

# Preach the Word

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*The Word of God is the source of power for believers and is essential for spiritual growth and maturity.*

**Duration:** 1:27:07

**Topics:** "Preaching"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being sensitive to the impact of our actions on others. He encourages preachers and missionaries to regularly read and internalize a specific passage from the Bible that summarizes their calling. The preacher highlights the current state of persecution and suffering in various countries, urging listeners to be aware of the reality faced by Christians around the world. He also emphasizes the need to endure and obey God's will in order to obtain the promises He has made, even if they seem unattainable.

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## Transcript

And yet it's amazing how we differ so much in the, I guess, with our intake and then with our output. I don't think a week goes, I'm sure it doesn't, but what I'm challenged by the, by the wonder of the Word of God, of course, but particularly one of the areas I like to kind of swim in is the 11th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, which we're not going to take this morning. But you know, when I read there that these men and women there subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

And they did all these things in the area of the supernatural. And yet, the astounding thing to me is that not one of them ever had a Bible. Have you ever considered that? At the very best, all they had were just fragments of the Word of God, because, of course, the New Testament wasn't really written yet.

And nobody could afford a copy of the Scriptures. They were all done by hand and they were extremely rare. And yet, somehow, they assimilated the truth of God to the degree that they were able to do those amazing things.

Subdue whole kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, and so forth and so on. Another thing which is astounding is, to me at least, that no man in history, it doesn't matter how big he is, you know, whether you measure him intellectually or spiritually, no man that ever lived ever had a greater Bible than you and I have. They didn't have a special edition.

They just had the same Word of God that you and I have. And all they did was use it better than you and I have used it, at least better than I've used it. And somebody said, it is a golden casket.

The Word of God is a golden casket where gems of truth are stored. It is the heaven-drawn picture of Christ, the Living Word. Jesus said, when he was speaking to a group of people, I think in the 16th of Matthew, I didn't check it, but I'm sure that's where it is, he rebuked them because he said, you can read the sky.

You look at the sky and say, well it's a red sky tonight and this is going to happen, or it's a red sky in the morning and this is what's going to come in the day. And he said, well are you able to discern the sky and yet not discern the sign of the time? It was Charles Wesley who gave us that lovely hymn, a gentle Jesus, meek and mad. But Jesus wasn't always gentle, he got angry.

You know, people suggest sometimes, if you get really filled with the Spirit, you become docile and, you know, kind of sloppy. It's like taking a fish and you fillet a fish, you take the backbone out of it, and if you become a Christian, well that's what happens to you. You know, anger goes out of you and this and that.

There's not a thing goes out of us. There's nothing wrong with your personality in one sense, except it's impure. And so God purifies every area that's impure.

And therefore we need anger. We quote so often, be filled with the Spirit. But the same book that says be filled with the Spirit also says that we're to be angry and sin not.

There is a holy anger. God is a God of anger. You never see a bumper sticker with that on.

It's all God is love, God is love, smile, God loves you. But if you look through the Word of God, you'll discover that there's more said about the wrath of God and the anger of God and the justice and righteousness of God than there is about the love of God. And we are those, again, I'm sure of what the Word of God says, that we're those upon whom the ends of the age of camp.

And I believe with all my heart we're moving into a new period that we've called the Dark Ages. The Dark Ages were somewhere about 467 to the time Columbus came to America and you know that date. Out of that came the Renaissance and it was really destroyed of course by the Reformation and so forth and so on.

But we're entering now into a voluntary period of the Dark Ages. We're putting the lights out. We're putting the light of truth out.

We've taken the Word of God out of schools for instance. And you know, God, his patience runs out. He says he will not always chide and neither will he keep his anger forever.

And we're not going to see the world situation as it is now. It is totally chaotic. I read a magazine yesterday, a part of it, a magazine from England, and one of the leading men in the country there says that all the nations now are in boil.

They're boiling or they're in a ferment. You don't know what's going to happen. We thought, well, you know, Iran's gone down the drain.

Next thing is China's having a war. Now they're invading Idi Amin's territory. They should have done that a long while ago.

But anyhow, there it is. The fact is that the world's been broken up before our eyes. The great nation of, well, it's a bundle of nations, actually, Africa, isn't it? And we're seeing, you know, like the domino theory, the areas are going down one after the other.

Rhodesia and then all these other things. I know this is a very serious thing to me. Now, I have no hang-up on color.

I love black people, white people. I've preached to folk around the world in all kinds of conditions, the murder camps and leper colonies and all kinds of things. I've no problem with that.

But I remind you of this fact that the white man's day is just about over. Every new nation that is born is a colored nation. I used to go into the United Nations in New York when I was editing Dave Wilkerson's paper, magazine, cross and switchblade.

And I was impressed by the fact, see these tall, dignified men come in. They have lovely robes and they'd have gold chains on the neck and they'd greet you very courteously in better English than I speak. Many of them were educated at Oxford and Cambridge and so forth.

And the sleeping giant, as it were, is awakening. And so it should. But, you know, we were given the commission from God.

America and England particularly have the word of God. And we've taken that word. And then, you know, it's kind of something that sticks in my throat when I think that, I think of a Christian magazine that says, look, we want to send you the New Testament in 24 versions.

And the rarest in the world, they don't have one version. There's more than a thousand tongues that still have no translation at all of the word of God. And some of the others only have a fraction like the gospel of Matthew or the gospel of John or something like that.

And yet we have the whole counsel of God. God, listen, if you live to be a hundred, I doubt we any of us will, but if you live to be a hundred, God has nothing else to say to this world. I like the hymn, How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints of the Lord.

You remember a phrase in that hymn that says, What more can he say than to you he hath said? God has no afterthought. I guess you do sometimes. If you're like me, you do.

I write a letter and my wife always checks and says, Len, you left this out. I say, oh, okay, dear. And I put a PS.

Then I read it again myself and find I left another one. I put another PSS. Then I need another PSSS or something.

There's at the end of the letter, it's got more tail than head by the time I finished. But God has no afterthought. Whatever God is going to say to men anywhere at any time is all packed in the covers of this book.

And I still think King James Version is the best because it's translated from not from the Codex Sinaiticus, but the Textus Receptus, which is unquestionably the purest of all those marvelous bits of paper or what in the world they are, papyri that we've dug up all around the ages. So here again, I'm saying this, this is God's Word. Now, if you and I are His, these are our instructions.

There's nothing I need in one sense outside of this Word of God. I was in the home recently. A very lovely, charming young lady had been to one of the best Bible schools in America.

And now she's home. She's teaching a class in a Christian school. And we got talking and one of my sons asked her what she was going to do.

She said, Oh, I'm just waiting for a call. I'll go anywhere in the world if the Lord calls me. Well, you don't need a call.

You don't need a call. He's already said, Go ye into all the world. What you need is an excuse for not going when you get to the judgment seat.

He's already said, Go ye into all the world. The thing is, find out where He wants you to go. You see, again, the Word of God says we're not our own.

If you're really born again in the Spirit of God, you didn't just give God your lousy sins. He says you're not your own, you're bought with a price. From the moment that we became really regenerate, if we passed into the kingdom of His dear Son, then obviously being in the kingdom, we're subject to the King who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And He has given us our marching orders. There's the vast world. This is an awful thing.

I try to think of this every day of my life. You know, there are more lost people in the world at this moment than any period in history. By the time we go to bed tonight, what is it, 200,000 more babies will have been born around the world.

We can't handle this burgeoning, this expanding world population. It's totally out of reach. George Bernard Shaw said war is God's method of cutting the population down.

I don't believe that. I do believe this. We're desperately near to Armageddon unless there's an intervention.

It gets more serious. The ring is being tightly put around the world right now. Russia's got a bigger fleet in the Mediterranean than America has.

And then at the other end, in the Indian Ocean, she's got more ship. And she can bottle up the Suez Canal and she can cut a shard of oil. And all these things are, they're little things.

In one sense, they're big things. I don't know if you've read Gulliver's Travels. If you haven't, you should.

