know of that night. But he said, I got up and said to the congregation, look, my wife and I have been married now five years, we have no children. But you know, I want such an experience of the indwelling of the Spirit of God that not only you show off gifts, but I have love and joy and peace and long suffering and gentleness and meekness.

You see, when Peter goes on a little further in this chapter, he gets to a real hot spot there. Do you know what he says? He says that you're called, you, you know, you folks sitting here tonight and me, you're called to be like Christ. He suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow in his steps, unless you start guessing what the steps are that are in the next verse.

Number one, he did no sin. Number two, no guile was found in his mouth. Number three, when he was reviled, he reviled not again.

Number four, when he was suffering, he threatened not. Number five, he committed himself unto him who judges righteously. That's a load for you to chew over between now and Sunday.

I didn't write it, God did. You're expected to be a miniature Jesus Christ in your home, in your office, the beauty of Jesus between and me. And the preacher said, I stood there and said to the congregation, you know, if God ever gives us any children, if I have to walk round the bedroom until my feet are like ice, I want to be able to get into bed and say, Lord, I'm shivering and cold, but I'm in victory and I don't understand why this has gone like this.

And he said, you know, less than a year after that, my wife came to me one day and said, Darling, what do you think? I said, I don't know. I'm going to have a baby. Oh, wonderful.

Waited six years for a baby. Great. What would we call it if it's a boy? What would we call it if it's a girl? He said, I remember the day somebody stopped me in a little town and said, they took your wife to hospital while you were out visiting somewhere.

Yes. I believe she's got a baby boy. Oh, wonderful.

He said he rushed to the hospital and as he went in the nurse said, Pastor, no, I'll talk to you after because I waited six years for this pastor. You're not to go in that room. Something wrong? Yes.

Well, Harry, what's wrong? I can't tell you. The doctor's going to tell you. The doctor came in and he said, Pastor, you've comforted people many times, haven't you? Yes, sir, I have.

That's part of my ministry. He said, you'll need all the comfort you can get. He said, why? I've got a baby boy, haven't I? He said, yes.

He said, I've known you many years. Let me tell you something. This child is the most dystopic thing I've ever seen in my life.

Its eyes are not straight. Its mouth is not straight. Instead of having arms, it has two little things that look like carrots.

It has no legs. It's two little springs hanging there. And obviously, it's mentally deranged.

We haven't shown the baby to your wife yet. We've left that for you to do. How will I do it? It's got its problems.

The nurse said, Pastor, that won't do. Dry your eyes. I get some powder, and she powdered his eyes and said, Joey, your wife keeps asking for you and asking for the baby.

And he flipped in and she said, we've got a little creature. We've got a boy. Well, aren't you happy about it? You've always said you'd like the first one to be a boy.

We've got a boy. He said, I knelt down and took a hand, and I told her what had happened. And just like that, her mind snapped.

She went crazy. For six weeks in that hospital, she oscillated between sanity and insanity. And when she was sane, she was broken with grief, and then she'd go off and she'd be wild.

And she's driving the little horse and buggy with smithing back to his church, she said. I brought her home after six weeks. The Lord mercifully healed her, and he said, when I got her home, I said, darling, look, you look after him till ten o'clock at night.

Ten o'clock at night, I take over and I look after him till seven in the morning. OK? And he said, brother, there hasn't been a night I haven't thought of you. He said, just like setting the alarm, somewhere around about half past one or two, suddenly the youngster would yell his head off.

Couldn't satisfy him. I kept the blanket there and I wrapped him in it, and I just walked round that bedroom, he said, that cold, cold floor. I walked round and round and round and round.

I want to tell you something. I quoted the scripture, the comforter who is the Holy Ghost. I quoted the scripture, he is able to keep you from falling.

He is able to make all grace abound unto you. And I want to tell you as God's my witness, I've had no bitterness about it, I don't understand it. I want to tell you that I got into bed every morning in peace and the joy and the rest of God in my soul, and it's all due to the fact that that night I trusted God to baptise me with the Holy Ghost, for the Spirit to come into all this life, this heart of mine, and keep me in perfect peace.

You may not be faultless. Don't you sit down and cry when, just a minute, just a minute. Let me use the one thing.

Here, the pastor might say to me, you're going down the country on Monday? Yes. I've got an urgent letter here. It's for Columbus.

Oh, I'm going to Columbus this Monday night. Would you mail it for me? It's urgent. It's got to get there for Tuesday March.

Say, happily. Sure, sure. I'll mail it for you, all right.

And I go home, and I usually drive in a loose kind of suit, you know, when I'm driving. So I fold this coat up, and I put it there in my suitcase, and I go to Columbus, and then I go home, get down to Baton Rouge next Sunday, and I put my coat up, and boy, there's that urgent letter. Oh, man.

Oh, I'll go down to the head office there in Baton Rouge, and as I go there, I happen to see the pastor coming, and so I sit around the back, and I slip it in a box, you know. He said, did you mail that letter of mine? Sure, I mailed that letter of yours. Five minutes ago, I don't tell him.

