

Problems in the Christian Life

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon addresses the challenges of living a holy Christian life amidst misconceptions about perfection and tribulation.

Duration: 55:28

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:15

Topics: "Problems"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Job and how he faced immense suffering and loss. Despite being surrounded by troubles, Job refused to give up and curse God. The preacher emphasizes that although Job was knocked down, he was not knocked out, showing resilience and faith in the face of adversity. The sermon also touches on the importance of rightly interpreting the word of God and not just going as far as it is comfortable to go. Overall, the message encourages listeners to trust in God and persevere through difficult times.

Transcript

This morning we're going to forsake the epistle to the Hebrews and take a look in the first chapter of the first epistle to Peter, and begin at the first verse with the first word. First word in the first verse of the first chapter of the first epistle of Peter. The epistle of James is very often given the title of being the most practical epistle in the New Testament.

But I always find this epistle to be more practical, maybe because I need it, I don't know. But this message this morning is designed with two ends in view. One to encourage people who maybe have made a recent commitment to Christ, a fully total commitment, and the other to encourage people who would like to do that but they're afraid of tomorrow.

They say, well, if I lived on a camp like this, I could really live the victorious life, but when I get outside. Well, that's a different situation. Well, that's true, the situation is different, but God is not different.

And the Spirit who indwells us now is the same Holy Spirit who will indwell us continually. Let's read together just verses 15 and 16 here. But he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, be ye holy for I am holy.

One of the recurring words in this epistle is the word holy. Notice in the second chapter, verse five, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. And then in verse nine he says, ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

And he says in the third chapter and verse five, after this manner of all time, the holy women. And so he goes on and uses this word that is a kind of frightening word to many people in the day in which we live, because some people become very eccentric about the way holy people should live. A man said to me recently, he said, I believe you're very interested in the holiness people.

And I said, I'm not a bit interested in them. Not a bit interested in holiness people. I'm interested in holy people, but they're very different from holiness people.

The Pharisees in the New Testament are the holiness people who lost the glory and then they put the accent on external things. Now I sure believe you should be modest, but I was at a camp a while ago where I was rated as, well, maybe my true category, way down in the list, because I wore a tie. The real holiness preachers do not wear ties.

A tie is a sign of vanity. You're trying to show off. And the ladies wore long skirts, which are all right.

But I said, if sanctification is determined by the length of your skirt, the nuns have got you beat. I wouldn't say they all said hallelujah, but there you are. You see, we put the emphasis on externals.

I think one of the troubles with, well let me say this, that the Word of God says that we're to rightly divide the Word of Truth. It does not say rightly interpret the Word of Truth, though we should do that. That to rightly divide the Word of Truth is not necessarily rightly interpreting the Word of Truth.

For instance, I'm hoping this morning that this very simple message will clear a lot of your thinking. And I trust I'm rightly dividing the Word of Truth, because I'm bringing you the message that I feel God wants you to have at this moment. I don't think it's the right thing.

Let me say this. I think a few minutes ago we sang, Years I Spent in Vanity and Pride. I went into a large church in England, and I heard some marvelous singing, little children's voices.

And I opened the door, and there were maybe a hundred or a hundred and fifty little children on those tiny little chairs, and then their feet didn't even touch the floor, and there wasn't a child in that room over five years of age. And they were singing lustily, Years I Spent in Vanity and Pride. Now I couldn't understand that.

How can five-year-old children spend years in vanity and pride? Now I could bring you a message, or you could go to, say, a rest home for old ladies, and preach on, put on the whole armor of God. I don't think that would be rightly dividing the Word of Truth. Or you could go to a class of vigorous young teenage boys, and take a section out of the life of Moses.

Take this child and nurse it for me. I don't think that's rightly dividing the Word of Truth. I think there is a word which is essential to people at that moment.

That is dividing the Word of Truth. If you need a word of rebuke, that is a word of truth to you. If you need a word of exaltation, then this is the Word of Truth.