And it's not a children's story. It's a satire on capitalism, I think. It's like Humpty Dumpty, you know.

You see a little baby and maybe say, Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall. And if a youngster could say, hey, Mum, who is Humpty Dumpty? She'd say, well, no relative, but I don't know who he is anyhow. Humpty Dumpty, I've never thought of it.

Who is it? Well, it's a satire on the world. Humpty Dumpty is depicted as an egg you put on the edge of a wall. It falls over and breaks.

Well, as the old saying is, anybody can scramble eggs, who can unscramble them? And the thing is, anybody can drop an egg, who can put it back together again? It's a satire on the fallen man. Excuse me.

Nobody can put mankind together except God.

I remember reading a story some years ago about a man who, he had a little boy, a mischievous boy, which is a sign of good health. And this little fellow was always in mischief. Couldn't keep his fellow quiet.

Particularly when visitors came, he'd say, no, you don't say a word. And of course, he'd say a thousand. If you tell children not to do it, it's a challenge.

It's not a command, it's a challenge. And so the little fellow was always interrupting. One day his daddy was out and he saw a crossword puzzle, not a crossword puzzle, one of those, what do you call them? The jigsaw puzzle.

And it was a lovely jigsaw puzzle of the world. And he thought, boy, this is great. So he took this great big jigsaw puzzle with the two hemispheres, showed his little boy, this is one hemisphere, this is the other, so forth.

And he said, now what? And he brought it all up and he said, put it together again. And then he said to his friend, now come on, we'll go in the other room. He hadn't been in the other room half an hour, the youngster came and he got the thing put together again.

He said, this kid must be a genius. You don't even know geography, how do you put it together again? He said, daddy, I noticed when I was putting it together some marks on the other side of the pieces of the puzzle. And I turned them over and I found on the other side there was a picture of a man.

And all I did, I put the man in there right and turned it over, I got the world right. Pity some of the politicians don't know that. You see, we're trying to put Humpty Dumpty together politically and so forth, when all the time the only hope for the world again is revival.

The only hope for our age is a great marvellous outpouring of the Spirit of God. There is no other answer. There is no other way.

You can't cure the human heart. There's nothing we can inject into man which is going to make him sane for it. Now, you mentioned Dr. Tozer, and Tozer said to me on one occasion, you know Len, Christians don't tell lies, they just sing them.

Have you ever wondered how many lies you sing? It's amazing. We sing hymns like that and it doesn't faze us a bit. You know, we're the whole realm of nature, mind that what an offering far too small.

We won't even give him what we've got, never mind the whole realm of nature. Or you sing a hymn, Beneath the Cross of Jesus, one of my favourite hymns. A phrase in it says, I ask, no other sunshine than the sunshine of thy, is that really true? You mean to say that if somebody needles you, if somebody drops you, if somebody deserts you, if somebody hurts you, it doesn't faze you? I'm not saying it doesn't hurt, I'm saying it doesn't disturb you because Paul said none of these things move me, he didn't say none of these things hurt me.

Sure they hurt, but they didn't move him. Now, this has been touchy, being touchy and being sensitive. But again, I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of thy face.

Lord Charles Wesley, again, Jesus, lover of my soul, thou, O Christ, art all I want. How many hundred, I must have sung that thousands of times in my pretty long life. And yet only a few years ago I realised what

I was singing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want. And more than all in thee I find. You see, this is why as you get older, I'm not just saying you get more sense, I don't believe that maturity comes with years.

But a lot of old fools around for sure. Maturity comes through obedience. I know people who've been saved 50 years, I don't think they're six months old spiritually.

And I've seen a man come out of the jaws of hell, and in less than a year he's been a mature man, he's been a saint. Why? Because he followed on to know God. He knew in whom he had believed.

Well, we were singing a hymn the other day, one of the oldest, one of the finest hymns written, written in America too. I noticed somebody said the other week that some lady had addressed the Congress, she was the first woman. That's nonsense.

The first woman that addressed the joint sessions of Congress, do you know who it was? It was Fanny Crosby, the little blind hymn writer. And she wrote some of our greatest hymns. Billy Graham used to have one of the hymns as his kind of marching song in his early days.

To God be the glory, great things he hath done. And she wrote, Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine. You know, I've often felt like saying now, everybody sit down, start at this end.

Will you tell me how you know you have assurance? After all, if you have assurance, what else do you want? I know an old lady said, blessed insurance, but it's assurance. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine. Now, is that really true? If I have him, what else do I want? If I don't have him, I got nothing.

If I have him, then with God, with Jesus Christ, God has freely given us all things. You know, the more I move around these days, the more I realize the poverty of the Church of God. We talk like a millionaire, we live like paupers.

The Word of God says, all things are yours, and ye of Christ, and Christ is God. Now, you know, when you come into a class like this, or any other Bible class, in one sense, it's here where you kind of, shall we say, we make the bricks. You get the material.

And then you take those bricks out individually. One man builds a house with them, shall we say. Another man builds a tower with them.

Another man builds a pink star or something. Here you get the material. Now, what are you going to do with it? Again, there's only one Word of God.

There's only one Holy Spirit. Now, you know, again in Revelation, it talks about having ears to hear what the Spirit says. Some people register things intellectually, they do not register them spiritually.

And they slip down into what the smart people call the repressed complex of your subconscious. And then somewhere, God may bring it up at a certain time, at a critical time in your life. But what I'm trying to say is this.

Get into God's Word. Get into it. But more than that, let it get into you.

You see, the psalmist said again, didn't he? Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. Now, the Word of God says we're to be steadfast and unmovable and always abounding. That's a paradox.

How can you be abounding if you're unmovable and steadfast? Well, it means this, that we know in whom we have believed. This was the great strength of the Apostle Paul as far as I'm concerned. And I want to just begin this session by mentioning to you one or two things about this amazing man, Paul.

You know, he began his life in the ancient capital of the world, Tarsus. He finished up in the military capital of the world, which was Rome. In between, he went to the intellectual capital of the world in the, what, 16th or 17th of Acts there, Athens.

He went to the religious capital of the world, Jerusalem. He went to the immoral capital of the world, which was Corinth. His life spanned such a vast area.

And you know, if you get a good map and you see number one missionary journey, number two missionary journey, number three missionary journey, and then reckon that this man did all this without any planes or trains or any fast means of travel. He spent more time in prisons than palaces for sure. And let's look just for a little while in this first section in the 26th chapter of the Acts of the Apostle.

The 19th verse says this, Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. This is in verse 19. I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.

Now, here he's testifying, as verse one says, he's testifying before Agrippa. In the 23rd verse of the previous chapter, it says, On the morrow, when Agrippa was come and Bernice with great pomp and was entered into the place of hearing with the chief captains and principal men of the city, at Festus' command, commandment, Paul was brought forth. So here he is, he's before Agrippa and Bernice.

If you go back into the 24th chapter, you discover that Paul there is, in verse three, in all places, most noble Felix. He's there before Felix. Now somebody has said, and I don't know how to explore this, but somebody has said, and it surely is true, that one man with God is a majority.

If there was anything that characterized the life of the Apostle Paul, it was fearlessness. Fearlessness. He feared no men, he feared no devils.

You know, when you come to look closely into his life, you discover this, that Paul actually did everything that Jesus did, as far as I'm concerned, except walk on the water. Jesus raised the dead, the Apostle Paul raised the dead. Jesus cast out demons, this man cast out demons.

Jesus healed the sick, this man healed the sick. Jesus had nowhere to live, this man had nowhere to live. And he puts on, as you might, Kipling would say, his seven-league boots and his strides there of a shamanic.

But here he is before Felix. Now that's what it says at the top of the Bible, at the top of my Bible, it says Paul before Felix. Now that's just nonsense.

It is not Paul before Felix, it's Felix before Paul. The whole thing turns round. Look what it says in verse 25, or verse 14 first, This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets, and have hope

toward God.