Not a surprise. I mailed that letter of yours. Well, it's strange, and no, I say to him, Pastor, I had good intentions.

I put it there in my pocket, but I forgot about it. Now, he wouldn't do it. Some other man might say, I should never have first addressed you.

You were never dependable anyhow. Stupid of me to give you the letter in the first place. He might get abusive, and he might go on me and do other things, and I say, well, wait a minute.

I wasn't faultless, but I was blameless. Let me close with one thing. Thomas Cook was the head of a college I happened to go to for a few weeks, just before I went there.

He had died, and he went to a house, and they had a little girl, a beautiful little girl. Her daddy was on the church committee. There was an important meeting at the church, and when he came in, his shoes were being repaired at the shoe repair shop, but he was soaking wet.

He had no automobile. He came in, said to his wife, I've got to be at church in about forty minutes. She said, alright darling, go bathe and shave and come down and everything will be ready.

So he took his shoes and he put them by the open fire like we have in England, you know, to dry, because his others were being repaired. And he went upstairs, shaved, came down. He said, I don't have much time for it.

Well, okay, it's on the table ready. And he said, did you move my shoes? She said, the shoes haven't been out of the kitchen. Well, I put them by the fire.

Well, they're gone. Well, I didn't move them. Well, where are they? Little sweet little daughter came in.

Hi Daddy. Did you move my shoes? Daddy, you put wet shoes by the fire? And I just got them and they were so wet. Went to the washroom.

And I heard you say you were going to church. Well, your shoes wouldn't have dried there. Well, what did you do with them? I slipped them in the oven.

I thought they'd dry a lot quicker because Mummy had been cooking, you know. And he opened the door of the oven and the shoes were there. Toes were going that way, the heels were going that way.

And he took them out and he looked at her and he said, I can't go to church. I've no shoes. You've ruined the best parents.

Now, what did you do? Turn her over and beat her? No. Was she faultless? No. Was she blameless? Yes.

And Monty was pure. She made a mistake. So she didn't think, my dad's going to stay home with me and play games tonight.

He's not going to church. He's always going round doing nothing anyhow. He's going to stay home.

She didn't say that. She thought, I'll help him. And what a mess she made.

You know, sometimes we stumble like that. We make mistakes. And the old accuser, the enemy says, well if you really had a pure heart, you wouldn't make mistakes like that.

Listen, that system of yours up there may not be too straightened out. Your motives may be pure. Read that very chapter.

It says, you've purified your heart by obeying the truth. And if you're walking in all the light you have, let all hell and all the demons accuse you. As long as you know you're doing God's will, as long as you know there's no enmity in your heart against God, then your heart is pure.

You may make mistakes. You will not be faultless, but you can be blameless. John Wesley made a mistake.

He married a woman. He not only married a woman, but he married a witch. He stood up in the meeting and accused her of lying.

He was preaching, you were drunk last night. He never corrected her. She got up another night and said, you liar John Wesley, you know you're lying.

He didn't say, please don't believe her, you know I'm a good man, I'm a good holy man. He never corrected her. He was going down the road one night, he never wasted a minute.

Give every flying minute something to keep him stuck. Sitting on the back of a horse, he would be reading a Greek primer, the old thing going in the moonlight, he'd be jog, jog, jogging, he'd be memorizing something. And when he went through the forest, suddenly a man jumped out with a white sheet and shrieked, and another man jumped out and the old horse reared.

He was a little man, he stood in the stirrups and looked down and said, who are you? And one of them said with a speckled, good old voice, we're the devil's brothers. You're who? We're the devil's brothers. You're the devil's brothers? Yes.

Well he said, stand on one side and let me go through. I married his sister. You may not have it as rough as that, but I'll tell you, between here and the pearly gate, somebody will misunderstand you and somebody will misrepresent you and somebody will question what you do.

But you know what? The Holy Spirit bears witness, not just that we're saved, not just that we're sanctified, but he bears witness that we're obedient. And if there's an earthquake outside, it won't matter. If he's speaking his word of peace into your heart, it won't make a bit of difference what men say.

He can keep you kept by the power of God, through faith and to salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. I wanted the pastor to sing one verse of, but I don't think he has the music, but we'll try and get him to sing on Sunday night if he can. Day is dying in the west.

Day is dying in the west. Shall we stand? Lord, we thank you for your word tonight. Thank you, Lord, that we can have victorious Christian living.

Let us not be weary, Lord, in those things that Satan would use to make us fall, but to keep our eyes upon our lovely Lord Jesus. Teach us, Lord, not to be offended, not to be hurt, to keep our eyes and our minds solidly stayed upon thee. There's eternal life in that.

Thank you, Lord, for the joy of being here tonight. It's been a privilege. Thank you, Lord and Jesus.

Amen. Have a good weekend and we'll see you at church Sunday morning. Good night.

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