And this is rightly dividing the Word. In other words, it's due meat in due season. Now on top of that, we must, of course, rightly interpret the Word.

But the trouble with interpretation is we go as far as it's comfortable to go. Years and years and years ago, when I was a boy, and that's a long while, but no I wasn't, I was a young preacher at that time, and a very famous American executive wrote a book. Bruce Barton wrote a book, *The Man Nobody Knows*.

Now that book has been republished, and it's well worth reading, though there are areas in it you won't agree with. But as I said last night, or the night before, I would like to rescue Jesus Christ from stained glass windows and children's cramming books. I think they're vulgar, I think they're almost blasphemous very often, they're certainly grotesque, and they're not right.

And I think Bruce Barton was doing that in words, but he wrote this book that became a bestseller, and 30 years after, it's still selling very well. It was *The Life of Jesus, The Man Nobody Knows*, and then he followed that with another book about the Bible, *The Book Nobody Knows*. And I've been very tempted to write a, um, another book on the life nobody lives.

Because I could easily prove to you, I think this morning, that there are no Christians anymore. No Christians anywhere. Anybody here doesn't have two coats, raise your hand.

Well you're not Christian, you're not Christians, because Christians don't have two coats, do they? And you carry neither purse nor script, and if you push too far enough, most heresy that we have is truth that is pushed too far. I believe in sanctification, the Bible teaches it. I do not believe in sinless perfection.

Dispensationalism is error, actually. There was no dispensationalism until a hundred years ago. The world didn't know a thing about it, then somebody brought it up, and everybody fell for it.

Strangely enough, I'm not trying to, uh, sabotage your theology. You say, I believe in the imminent return of Jesus. He could come before we get home, which I don't believe.

And that theory was never propagated until 1834, and it was started by a woman. Now that's rough on the Baptists, but that's really true. It was started by a woman, and it became very popular.

You know, lots of people would like Jesus to come today for two reasons. One, they're afraid to die, and the other, they don't want to go through any tribulation. And if Jesus came today, well, that'd be great, because we wouldn't have to, uh, uh, face death, maybe very coldly, and the other thing is, we, uh, well, we wouldn't have to go through what I'm sure the church is going to go through.

After all, if you were in Russia this morning. Oh, let me put it this way. A man came into my office a while ago, and I said to him, where have you been? And he said, well, I had a wonderful experience out on the West Coast.

I met my cousin, and he told me his cousin has joined a group of people, and he said, my brother, my cousin never reads the Bible. He doesn't know a thing about it, but I found him, and he put his hand up like this, living in a house, oh boy, a mansion, and beautiful foreign sports cars, and I don't know what he didn't have. I asked him how he got it.

He said he'd joined this certain group, and he said, you know what my cousin said, and he doesn't know a thing about the Bible, he said the world situation is heading up, and soon there's going to be a superman

on this earth, and he's going to rule the nations of the world, and we've got him on the ground floor, and because of this, we're getting money from various directions, and when this man gets into authority, we're going to help to rule the nations. And he said everything about that man, except named him as the Antichrist. And then he said, why don't you come and join our group? It's a good thing you came today, if you'd come tomorrow, he said, I'm taking a place for, a plane for Basel, and I'm going to the university to try and get a degree there in the occult.

Now he has a number of degrees, and on the way he said, I'm going to South America, into a certain mountain, and there's an old woman there, I believe an Indian woman, and she has a great big, um, well, to switch over to a lady who's caused a lot of sensation in Washington, she, she reads a crystal. And people sometimes say to me, do you think that, uh, Jean Dixon is, is, is a God guided person? And I say very emphatically no, because if she was, at first she'd witnessed for Christ, and she's never mentioned his name yet. She's got spiritist instincts, she, uh, she doesn't look at the Bible, she looks through a piece of glass made in Cornell or somewhere.

Now the Bible doesn't say you should receive power after you've bought a crystal. It says that you receive power after the Holy Ghost has come. But this woman in South America has a crystal which has been hewn out of the side of the mountain, and it's the shape of a skull, and she predicts world affairs out of this.