In verse 25, and as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled. Now Paul should be trembling, this guy can cut his head off. And yet Paul isn't a bit, he's as solid as a rock.

What does he do? He reasons with this ungodly man of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment. The man didn't know a thing about any of them. He was one of the most unrighteous men living.

So when this man comes, he shoots an arrow of fire into his heart about righteousness, he begins to panic. And then he goes a little bit further, he talks about temperance, this man's the most intemperate guy around at that time. And then when he speaks of judgment, you know, I believe that if every day of your life, in fact if you ever come in my office, don't all come at once, I have a sign there that says eternity.

And then I have a little steel thing about that side, it says judgment. And I look every day at those two things that I am heading. You say, well you're old and I'm much younger.

No you're not, no you're not. No, no, no. You say, well what do you mean, no, no, no, you're 70 odd years of age.

That's right, I'm 20, that's right. So I've got more life. No you don't.

The only thing you have is what I have, one beat of your heart. You could drop dead, don't all do it at once, it's going to give us a problem. But you could drop dead, you've only one beat of your heart.

You can't mortgage your life in one sense, you have no assurance of tomorrow, this could be your very last day on earth. Now if it was, how would you live it? I've tried to do this, I don't know if I get through always, I've tried to preach every sermon the last sermon I was going to deliver before I go into the presence of God. I want to feel clean of the blood of everybody that I preached.

And sometimes I get a little too fierce and anxious I suppose, but there it is. We had a fantastic meeting Sunday night. The Holy Ghost came on that meeting, preachers were at the altar, and it was just an enormous meeting.

You know every meeting should be that. I mean we're dealing, we're not dealing with Dow Jones averages, we're dealing with eternity. This man's vision never dims.

And he's delighted, he's been praying, I guess if you could get that back in his diary, he's been praying, God just make it possible for me to get before Felix one day, I'll give him both barrels when I get there. And I promise not to be worried about the consequences. Well then after he's been before Felix, who's the next guy? Oh he's brought before Festus in the next chapter.

And then in this chapter now he's before King Agrippa. My goodness when you go in the presence of kings. I was thinking this morning, if you were called to the White House next Friday, well what is it today? Tuesday? You've got Wednesday, Thursday? I guess the next two days will be the most awesome days in your life.

You'll be saying to everybody, listen I just don't know what to do. I've got to walk into the Oval Office and I understand just the President and I will be there. I think I'll go to pieces.

I think I'm going to tie a rod up my back so I won't shake or something. It's going to be awesome in the presence of the President of the United States. Or the Queen of England sits on a throne and you know if a man goes in to be knighted, he bends the knee and she puts a sword, she's sitting there, she puts a sword on his shoulder and puts it over his head.

If it were me, she'd know my name was Leonard Raven, she'd read the little script she has there and she'd put that sword over my head and say, why is Sir Leonard? You know when people have said, well going in there, the room is full of golden things and gorgeous carpets and you want to look around, you think it's kind of the Caesar's Palace you're in, not here of course, the old Caesar's Palace. And it's the awesomeness of being in the presence of somebody with such awful power. I don't think that grips us very often when we come into the presence of God, does it? I mean when you kneel to pray, you say, well you know what I'm doing? I personally have audience with the Eternal God and he's listening to me like he listened to Elijah on Mount Carmel, he's listening to me like he listened to Jonah when he said, from the belly of hell I cried.

I have a personal line. Now supposing you had a hotline of your own, in your little room, wherever you are, right to the White House. And you were told that so many things were available to you.

Do you think you'd have used it this week? Do you think, no I'll struggle, I won't bother, I don't want to bother Jimmy, rather than trying to sell his peanut farm and a few other things and Mount Sidon or these other guys around. I think that because you have that line and you believe the character of the man, that you had a personal line into his presence, that just by the same token, if I have these resources in Jesus Christ, if I'm weak, it's because I want to be weak. If I'm spiritually poor, I've decided to be spiritually poor.

If I don't have the power of the Spirit upon me, it's not God's fault. This is all here available. I'm not saying God's going to make every man a Finney, or every man a John Wesley, or every man shall we say a David Brainerd, or every man again a missionary after the caliber of maybe Fenton Hall, or Gilmore of Mongolia, some of those characters.

But I am saying this, that we sang it Sunday night in our meeting, I'm pressing on the upward way. New high time gaining every day. Now is that a lie? Is it really true when we stand up? Supposing I said to an audience of a thousand people, now if this has been true in your life this week, sing it, and if it hasn't, keep your mouth shut.

And I said, come on, I start singing, I'm pressing on the upward, and I find there's just me and a guy there singing. The other 999 can't sing it because it's not true we're pressing on the upward way and finding new heights every day, but we should be. If you go to a diamond mine, you don't find men scratching where other people have scratched, they're breaking into a new territory, there's something here to get.

I went down a coal mine, I've been down a coal mine too, been in a coal mine where they're exploring, the man is scratching in the rubble saying, you know, he may have missed a little bit, he's going on and saying, listen, I'm going to find a new nugget right in here, I'm going to break into new territory. Now look, you can look at history and kind of think to yourself, poor me, poor me, I'm born in this lousy age and people don't know their right hand from the left. I wish I'd lived in John Wesley's day, I wish I'd lived in the days of David Brainerd.

Well all they did was face the world, the flesh and the devil anyhow. And all they had were the same resources, again the Word of God says that ye are Christ and Christ is God. I do not believe that any man

that ever lived explored the possibilities of grace like the Apostle Paul.

When he says here to King Agrippa, let's look at this, let's look at verse 10 because of the time. No family, let's go back to verse 8, I believe in repentance. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? I verily thought within myself I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which thing I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints did I should have imprisoned, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them.

I punished them off in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad. Now you see, here again, this is the disposition of this man, he's fiery, and all God does is purify that fire and put it into another channel. John the Apostle could never have been the Apostle Paul.

The Apostle Paul in one sense could never have been John. God takes the disposition we have and he refines it. You need all those dispositions in the Church of God.

After all, not everybody's a blazing fiery evangelist. There are evangelists and apostles and teachers and prophets, all for what? For the perfecting of the saint. They're like this, you see, they're all spokes in the wheel.

Here's the wheel and here's apostles and here's prophets and evangelists and teachers and so forth. They're all essential to make us fully rounded believers. But listen again, think of the transformation.

The man who writes the epistle to the Colossians and Ephesians and Romans is a bloody man. He's a murderer, he's put men and women in prison. He couldn't believe for a minute that folks were gullible that they'd believe that that fellow called Jesus actually died and rose again from the dead.

That's hideous and nobody's ever seen him anyhow. Don't you wish Jesus had really cleared the whole mess up when he rose from the dead? You know, the Lord showed me something the other day, maybe you've seen it years ago, I won't be surprised if you have. I was thinking of that man that sat at the beautiful gate of the temple and it suddenly struck me like that.

Heavens, Jesus passed that man a hundred times. The apostles passed him hundreds of times. He'd been sitting there, he was 40 years of age and Jesus went back, never bothered with him.

Peter and John went back, never bothered with him. The sedentary went out, never touched him. There was a moment in his life when God was going to heal him, not for his own sake, but the glory of God would be that the whole city would be disturbed because of it.

It's the timing factor in your life and mine that matters. You may get out of school, you may not suddenly move into a ministry, well don't worry about it, it's God's timing. The psalmist says, my times are in my hands and hymn writers added another line to that.

My God, I wish them there. They're in his hands, are they? Now are they? Am I training here and hoping when I get out somebody will discover my genius? I mean, after all, I am the best student they've ever had at Agape. But apart from that, you'll get over your humility later, but apart from that, what, what, are you going to try to kick doors open? Listen, if God has called you, he'll open the door, he never wastes anything.

If I'd fed the 5,000, I'd say, well hallelujah, this is great. Now let the birds, come on birds, have a good time. Jesus says, pick up every crumb.

He suggests that if a sparrow falls off the roof, it upsets the balance of earth and heaven. God can't see the sparrow. He says, the very hairs of your head are numbered.

I mean, a little boy in England who heard a preacher preach on that going home, he saw a hair, he said, mummy, what number is this? That, apart from that, what it, what it's saying is that God takes care of the finest details. My times are in that there is no waste in the economy of God. Get that in your little head or your big head.

There is no waste in the economy of God. God is designing something in your life for his eternal purpose. But going back again to the resurrection, maybe I mentioned it the other week, I don't know.

You know, I think the resurrection morning, while we're jubilant about it, we clap and sing and shout and have a whale of a time. And so we should. After all, Mohammed is still buried.

You can go see his corpse over there and go to the Mecca or somewhere over there. They have his body and barn. You can go see Stalin.

I wish you could go see a few more, but there it is. You can't see the body of Jesus. We'd be in trouble if you could see the body of Jesus.

We'd have no hope. You see, the Apostle Paul wrote 14 epistles. That is, if you, if you take, if you take Hebrews and if you stand those and put them up like a pyramid like this, you know, let me do it with my pencil here.

This is, this is the basis. And you can take Romans together. Then he goes up building his pyramid and he's got 14 epistles.

And then he turns the pyramid over and he balances it on a fine point. And he says, listen, there's just one thing. You know, if you say to people, and I like to shock people.

And I said to an audience not long ago, you know, we're not saved by the death of Christ. Boy, that's heresy. But we're not.

We sing a hundred hymns on the death and blood of Jesus. For every one hymn we sing on the resurrection. Paul says we're not saved by his death.

We're saved by his life. If he isn't alive this morning, we're sunk. Now, if he is alive, we ought not to be afraid of the world or the flesh or devils or deacons or anybody else.

If he is alive, is he alive? Okay. Then you ask me how I know he lives? Why? He lives. Does he? Does he really? Is this more than a mental thing? Does he actually live? I don't ask people anymore, are you saved? Everybody's saved.

From Jimmy Carter to Jimmy Jones. I don't know. Everybody's saved.

I heard Billy Graham say recently that in the last poll across the nation, 75 percent of the people in America are saved. That doesn't make sense. If that's true, even if they profess it, the salt has lost its

savor.

We couldn't have the colossal trouble with divorce we're having now. We couldn't have all the jails packed out. We couldn't have had the biggest prop of pregnant girls and the 16 unmarried girls last year if the church was healthy.

No, it's not a case, did you ask Jesus to come into your heart or did you give up your lousy sins? You can give up every sin and go live in a monastery. It won't mean you're saved. Have I got the witness? Does he actually live in my heart? As I said the other day, I think that maybe the saddest day in the life of Jesus was a resurrection morning.

He'd been telling his students for how long? For three years that he would die and rise from the dead. I've heard more than one teacher say, you know, sometimes only if those students take anything. They're looking at each other, writing notes.

They hardly get out there when they're talking football. You wonder if you've got anywhere at all. Well, I think Jesus might have said the same thing.

He taught them for three years. What happened? They didn't believe him. How do you know they didn't believe? Because if they believed him, they'd have been lining up at the tomb, wouldn't they? The whole bunch of them would have been standing in line.

Peter would have been saying, hey, I want to be first as usual. Get out of my way, John. And John would say, well, go on, you old rascal.

It's just like you to do that, but the upper room will straighten you out. But anyhow, you see, they'd all have been there waiting, but they'd all gone on waiting. There was not one of them there.

I think that must have been the saddest time in the life of Jesus. But you see, the trouble with the situation is this, as regards the world. Well, it's all right.

You were saying he rose from the dead, but he never appeared to anybody outside of his own little club, did he? No, he didn't. I wish he had. I wish as soon as he came out of the tomb there, he'd gone down the road, and after all, he didn't need a key.

He could have gone into the bedroom of Pontius Pilate and tapped him on the jaw and said, now what? Huh? And then he could have gone down the road to the bedroom of Caiaphas and pulled his beard and said, what are you going to do now? You're in trouble. He could have broke into a meeting with the Sanhedrin on a Wednesday afternoon, and they'd been scared to death. He could have gone right over to Rome, where they were having a banquet with Caesar, because he'd no problem getting anywhere.

I mean, he could be here one minute, he could disappear and reappear at will. He had a glorified body. He didn't have a blood system.

You and I won't have a, he left all his blood at the cross. I don't believe without blood in our glorified body, we're going to have a different kind of body. But it's going to be like his glorious body.

But I'm saying again, why didn't he end the whole program? I mean, millions have gone to hell since that day. Wouldn't it have been better for them all to have believed me? He'd have gone through Jerusalem and Judea and elsewhere and gone on a world tour and said, I'm Christ, the Son of God, I'm risen from the

dead, and you can all go to heaven with me. That would have been nice, he didn't do it.

And so the task is unfinished. Paul takes up, he says, this is one of the most daring things anyone ever said anyway. He says, I want to fill up the sufferings of Christ.

Let me ask you a simple question and keep it in your mind. Are you a Christian for what you can get out of it or for what you can put into it? Now that just about sums up all the lives of most people. You chew that over.

Are you in this because you'll escape hellfire? Are you in this because you don't end up on a scrap heap as a drug addict? You don't want to end up with a couple of illegitimate children if you're a girl. You don't want to end up in jail if you're a man. Are you in the Christian life for what you can put into it? I like that hymn that was written in America, My faith looks up to thee, as thou hast died for me, O name my love to thee, pure, warm, and changeless thee.

Some of you have been in love, some thought you were, but anyhow, there's a place where love is warm. There's a sense of a glow and radiance about it. Ray Palmer wrote that, he wrote the lyrics anyhow.

The tune was written by, I've forgotten his name anyhow. I was going to say Lowell Thomas, Lowell Mason. Lowell Mason wrote it.

Now I preached in the church in Boston, Ockingate church where it was written, and I asked them to sing it that night. I preached at the missionary banquet. I think it's a wonderful hymn.

My faith looks up to thee. The second stanza, May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire, as thou hast died for me. O may my love to thee, pure, warm, and changeless be a living fire.

Now we're taught the sanctified life, all right, there's a place where you die, you die to serve so forth. But Paul said that. He said, I am, not I was.

You know what the biggest challenge is to the Christian, in my judgment? Come down from the cross and save thyself. You know, like you gave up a good career. You know how you did it? You did it on emotion.

You know how you did it? Because that guy kept saying there's one more and it's you. It's you, it's you, you. Well, you're the you, aren't you? I mean, everybody else is somebody else.

It was you. So you went to an altar and made a decision and said, I'm going to be a missionary or something. And then the temptation is, well, you said it under stress, you said it under emotion.

And the enemy says, come down from the cross and save thyself. But the Apostle Paul not only said, I am crucified with Christ, but also he said, I die daily. Now, how can you die daily? You die daily, I believe, in the choices we make.

For instance, I'm hoping maybe in a few weeks we'll take another break down in the Bahamas. We usually go and I like to spend about a month there and pray and write, get quiet on an island. And I might be in a home and I feel I should write and I should pray today.

And somebody comes up and says, hey, we're going fishing off the Dutch bank. Oh, there's good fishing there. There's a drop off of about 1,500 feet and you can get sailfish and tuna fish and a good night, I don't know what you can't get.

Huge 150 pound fish and it's great, you know. And I say to myself, well, I got up early this morning and I feel I should pray and write today. And my friend says, hey, come on, you're not preaching tonight? No, I'm not preaching.

Well, will you come? No, I can't come, why not? I just feel inside a check on this. You know, the Quakers used to talk about having an authentic stop in the spirit. That God not only says go, there's a time when you can't explain it, there's just a no.

It's a no-no, we say, spiritually. The Lord just says no, you can't do it. And I say to this person, I can't, well, listen, Jim's just come up, you know, he got a new boat.