And this man said, I'm going to see her because she is one of the most amazing women in the world. Now remember this, Adolf Hitler made every move right until the last one. And he did that because he stayed out of bed every night, not consulting the Holy Spirit, but familiar spirits.

His guide was a crawly and old wrinkled woman that was in touch with evil powers, and he made every move right. He roped Europe, and he went on almost to world dominion until he came to the last fence, and then he missed it. The devil offered him the kingdoms of this world, and he bowed down, and he was going to take them, and then the devil did what he always did, he gypped him.

But this woman has this skull, and this man said, I'm going to see her. And he said, do you know the people that come to consult her from all over the world, the people that come there the most are either Jewish people or mainly Roman Catholic priests. And he said the Roman Catholic Church had offered her a blank check for this crystal that she has.

But then he said this, which was more disturbing, he said, I I met a friend out there in California, a man who used to be a missionary in China. And he had been on a tour, and as he came back from Australia or somewhere down under, he he stopped off in Formosa, and he learned that there were a number of Chinese people there who had been living in a certain province where he used to be a missionary. And he went to see them, and they were doing what they always do, they're industrious.

Ask the folk that have been to Hong Kong, almost every room in Hong Kong is a factory, everybody's making money. There are no Jews in Hong Kong, there are no Jews out in Thailand, they can't make a living. The Chinese are the Jews of the Orient, they now do the Jew, and so the Jew has to run.

But he went to see these Chinese people, and he greeted them in eloquent Chinese, because he used to teach them in Chinese, and they ignored him. And he spoke again, and they spoke again, and they went on working, and he went up to a man, and he said, Do you know who I am? He said, Yes. He said, I'm the, I'm your former pastor in Hunan province, or whatever it was.

I've lost my hair, I'm a little heavier, and so forth and so on. But uh, isn't that somebody, you know, all these Chinese names they have, Sing Hai, and Sing Lo, and Wan Lang, and all the rest of it. And uh, he said, Yeah, that's right, you remember them? Yeah, I uh, yeah, these, the, well, I used to be in my church, and I greeted you once, and I greeted you a second time, in the name of the Lord, and you ignored me.

That, now this is not Oriental courtesy. Why do they ignore me? And he shot the answer back, he said, Because you're a heretic, you're a false prophet. Well he said, I'm not a false prophet, I led you to Christ.

Ah yes, but after that. Remember you had some big maps of the world? Remember you had one area, all red, this is Russia. Remember telling us the Russians, and you made a red mark, will invade China, and take over China, and they'll burn our churches, and they'll rape our women, and they'll take our sons that way, and take our daughters this way, and they'll tear our Bibles up, and burn the churches before us in the street.

Remember saying that? Yeah. And remember telling us that just before that happened, the Lord would take his little darling church out of it, and we wouldn't experience it, it would just be left to the sinners, and the unbelievers, and the others, but we would escape. We would not go through tribulation, we're going to be caught away, and wrapped up in the arms of the Lord, and he's going to take his darling children into his breast.

He won't let one hair of your head suffer. Well the preacher went in on his feet, he came out on all fours. You see we do a lot of our interpreting inside the framework of the American economy.

Oh sure you can build a university, or you can build a great evangelistic empire in America, because this is the most affluent society in the world, but you can't do that in Russia. If you tag on to being filled with the Holy Ghost, that after you've been filled two years, you should be a millionaire, and if you're not, you didn't get it, you better be parachuted into Russia or China. They'd accept that, but it wouldn't work, I'll tell you that much.

And again we like to twist, it's comfortable. If I preach this over the nation this morning, and then said now, which I wouldn't say, but I'd like you to send me a dollar to support my program, I wouldn't get any dollars. But if somebody told you some lies, if somebody told you you're going to be raptured before tribulation comes to America, boy you'd feed him, because that's what you want to know.

You want to know you're not going to suffer, you want to know you're going to be wrapped in his dear arms. Now after all brethren, why was Daniel in the lion's den? He didn't escape and get a rapture, he went through tribulation. And I have an idea that Paul went through a little bit.

Tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sword, imperils of the deep, imperils of mine own countrymen, imperils amongst false brethren. I, I, well maybe I'm wrong, but I kind of figure that's tribulation. And your tribulation was, it, it, we, my dear wife and I were in a certain place two weeks ago, we went to a lovely church, and I said well there are not many people in, and I looked at the Sunday school register, a notice on the wall, you know we never put any prayer meeting attendance up there, but it said, it just said Sunday school last Sunday four, four hundred and uh, what was it, 453.

Attendance this morning, 150. Do you know why? It rained. Tribulation.

You imagine sitting through a service with wet feet, wouldn't that be terrible? Or splashed your nylons going into church, oh dear. You know what ladies do just before they go into church, they go like this. If we

spent as much time preparing our hearts as we spent setting our hair and all the other things, we'd be in the millennium right now.

If I didn't know what the Bible said, I would think the Bible said the Lord looketh on the outward appearance and not upon the heart. Maybe that's in the Amplified, I don't know, but anyhow, the authorized version says that God looketh not, not, not. He doesn't know whether your hair's set or what.

I, I remember taking a morning service in Teen Challenge one morning and just before I spoke, the song leader, a boy who had been on drugs for 17 years, and he came in Teen Challenge one day and he just knelt down there and said to God something like this, I'm rotten, I'm corrupt, nobody wants me, the police have given up on me, the judge threw me out, they won't take me in Lexington, I'm too hopelessly gone in drugs, oh Jesus do something. And right there the Lord transformed his life, he didn't have to take cold turkey, which is just sweating it out really. Right there the Lord delivered him from sin and delivered him from the habit of drugs and wonderfully saved him and he was a miracle of God's grace.

And he said before Brother Ray Mills speaks, let's all stand up and sing Amazing Grace. And I looked down the side of this, this room, a fairly long room. Every girl there was either a prostitute or had been a lesbian or was involved bisexually or some other way.

And one girl was the queen of the call girl racket. She came to our office one day with a \$5,000 mink coat on, a snow-white Cadillac outside and burst into tears and said she wanted to get some help. She had five other mink coats at home and a jewel box like this with real jewels in and she was supposed to have about \$250,000 stashed away.

I looked at all these girls, some of them pregnant, some had been pregnant, some diseased, some had got delivered. They'd been to Lexington, they'd been to jail and here were all this bunch of riffraff, now very attractive, washed and renewed and in their right mind. At the side here, here's a boy, I remember saying to him when did you start in crime? He said, I carried a, I carried a point, what do you call it, .28, well I don't know much about guns.

Anyhow, he carried a revolver when he was eight years of age and was in a double murder and remembered shooting a man, murdering a man when he was eight years of age. And had been so many murders in New York and round about he couldn't even remember how many was it. Another man had just done ten years in Sing Sing, where nobody sings.

And all the other boys were criminals and they stood and sang Amazing Grace and you know before we were through the stanza, tears were running down their faces. And I never realized what that word really meant till those boys sang it. To save a wretch like me.

And when it came to wretches, you could see them wince and close their eyes and the tears ran down their faces and the girl's blouses were wet with tears. And they sang it over and over, to save a wretch like me. And then a couple of Sundays afterwards I went to a stuffy church, I don't know what it was, maybe Baptist.

But anyhow, it was a very stuffy church with a lovely choir and everybody was so nice. There's a little blonde woman here with curls and, and, and do you know what they said before Brother Ray and those preachers were going to sing Amazing Grace. And I thought what, in an outfit like this? And they sang Amazing Grace and this little darling girl here with the, with the curls, you know she sang something like

this, Amazing Grace.

How sweet the sound that saved. And you know she couldn't get through that stanza, that little curl wouldn't sit down and she had Amazing Grace. And she was hitting the thing down and you know she sung that hymn totally unconscious and when she sat down she was as dry as the sand out there.

But these other kids had been lifted out of a horrible pit. Then you want Amazing Grace really was. David never describes the horrible pit, he just declares it.