You know, even rich people have the problem. A friend of mine down there ordered a yacht, I think it was about \$950,000 or something like that. And would you believe it was the wrong shade when they delivered it? Really? He said, I ordered a, I didn't order it, that's a custard yellow, I ordered a between white, isn't that terrible? I said, sure, everybody has a car.

You know, people have such hang ups on things like that. But I said to this fellow, well, I'd like to go. Sure, I'd like to experiment with your new fishing gear.

When we go fishing in those deep waters, you know, you don't fall a line out and sit there and break your arms. I've nearly been pulled out of the boat sometime. Now we've got a rod and you fasten it in the seat there, and you press a button.

You've got an electric batch on, you just fish and say, come on fish. They come running in, they come running up there, and then you just lift them up, you see. And I say, well, they say, well, we're going to a certain island and we're going to fish, get out and cook the fish on the beach, and then we'll be back before that.

And I say, let's see, that's going to be two hours to get there, two hours back, that's four. How long are you going to fish? Three hours, that's seven. And make a meal, it's going to be about nine hours.

I can't come anyhow. Now, I believe in making a choice like that. It could be something else, somebody says, come shopping.

And you say, you know, I'm a bit behind in my prayer life. Now, you make a choice. And I believe as you make those choices, you die daily, but it's like the man, the Indians used to say in this country, you know, that when you kill another man, his spirit enters into you.

There are two Indians in me now, he said. I killed a man, I shot a man, so there are two Indians living, that's what he believed. But I believe that it's true in the old hymn.

We used to sing in England, I've never heard it sung in America in, well, been there 20 odd years. Well, 1950, I came the first time. But anyhow, each victory will help you some other to win.

Every time there's a breakdown in my life, I weaken myself. Every time I get victory, I strengthen myself. I'm going to be strengthened with all might by the spirit in the inner man.

Well, let's make it, take a break here, and then I'll take the other half, after. Is that all right? Okay. Pray for me that utterance may be given.

I believe that word utterance there really is authority. Now, he went down the Damascus road, and he was going to put him in prison. Everybody fancied he wanted to put him in prison, because he had authority.

He carried a seal, a letter that was signed, and because of that, it gave him power over all these other people. Now he has authority, since now he's a redeemed person, he has authority from God. He has a mandate, shall we say, from the skies.

Verse 13, verse 12 again, whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority, emphasizes that again, from the chief priest at midday o' king, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the noonday sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me, and when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice. Now notice the difference there. He says, this is what happened.

There shone round about me and them that journeyed with me. And then he says, all these fell to the ground, me amongst them, that I heard a voice. Now, I believe that if I'm talking to a crowd of people, maybe it's not quite the same in a class like this, although it could be, but I believe sometimes if I preach to a hundred people or a thousand or two or three thousand, that maybe God convened that meeting just for one person.

Now, everybody may get light. You may say, well, I never saw what that verse meant. But somebody gets not only light, but they hear a voice.

You see, there shone round about me and them that journeyed with me a light from heaven. They all shared the light. We were all fallen to the earth.

They all fell down, but he said, I heard a voice. I don't think anybody else heard it. I think it's Andrew Bonner that wrote that lovely hymn, I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, behold, I freely give. I heard the voice of Jesus say. And you remember that Mary said, concerning the Lord Jesus, whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

You know, we're almost apes. We're not apes, but we want to copy what other people do. If it worked for you, I want to do it.

No, it won't work for you. It's like me getting a suit from a fellow, you know, that's seven feet high, one of these basketball players. Well, my trousers would be like a bridal dress trailing behind me if I wore his trousers.

The jacket would be down to my boot top. I couldn't wear his, well, let's put it this way. David can't fight in Saul's armor.

You see, that's the danger again. If you just get a text and you start borrowing material from other people, well, you're going to try and fight in Saul's armor, it won't work. If you're going to preach from a text, if you feel God puts a text on your heart, well, you get that text and work on it and work on it till you can't get anything else out of it.

Then borrow other people's opinions after you've worked on that text. Otherwise, you won't be a voice, you'll be an echo. You see, all you'll be saying is something that God said a hundred years ago through Spurgeon maybe.

And God wants to say something new for this day in which we live. Somebody says, if it isn't new, it isn't true. That's not quite true either.

You see, this man is sure that when they're shunned round about me, he says, I like from heaven. You know, when you see the enormity of this man's life, he's just ten men all in one. He's the teacher, he's the evangelist, he's the prophet.

He seems to come behind him, no gift in himself. I've said this and said it often, you know, most of us would like the power the Apostle Paul had. Put this down, okay.

Power, how did it work out? Let's put it this way. Power, he raised the dead. Peace, we'd like his peace.

Because he said, he could, what did he say? He says, you know what I do every day? I get up and by the end of the day, my fingernails are nearly squeezed into my flesh. I keep saying, God give me grace to get through today. And if there'd been 25 hours in the day, I would have collapsed.

I didn't have what it takes. He doesn't say that. What is it? He doesn't say merely that tribulation doesn't mean too much.

You know what he says? It's ridiculous, but he says, I glory in tribulation, in necessities and reproaches. Now, you haven't got there maybe, or are yet, but listen, that's what he says. You see, most people are running away from tribulation and reproaches and difficulties and adversity.

That's what makes you strong. You see, so first of all, he has power, then he can raise the dead. He has a peace, because he glories in tribulation.

He has poise. You know what I think? I think the Apostle Paul was a, was a problem to the devil. Why? Because, because Satan used up all the tricks of his trade, everything he had in hell, he tried on the Apostle, never moved him.

He says, none of these things move me. You remember what the things were? They tied him to a whipping post and lashed him 195 times. That's a lot, 195 lashes.

What does he say? Thrice I suffered shipwreck, thrice I was stoned, in weariness, painfulness, fasting, tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sorrow, perils of mine own countrymen, perils of the deep. That's enough to kill a hundred men. And when the devil has nearly got everything on him and says, we're just going to about crush the life out of him.

Do you know what he says? Do you think he had no humor? He got enough that if I shed to you, tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sorrow, perils of the deep, perils of mine own countrymen, lashed 195 times, weariness, and I went right round. If I split them in half and gave you all half, it's enough to kill us nearly. And the devil puts them all on him.

And then you know what he says? Our light affliction which is but for a moment. Don't you think that made the devil sick? He must have needed one or two Bufferins after that. He said, I've tried everything, what are we going to do? And Paul's pushed his shoulders back at the end of, you know, at the end of Romans 8 and he says, neither things present nor forth.

If that isn't spitting in the face of the devil, tell me what is. Now what I'm trying to do this morning is test you or let you test yourself. Are you really, am I grounded, am I rooted in this depth that forever I go to the

world? Because it's a hell of a world outside.

Either you shake it or it will shake you. Either you break it down or it will break you down. So he had what? He had power, he could raise the dead, he had peace, he gloried in tribulation, he had poise, none of these things knew, none of these things move me.

And, and this is the most essential of all nearly, he had purpose. This one thing I do. I believe that is the secret of his life.

He never got entangled again with anything secular. I've been tempted many times, at least I've been challenged, listen you come in, come in business with us, do this with us, we look after you, do this. No, no, no.

I pulled out of a business career, just going into my own business and I got everything ready and I pushed all the things on one side and stepped out with God. I have no regrets about it. This one thing, this task is so immense that you can't be involved in anything else.

You know that hymn that says, O happy day that fixed my choice on thee my Saviour and my God. Do you know the last stanza of it? You don't remember it. The last stanza says this, Now rest my long divided heart.

Do you know the trouble with most preachers in the country? They're trying to do two things. They're trying to be spiritual part of the week, weekend, you know, Sundays and maybe Wednesdays and the rest of the week they're dabbling with material things. Or sport or some other thing.

Now I love sport. I wanted to be a professional soccer player. I still think it's a fascinating game.

I wanted to be a professional player, but I remember God laying the challenge to me. It's this one, it's all or nothing. This one thing I do.

So he not only has power and peace and poise, he has purpose. This one thing I do. And then the thing that puts it all together nearly, he had passion.

What was his passion? For me to live his Christ. Now this isn't mine, but I'm going to share it with you. Put this down.

Determine, put determine at, you know, kind of the left hand side of your page. Put determine. Number one, to do what God commands, however difficult.

To do what God commands, however difficult. Again, to do, I determined to do what God commands, however difficult. Number two, to endure whatever God appoints, however severe.

To endure, E-N-D-U-R-E, to endure whatever God appoints, however severe. Three, to obtain whatever he promises. To obtain whatever he promises, by obedience to his will.

To obtain whatever he promises. No, let me say, no, let me, let me also, I'm sorry. To obtain whatever he promises, however seemingly unattainable.

That's better. To obtain whatever he promises, however seemingly unattainable. Let's go back to verse 14 now.

When we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Now, does that, does that strike you as strange? Paul hadn't persecuted Jesus. How could he? He'd never seen him as far as I know. Some people have a theory, you know, that Paul was a rich young ruler that met Jesus and then he turned away.

But I'm not sure that's correct. And yet Jesus says, why persecutest thou me? Why? Well, what do we say we are? We are what? We are the what of Christ? The body. Now, if I take this fist and hit this, which I don't do, of course, but if I start, if I hit any part of my body, my head responds before that particular place knows pain.

For instance, if somebody came and stood on my toe, but I'd really feel it, but because my head is alive. But give me an anesthetic, and you can jump on my toe. You could all come one after the other.

Maybe I wouldn't have much foot left when you're done, but you could stamp on my toe. But I'm under anesthetic. I can't feel it.

I won't pull it away. But because my head is alive, immediately you stand on my toe or pull my ear, my brain responds. Okay? Okay.

Well, Jesus says, why do you persecute me? Because in as much as you do it to the least, we do it to him. Look, if you insult a person, another Christian, if you hurt another person, before ever they feel it, the head feels it. You can't injure another person without Jesus Christ feeling it.

You think of the scripture again that says, in that awesome day, maybe one day I'll preach on that here. I haven't preached on it that I know of here, but on the awesomeness of the judgment seat of Christ, that the Lord is going to say to us one day, when you were there by yourself, you don't have your husband, your wife, your friend, your teacher, your daddy, your godly grandfather preacher, nobody. You know, it's like, let me put it this way, where's the chalk here? Okay.

It's as though here's a kind of a diocese, and you're going to stand there on the middle, and here's a throne, shall we say, where Christ is, and round here you've got all the people that have ever lived, and he's going to judge you before everybody that's there. At least, he's going to judge you before all the saints, so I don't believe the sinners are going to be there at the time that we judge. But you're going to stand there, and amongst other things, he's going to say, you know, I was in prison, and you didn't visit me.

I was sick, and you didn't come and see me. I was poor. You didn't help me.

And you can say, well, Lord, excuse me, I think you've got it wrong, because, I mean, I wasn't living on earth when you were around. I mean, I lived in the 1900s, not when you were on it. I would, Lord, I would never.

I mean, if I saw you come in the meeting with a hole in your sandals, I would have been saying, Lord, I want to buy you a sandal. Or if your garment was torn, I'd say, Lord, give me the privilege. And he says, in as much as you do it to the least, you do it to me.

And in the fact you don't do it, you withheld it. You didn't withhold it from that little man down the street, or that little woman. You withheld it from me.

You see, we're part of the body. And Jesus says to you, what would you do? You've already testified that you shot many people up in prison, and having received authority from the chief priest, when they were put to death. And I persecuted them to the strange cities.

Do you get what he's saying there? He says, I drove people out of their home. You know, we're living in a nightmare of a world. Do you know, a thing I've read twice, in two different papers this week, in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia used to be governed, you know, by Haile Selassie. When I was a younger fellow in England, Haile Selassie, in World War, pardon me, World War II. I remember World War II.

But World War II, Haile Selassie, his country was invaded by Mussolini's gang. And Haile Selassie's two sons came into a town where I was living, and they went to a small Bible school there. And you've read, many of you read, Haile, Rhys Howells' intercessor.

And Rhys Howells provided a home for Haile Selassie. He was called a lion of the tribe of Judah. He traces his ancestry back to, you know, the Queen of Sheba went, and the story is, she came back pregnant, most people say by Solomon.

And the throne was established there, and they believe he was the lion of the tribe of Judah. But they got rid of Haile Selassie. Nobody in the country knows how.

He was one day seized, taken away. Some people think he was destroyed with awful persecution, and maybe mutilated, I don't know. But right now in Ethiopia, you know, recently, they gave the Christians there three weeks to renounce their faith or be executed.

You know, we're going back to the dark ages with every new day we get up. We're going back to the dark ages. We're deliberate of putting the light of the gospel out in our country.

Our kids have to go to a dark school because there's no Bible in it. We put in God we trust in our coins and say to hell with his Ten Commandments, because we've legalized prostitution, at least in Nevada, and we've destroyed capital punishment, and abortion on demand. Then we break the Sabbath.

I mean, we've got some very wonderful Christian footballers who break every Sabbath and empty half the churches when, you know, you go up by Dallas, heaven help you. You don't want to preach in Dallas in the football season because folk can't get to, you know, church and then get a good seat, get a good seat in church. But cowboys are more important.

Cowgirls are more attractive. But we're living in a terrible day. No, you can go to sleep while you're in Bible school.

You can just relax and watch the pretty birds and look at the flowers, sweet girls and nice guys, and forget every day. This day is a warfare. The devil's pouring all the shot and shell of hell into some countries right now.

It's unimaginable what's going on in Cambodia, for instance. The Chinese are sweeping over into Vietnam. You see, it's what you saw, you read.

They've murdered and slaughtered, now they're getting murdered and slaughtered. And time's running out on the church. And Christians are being destroyed.

This very day there'll be martyrs for Jesus Christ in Russia and China and elsewhere. This very day. Maybe no older than you, maybe some as old as me.

And then he keeps the record. Again, bringing it back onto a level, our own level. If you injure someone, if you insult them, if you hurt them, if you, if you willfully do something, which, which will even hurt their feelings.

Or you withhold something that you could give, in as much as we do it to, to, to the least. You know, sometimes people come up to me and say, I've got a thousand dollars. Could you pass it on to somebody? Yeah, pass it out of this hand into this and into my pocket.

No, I say, yes, sure, I'll give it. And often they do. I have a hundred dollars, I have five hundred, I have a thousand.

I have five thousand. But I don't want anybody to know. Because it puts me on the spot, never troubles me from that.

People say money talks, you know, it does. All it says to me is goodbye. But, uh, I don't mind taking that money and, and passing it on to somebody.

Because in as much as they did it, particularly when they don't want the glory and the glamour of doing it and getting a name on the list, you know, I gave a hundred thousand or something. But in as much as we do it, the body of Jesus Christ is the most precious thing on earth. More precious than the crown jewels or the kingdom of England or America or Wall Street.

We need to be very sensitive to what, what we're doing. I need to check myself and say, well, if I do that thing, will it hurt that person? Because if I hurt that person, I hurt the body. All right.

Uh, I said, who art thou Lord? He said, I'm Jesus whom thou persecutest. Now look, here's something that if you're going to be a preacher or a missionary, I honestly believe you should read this at least once a week on your knees. If you read it once a day.

Read it till it burns in you. Read it till it hurts you. Read it till it wakes you in the night.

Because I don't know a better summary of the calling of a missionary or an evangelist or a preacher than this, this period in this chapter here. What's the ministry for? Rise and stand upon my feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister. Now only God can make you a minister.

You may be a better student when you leave here. You should be, because you're responsible even for your in being taught. But only he can give you, uh, make you a minister.

Only he can really ordain you. The ordination is in the 15th chapter of John, where it says there that, what did he say? You go forth, I have ordained you. That's the ordination that God gives.

To make thee a minister, what is the work of the ministry? Well, it's to be a witness. There are a lot of preachers that can't witness because they've nothing to witness about. There are a lot of people who witness who are not called to preach.