He saved me out of a horrible pit. And you say Mr. Raven, I was never deep in a horrible pit. Well friends let me remind you, you are going to one anyhow.

And so I don't want to get guilty of straining any truth at all, but I think the scarecrow that the devil has put in the field of spiritual living is the, is the scarecrow of sinless perfection. No man with any intelligence believes in sinless perfection. But again I say we're living in a day when we're more afraid it seems of sinfulness, pardon me, we're more afraid of sinfulness.

Well that's an interesting word, Peter. Peter. When Jesus found him he wasn't Peter, he was Simon.

And the word Simon really means shifty. And Jesus says you're Simon, you're shifty, you're not very responsible, but by the time I'm done with you, you'll be Peter, you'll be a rock. If you took a grain of sand and put it under a microscope, you'll discover that little tiny grain of sand has got peaks on it like that and cavities in it like that.

Now you can't build on sand, but if you put that sand under pressure, those cavities will fit into those, I mean those peaks will fit into the cavities and get locked together, then you get sandstone. And you can build. We have some cathedrals in England, the Abbey at Bath, the foundation was laid in 444.

Much of it was destroyed, but the foundation remains. It's been standing there now for 1,500 years. If it was sand it wouldn't stand, but it's sandstone.

Now Jesus says you're Simon and you're going to be transformed by the power of God and from Simon you're going to become Peter. When we were out on the west coast earlier this year, a man gave me a piece of petrified wood. Petrified wood, well it's the same thing, it's just the accent you put on it.

It was once soft and you could chip it with your fingers, but it's gone through a process and become petrified or petrified, it's become solidified. And the Lord says you're shifty and irresponsible and not very dependable, but I'll take your personality and knit it together and you shall become Peter. And notice, will you please, that Peter has become an apostle.

He's really made it. Sure he's gone through a lot of tribulation and distress and trial and difficulties, but now he has graduated and he has become Peter, the rough fisherman. I say again we've got all kinds of ideas about holiness.

If people are holy they have to wear certain garments and maybe get shut away up in a monastery or a convent or something. Now that's no good at all. That's like taking all the lights out of the tabernacle here and putting them all in one room and say let's have them all together, leave every other place in darkness.

This is not what God does. He doesn't collect the salt, he distributes the salt. He doesn't collect the lights, he distributes the light.

They were building a church in Scotland years ago, I'm told, and they had got everything designed and when the building was in good shape and the carpenters had been working, the architect came in and said now give me the final plan on the windows. You've got a dozen windows here, what are you going to do? And somebody said now I think it would be nice to have some stained glass windows. Let's have pictures of the saints in the windows.

There's a little old Scot's body there sweeping the floor and she nudged the architect and said wouldn't it be better to have the saints in the pews? Well I think it's better to have them in the pews rather than have them in the windows. They're not much good in the window. There's a very famous picture, I think it's in Spain, Raphael's amazing picture of the miraculous draft of fishes.

Now it is a very beautiful picture and I guess today it's worth billions, millions and millions of dollars. It's the only one of its kind. And after Raphael had finished the picture, for years it became a mecca.

All the artists went there and almost bowed down and said what a picture. Oh look at the proportions, look at the colors. And they got drunk in ecstasy over the wonders of the picture.

And then one day a rough Englishman by the name of Ruskin, some of you have read his writings, and Ruskin went along and criticized the picture. And people said isn't it amazing? He said it's nonsense. What do you mean it's nonsense? That's the most perfect picture in the world.

Is it? Well he said where did the miraculous draft of fishes take place? Well anybody knows that, on the Sea of Galilee. Well why has he got the dome of Saint Peter's in the background? That's a good long way from the Sea of Galilee. How many men were in the boat when the miraculous draft of fishes took place? Seven.

He's got eleven in the picture. Who's that fellow leaning over the, over the boat with long lace, beautiful lace cuffs and a lace collar around his neck? So gorgeous. Crochet work of the finest.