But the man who is a preacher, let me put it this way, write it in capital letters, a man with an experience is never, or that puts the ladies out, all right, let's put it, a person if you like. A person with an experience is

never at the mercy of a person with an argument. It's easier to say, I guess, a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

If you've passed through an experience, look, men could come in here, all of them carrying 20 books against that thing you've gone through. And you say, but wait a minute, wait a minute, fellas. I'm not philosophizing here.

This thing has happened in my life. I have the experience. Paul's argument, John particularly says, we know, we know, we know that we have passed from death unto life, or we know in whom we have believed.

I'm a minister and a witness of the things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. You know, I think you can divide Paul's life up like this. He says here, going down this Damascus road, there shone round about me and them that journeyed with me a light from heaven.

So on the Damascus road, he says, God, Christ revealed himself to me. And then you remember, he went in the wilderness for about three and a half years. And afterwards, he says, he revealed himself in me.

Now there's all the difference between having an external experience with God in that sense that you have a confrontation with God, with Christ. But then when he begins to work in our nature, begin to work inside, and after all, he's not, we don't come off the assembly line like we shouldn't do in Christian experience like cookie cutters or like they make Fords up in Detroit there. He's making you as an individual.

Why is the Apostle Paul unshakable? Why does he say none of these things move me? Because he says, God has worked this in my life. And a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument. So he says, the things which I will appear unto thee.

Do you want to guess what those things were? Well, for sure enough, he still hadn't been into the wilderness, had he? Wasn't it right after the Damascus road experience? He was taken away in the wilderness for about three and a half years. Now what happened? Do you want me to make a guess? I suggest to you at least that possibly he saw in that time of revelation, everything that John saw in the book of the revelation, that God said, you're not to say a single word about it. Sure, the Lord would never say that to a woman, but anyhow, he said it to the Apostle Paul.

He said, look, the things, wait a minute, wait a minute. What do you think it is? Sat on a rock and had a daydream? Had a drink of water, got some fruit and said, boy, it's great. Glad that Damascus road experience is over.

It was pretty rough. Think I'm going to cruise now from here to eternity. No, no, it didn't say that.

What happened? Well, what he says, if you want his word for it, is this. I was caught up to the third heaven. There's a heaven above us where the birds fly.

There's a heaven above that where you've got stars and planets. There's a heaven beyond that which is God's territory. He was caught up into the third heaven.

In other language again, he says, I hardly knew whether I was in the body or out of the body. Such a time of revelation, but I'm sorry I can't tell you anything about it. Do you think anybody ever nudged him and said, listen, Paul, you know, one reason I brought you here to lunch today, I want you to share what

happened there.

I mean, you know, I'll never say anything. I'll never mention it to anybody. Nobody ever got a squeak out of him.

But I'm convinced of this, that just as he saw the Christ on the Damascus road, I kind of figure he saw the final eternity. I think maybe God showed him a plan of the ages from the, what we call the incarnation, which as you know is the birth of Christ, to the consummation. Maybe he showed him the collapse of the Roman Empire and the Greek Empire.

Maybe he showed him every phase of the church. He has three and a half years as the only student in the Bible school. Boy, that must have been great.

I'm not taught by somebody fallible like me, but by the eternal God. God takes the wrappings off everything. Well, do you wonder that he endured what he endured? That's why I say it's our light affliction.

It doesn't feel a light affliction. I guess some people in the Gulag archipelago this morning that have been there three or four years, that slept in their own urine last night or somebody else's, which they do, and haven't had a bath for four or five years. I guess it doesn't seem that our light affliction, which is but for a moment.

Some of them are lost count of days or years even. But Paul says that, so what if I go into prison and adversity and tribulation? What if I have to hang on a piece of wood in the Mediterranean for 36 hours? What is it compared with endless eternity? Old Noah Webster, I think his definition, if I remember right, of eternity is duration without ending. It's ages and ages and cycles of ages.

It's measureless, it's infinite. You know those boys at Cape Canaveral, those smart boys that put that tinware up in the sky, most of them don't believe, they don't believe in eternity, but they do believe in infinity. I don't know how they explain that.

You know, they shot a thing up in the sky, didn't they, just a few months ago, you know, like if this, well the sky is up there, usually it is. They're going after something here, a planet, and this thing they shoot from earth goes up like this, it passed by, and they said it's already done about, I don't know how many million miles, and it's going on, and we don't know really where it's going for how long it'll take it to get there. It sounds like Washington, doesn't it? But they believe in infinity.

That's one thing that baffles them, they can't understand the mystery of the universe. Professor James Dean has a fine book on the mystery of the universe. You know, a hundred years ago, there's a woman, but that's okay, said there were only 128,000 stars up in the sky.

As I mentioned the other Sunday morning, now we say the Milky Way, that streak of light that you see amongst us when it's a good starry night, that Milky Way has at least 150 billion stars in it, and the latest telescope says there are possibly 150 billion Milky Ways. Now that's pretty good going, isn't it? You better get your computer out when you get home, and that little reckoner, and see how that works out. So you've got 150 billion stars in one Milky Way, and you've 150 billion times that, and just to show you how smart God is, if I dare use that word there, it says in the fortified fortified, he knows the name of every star.

Pretty good going, isn't it? And since he didn't die to redeem stars, isn't it more wonderful that my name is written on his hands, he said. Huh? You know, really, if he got into this world, and it got into us, you'd

never shed a tear, because somebody snubbed you and doesn't like you. You'd say, what does that matter? Somebody asked Karl Barth, you know, the great theologian, what's the most profound thing you've found in the Bible? And they got the pen, oh wait a minute, and they all got the pen and said, yes sir.

And he said, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. And they all thought they were going to get some profound, involved, philosophical, theological thing, and he says, the greatest thing I ever found in the Bible, Jesus loves me, this I know. Now if I believe, if he loves me, does it matter who hates me? Hmm? If he smiles on me, does it matter who frowns on me? If he says I'm his, does it matter who rejects me? Now come on, this is, this is really a relationship with God.

If I, if he is my father, if I'm his son, if I say I know in whom I have belief, oh I'm not suggesting that your emotions won't go up and down, sure, what's got, emotions got to do with it? I remember a friend of mine went to an altar one night to pray with a young man, and he says, well, oh, what's your problem? He says, well, I've had a bad week, I don't feel safe, will you pray for me? He said, yes, on one condition, what's that? He said, you pray for me, I've had a bad week too. What's that got to do with it? What's temptation got to do with it? What's hardship got to do with it? I'm his, he is mine, forever and forever, so what? Everything else is periphery. The apostle knew that.

But I'm saying this, he says, because he's had this revelation, God says, Jesus says, look, this is marvelous, I appear to you on this road, but listen, the things I'm going to reveal to you, again at the end of verse 16, the things which thou hast seen and those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Now, he can only appear unto me as I read his word, as I assimilate his word. This is his word to me.

As I say sometimes, this is God's love letter to us. Well, are we in love enough with him to read it, to get it, to digest it, to masticate it, to let it form in us, that God's word forms in us? It's not just something mental, it's not something we fight other people with doctrinally, that we're concerned more about the life than the theology, we're concerned about a relationship. The things in which I will appear unto thee, I think it's going to be wonderful in eternity.

When Paul stands on the judgment seat, I think we're all going to sit back and say, well, come on, relax, this is going to take three and a half million years. Paul's personal diary is going to be unfolded. Let's all sit back and you just say to an angel, bring me a drink of water from the river of life.

And you say to another one, bring me some fruit from the trees, you know, because, and there it is. God's going to reward this man, can you imagine him? For writing all these epistles, for all his journeys, for all his weariness. I don't know how God marks them up, but I'll tell you what, there's going to be a few people I think have more rewards than the apostle Paul.

He says, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. He wasn't then, he never was. You can't find a period in the life of the apostle wherever he backs me.

I don't believe his spiritual temperature went up and down at all. The things in which I will appear unto thee. Now, what are they? Delivering thee from the people.

Do you know what, do you know what happens to most preachers? It isn't the devil gets them down, it's people get them down. I've been in churches where somebody will say something like this, Father Raven, you know this man sitting on the right? He put in two of my daughters through school, college. He gives

me a new car every year.

And he does this and that, and he does the other. I've seen men get into greater bondage, because they've had everything laid on for them, and the men who have no material advantage in churches. Or there's a bunch of nice guys in our church, you know, and they pick me up every Saturday afternoon, we pray God.

I believe Saturday afternoon is a time a man ought to, a preacher ought to be with God, and stay with God. You've got to get delivered from people. It isn't that we come our nose at them, but you say, listen, I'm on, I'm on a, I'm on a course with God.

I'm, I'm under direct, direct authority from God. And one of the hardest things is to say no. Two hard words to say, particularly for ministers, either yes or no.

No is a very difficult word to say in any language, but it's very difficult when you know it's to your advantage. We've got to get me delivered from people. From the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes.

You see his own eyes had just been opened. And God says, I want you to go and minister to others as I've ministered to you, to open their eyes. And you remember writing to the Ephesians, he says what? That the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.

Do you remember what it says? It was in Revelation where it says, he that hath an ear, let him hear. I was sitting in a lovely home just the other day, and I listened to the conversation, and suddenly something in my mind, something crossed my mind, and I thought about it. And I didn't come back to earth till about five minutes after.

I hadn't even closed my eyes. And you've done that. And something passes through your mind, even perhaps while somebody's lecturing to you, something passes through your mind, and it completely blocks out your ears.

Because we hear with our minds, not with our ears. You see, having your ears open, the inner ear, there are inner ears. People hear with their ears, but they do not hear with the inner ear of the Spirit.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying. I remember preaching in a certain place, or in fact, preaching to preachers, partly. And one man said to me, he said, Brother Raymond, boy, God, get ready to bless the word to me this morning.

I said, well, good. He said, you know, I know he was really, really giving you some unction. I said, why? He said, because he was telling me things you didn't say.

Do you know what he meant? That immediately you dropped a seed, it exploded in his mind, and it set him off, and he grabbed something as though it's going past. And he says, well, yeah, oh, Raymond meant that, but that sparked something off in my mind. And quickly makes a note and says, well, there, God's speaking to him.

Now, I may be saying something else to another person through the same word. You see, open our eyes. Have you done that? I have many times.

I remember sitting in a chair at home, cross-legged, reading something about Hiawatha or something. And my mother would come out of the kitchen and say, Len, I've called you three times. And there you are in that chair.

Poor mother, I didn't like to tell her. I haven't been in that chair for the last half hour. I've been somewhere in a place called America with Hiawatha and his girlfriend and all kinds of stuff, having a whale of a time.

And there I was in another world. Even though I was in the house, I wasn't in the house. The mind's a very difficult thing.

You've got to have your mind stayed on him. You see? Well, this is our commission. Now, look, let's get this.

If you're going to do door-to-door visitation, you've got to be rooted, as a good book says, and grounded. Because if not, you might get toppled over. You know, I read something this last week that almost made me gnash my teeth.

I felt so angry, I felt almost mad about it, spiritually mad about it. There was a commission a couple of weeks ago. They showed a TV, in the TV news, they showed a bunch of people, a rabbi amongst others, who were testifying in Washington about the Mooniites and others, about the cults.

They're getting so disturbed about the cults. This rabbi got really angry. Do you know why? Because in, what do you call it? Hare Krishna or Hare Krishna, which do you call it? Hare Krishna.

I didn't know he was a boy. Uh, Hare Krishna. Do you know that 60% of Hare Krishna is made up of young Jews? Do you know that 40% of the Mooniites are young Jews? Now, I can't understand it, but you know, the Jews, intellectually, are usually sharper than the average people.

You think of the greatest, maybe greatest modern artist, I think, in stone, Epstein. You think of Einstein with his theory of relativity. You think of Charlie Chaplin.

Those silly things he said, you know, actually, other than were skits on capitalism. He was smart. He's a genius.

At least he was, isn't just now, but he was. And you get up in the upper echelon, I guess, sounds like it, I would think Leonard Bernstein is a Jew. Brilliant conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

Concert pianist in his own right. Think of the movie industry, I mean, they're brilliant. And these, the thing that makes me mad about it, why hasn't Christianity attracted them? Now, I know from their birth up amongst Jews, they thought that Christ was a heretic, and all the rest of it.

But you know, I'm convinced of this more and more, friends, that if the anointing of God was on the house of God, that it wouldn't matter whether they were Jews, or Greeks, or barbarians, or what in the world they were. If the anointing of God was in the sanctuary, when all is said and done, the man is only a tripartite being. His spirit, soul, and body, whether he's a Jew, or a gentile, or a barbarian.

Paul says the barbarians and the Greeks, it makes no difference. Now, Paul wasn't an orator. You know, you think because he wrote profound theology, like particularly his epistle to the Romans, which some people call the backbone of the New Testament, I guess it is.

Backbone of New Testament theology. But Paul wasn't an orator. He stammered a bit.

You say, how do you know? And some people have tried to get out of it because they stammered a bit, but that doesn't get you anywhere. Remember, Moses tried that, and God says, well, all right, your brother can speak for you, so forget it. You know, I've tried to get God to do so many things, and he tells me to shut my mouth, and let him do it.

Let me listen to him. Paul says he went to the intellectual capital of the world, to the Epicureans, and Stoics, and philosophers, and all the rest of them, in the, what, 16th is it? 17th of Acts, 16th. And what did they say? What is it? What chapter is it? Oh, it's in the 17th chapter.

Oh, in verse 18, Acts 17, 18, certain of the philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him, and some said, what will this babbler say? That doesn't sound like Demosthenes, does it? In the 10, 2 Corinthians 10, verse 10, he said he went up, you know, and all these muscle boys were there, you know, with the big biceps, and they looked down on this scruffy little Jew, and they said, his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. No, no, no, Apollos was the orator, you know. Some said, I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos, I'm of Cephas.

I like to hear Apollos, boy, make something run up and down your back, he's a really exciting preacher, I like Apollos. Paul wasn't like that, Apollos was so deep, most of them got drowned in it. But he's so deep, he plods along, he's methodical, he's theological, he's inspirational.

It's not just the excitement of speaking, that can go right over our heads. But listen, if I'm going to meet, if I'm going to come in contact with the Hare Krishnas, and the Muniites, and the Jehovah's Witnesses, and heaven knows what, you know, you know, this book is never wrong. You get that in your little head, this book is never wrong.

And amongst other things, it says that whatsoever we sow, that shall we reap. Doesn't it say that? All right, let's say here, we, uh, I've got my beautiful artwork here, but that's life. Let's say here, I, I, I sow something here, three or four things, whatever they are.

It says here, if you sow to the wind, you reap a whirlwind, so then the whirlwind looks something like this, a vast or whatever. So here in America, we gave birth to what? Well, we gave birth to the JW's, to Mormonism, uh, Christian science, and a few other things. We gave the world all those things in the last century.

Now we're reaping a whirlwind. Do you know there are 2,000 gurus in America alone, 2,000 from out, from the dirtiest country in the world, as far as I'm, countries I've been in, India. 2,000 gurus.

A man told me the other day, he went to Washington, he said, do you know what they put up? They put a, a, a huge mosque up there. England, for the first time in our history, has mosques in London and in Birmingham. We sow to the wind, we're reaping a whirlwind.

You, you try and list all the Celts there are now, again, Hare Krishna and, and, and Moonism and all these, these things, they're coming back to us. We sow to wind, we're reaping a whirlwind. Now, if you don't know the answers, you're going to be in real trouble.

You can't lean on your buddy there, can you? You may not have every answer, but if you know in whom you have believed, if you say, that miracle of grace has worked in me, I know I've passed from death unto

life, from the power of Satan unto God.

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