Who is that man pulling in sticky fishernets with lace cuffs and lace around his neck? Oh that's Peter. Peter fishing with a lace collar on? You make one for your husband next time he goes fishing and see how that works. But you see Peter is a saint and therefore he must have special garments.

Oh no, no, no, no. Cloistered virtues are no good. I like this story about Peter because Peter was so very, you know that Jesus spoke to Peter not only more than he spoke to any one of the other disciples, but more than he spoke to the whole bunch of disciples put together.

And conversely Peter spoke more to Jesus not only than any other single disciple, but more than all the other disciples. He always had a ready answer. Boy he was primed every time.

And this man Peter has become an apostle. He has graduated to some degree though there is no final graduation this side of eternity let's face it. Jesus Christ is the, is the bread of life but he's the hunger as well.

He supplies the hunger in me and he supplies the satisfaction. Peter an apostle of Jesus is writing to the strangers here scattered abroad through Pontus and Galatia and Cappadocia and right down right down to Zachary this morning. And then let's skip over to verse 3. 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.

We mentioned this the other night the resurrection of Jesus tied into our resurrection because I live ye shall live also. But then he says the resurrection is this to an inheritance. Remember the story of the long-term missionary coming into New York I think on the same boat as Eisner was it? And when the boat docked there was a red carpet and a message came over the intercom nobody leaves the boat until Eisner leaves.

This is a very special occasion and the mayor of New York and the representative of the president of the United States was there the red carpet was rolled out the band played TV was there the cameras everything the press all wanting to see Eisner get off the boat which is all right. And the missionary leaned over and looked and he'd been spreading it out in Africa for about 20 years and the old devil said to him there you are you see what you get when you go serve your country that man's going to get a pension and he's going to live in a mansion and he's going to have it easy and you don't have a pension you don't have a mansion and you know what when you get off the boat nobody's going to flash a picture and no band is going to play and you're not going to get any appreciation at all you're going to get off and get lost in the millions of New York which isn't worth it. And he began to feel a bit of that disease which is worse than cancer self-pity and then he said the lord said to him son you're not home yet you're not home yet.

Mr Bunyan said when his pilgrim died the trumpet sounded for him on the other side. You and I through Christ have an inheritance and he says three things about it here to an inheritance incorruptible it's beyond the reach of death it's incorruptible undefiled it's beyond the reach of sin and that saved us not away it's beyond the reach of time. And if you were really primed up you'd have said hallelujah but I'll forgive you.

This is the inheritance you're going to receive if you're truly born again an inheritance incorruptible beyond the reach of death undefiled beyond the reach of sin that saved us not away reserved in heaven for you. I remember flying into Chicago in 1952 and a very distinguished American artist met me there he was excited he said my my wife and I have been to England three times today and I said wow that's good going. Well he said I mean on TV we watch the queen get crowned.

And he said uh then his wife said at dinner if you had been in England brother Ravenhill would you have been at the coronation? I said no my name is Ravenhill not Churchill. And uh so she said uh wouldn't it be wonderful to be at a coronation like that? Do you think you could have got into it? No I couldn't have got in. There were 3,300 feet in the cathedral.

We lived in an old house in Ireland my wife and I before we came to the states an old house 300 years old beautiful old house and across the fields there was a castle a young man by the name of Lord Belmore lived in it he's a fellow about 35 real distinguished aristocrat and we went in the castle one day and there in his libraries great beautiful library he had two chairs beautiful chairs and they had a design in the back er Elizabeth Rex and a little tab on the corner that said on one Lord Belmore and on the other lady Belmore and he had been to the coronation and he was privileged along with others to buy the seat that he had sat on at the coronation and bring it home as an heirloom and pass it on to his children now if I had said I want to see the coronation of the queen they would

have got a register and had a look and said I'm sorry but Ravenhill isn't listed here so you you you can't come in and just look there you see all those 3,300 seats they've all got a tag on them Lord Belmore Lady Belmore Lord Sir Winston Churchill Lady Churchill and all the others there's no place reserved for you oh she said I I see now so you couldn't have gone in I said no I guess you're really sorry you didn't see the

queen crown not a bit interested well look at all the pageantry and the pomp and the color and the show you know pomp and circumstance I said to her Mrs Chase I'm going to a coronation soon that will make the queen's coronation look like the kitchen sink and I want to tell you something I've got a seat reserved reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God

through faith and to salvation ready to be revealed in the last day and then it changes the temper a little bit and it says though now for a season oh oh oh dear there's always a fly in the ointment ye greatly rejoice hey that doesn't make sense you make rejoice though now for a season you're in heaviness hey you don't rejoice when you're in heaviness do you no not like not unless you're in victory if you get into heaviness you don't rejoice you just ring the pastor but uh if you're really living where the Lord wants you you you greatly rejoice though now for a season somebody said to an old colored lady what's your favorite what's your favorite scripture she said it came to pass and the pastor wasn't very well educated he was only a phd and and uh so he said to the old colored lady now I

don't understand that it came to pass what came to pass oh pastor she says you know that trouble that came in my life it came to pass pretty smart you better be black skinned and be informed by the lord than be a white phd and know nothing anyhow so uh excuse me you phds that uh you see she said it came to pass let's build three tabernacles wait wait a minute peter this is this is the peter that wanted to do it remember oh peter this only came to pass you know the most tricky thing that any of us have and i don't care whether you live in a ghetto or you live in a palace the most tricky thing that any of us have anywhere anytime is feelings you get out of bed and you don't feel good fellow came to the altar one night a friend of mine went to pray with him and said what's wrong are you

saved he said yes what do you come for i don't feel safe well he said i'll pray for you and then you pray for me i've had a bad day too feelings oh feelings are so treacherous sometimes you feel you're on top of the world and sometimes you feel the world and everything else is on top of you though now for a season huh yeah they're now for a season if need be you are in heaviness through through what temptations no no no no through manifold temptations when temptations come like waves of the sea falling over each other now this is an area we could stay in for a week it's all right to stand in a nice audience like this and sing i need thee every hour temptations lose their power when now at night oh yes because you're feeling real good you're at a conference but what about tomorrow when

you have no emotion and what about tomorrow when there's nobody at the side of you and what about tomorrow when you you're buffeted from the moment you get up till you go to bed what about it then now temptations oh this is a vast field there are temptations to the body there are temptations to the spirit there are temptations to the mind there are temptations to you you know what i did when i was a little boy you know my besetting sin my besetting sin when a little boy i used to steal jelly my mother used to make it we'd gather fruit around the hedges in in england there and or she'd buy it sometimes if she had to but otherwise we we we would collect the berries and my mother would make fruit and i knew where she put it and when she went out i'd take a chair and i'd stand on it and i'd

reach for a jar of jelly and and i'd take the lid off and get a spoon and whoop i get a good big spoonful and boy then i'd smooth it out never wash the spoon why i didn't care about that i just smooth the jelly out and put the cover on like that and put it away and i always put it right at the back of the shelf so my mother wouldn't find that she'd an awful habit of going right to the back of the shelf the first time because she put the new ones at the front and thought the back ones would get dry and after day two she would say len yes ma'am i'm very busy oh i can wait till you're through as soon as you're through you come and see me

well i'm going to be quite a while that's all right then it doesn't matter any time between now and supper time and i'd go in and i'd see the jelly my dad

was an old-fashioned methodist he believed in the laying on of hands and boy he could lay them on but you know i i kind of figured it was worthwhile getting leathered to get a good spoonful of jelly now and again and you know i wouldn't even cry i wouldn't give him the satisfaction of thinking he was beating me i'd just bite my lip and stay there and be a real english bulldog and and i would get walloped for uh for taking jelly i'll teach you he said but it took him a year or two to do it my wife and i stayed in a lovely home recently and they had a lot of jelly and i want to report victory i never stole it one week didn't steal jelly one day out of 10 days in that lovely home every jar was in i never stole jelly honestly i didn't because my temptation as a little boy was jelly it isn't

that temptation now we could never exhaust this field but again i remind you that there are temptations and they're very real and they change the temptations to older men are the temptations to youth and youth to older men and there are temptations on different levels some of the flesh some of the spirit some of the mind some to doubt oh this is a vast area but but he says here and it's certainly true that you may be in heaviness because of manifold temptation now i believe that satan can come and tempt you and give up on you because you don't fall and then he switches what does the next verse say that the trial of your faith oh this is altogether different hey i i can take what this man says because you see the man that wrote it was a man who was in trouble once he was going down the

street turned around the corner bumped into jesus and jesus says uh hi peter and he says good morning lord i'm peter i want to tell you something when you get down the street there satan's gonna get hold of you and boy he's gonna shake the very life out of you nearly now peter keep your chin up i've prayed for you so long peter that doesn't sound very practical does it why didn't jesus say peter now you know with my foreknowledge satan's waiting there in ambush and he was going to jump on you and i caught him and i said what are you doing here satan i'm going to jump on peter well go back to hell where you belong to and leave my child alone will that be more practical no you run and let and wrestle and have a tremendous experience with satan it'll do your world would you believe that will

employ satan to make you a saint after all you have every right to tell god you want to be a saint but you've no right to tell him how to make you a saint that makes all the difference and if you want to tell him you want to be a saint well watch there's going to be a switch the temptation may fade and then there's a trial of your faith satan pardon me satan have desired thee to assist thee as weep but i have prayed for thee what that your health doesn't your business doesn't fail no that your faith doesn't fail after all if you lose your faith you've lost everything it's the shield of faith and if you lose your shield then the enemy can shoot his fiery darts you know i hear people say sometimes you know what the devil said to me this morning you know i seriously doubt the devil even

knows most of us are alive anyhow but it's nice to be conceited sometimes and uh and you know not once in his amazing lifetime does paul ever say that satan spoke to him notice that the voice of satan is only heard three times in the whole of the word of god as far as i remember the first time when satan accused god before man hath god said the second time when he accused man before god oh yes well that's all right i uh uh satan says i understand why job is so pious but you see job's piety is tied up with this prosperity uh lord you stretch forth your hand and the lord says i don't have time you go straight forth your hand and job went to bed a multi-millionaire and he woke up without a dime the first time oh oh well well i'll tell you what to do as satan says look there is job and you've

put a big hedge around him like that and i can't get through that hedge i don't know about the law in america but i know about the law in england if a policeman comes to my door and wants to search the house i say look you can come up to the doorstep but you can't come in the house till you get a permit you've got to go back to the government and bring a signed permit an affidavit if you like and you've got to present that to me before you can come in and search my home now look there's only one of two ways to live as far as i'm concerned in the old testament like jacob sitting under a tree shaking the tears out of his beard because he had one two three troubles and then you say to him jacob what's your trouble he says oh trouble you know i've had three troubles they're killing me what's

your philosophy of life my philosophy of life all things are against me he'd had three troubles and all things were against me here's a man lying in prison and i say to him excuse me sir but uh i just want to shake your hand and say what a wonderful man you are and he said well that's not true either but um you've been in this what was that oh that's a rat uh the water runs down the prison cell no facilities they feed him like a dog and he gets up a bit bent and he says excuse me i'm a little stiff i've been here so long notice his face is pleated one of his eyes is more baggy than the other after all he'd been shipwrecked pickled in the in the uh mediterranean sea for 36 hours and he had been uh lashed 195 times and uh once he was stoned and thrice he suffered shipwrecked and he'd been

in a night and a day in the deep in perils of his own countrymen in perils of the deep in fastings in weariness in tribulation in distress in peril in famine in nakedness thought that is all this little man has had and then he says well hallelujah i say uh hallelujah for what oh you didn't hear the news i say no i didn't hear the news you didn't you didn't hear the good news no i didn't oh glory to god he says they're going to chop my head off tomorrow uh did you say good news why he says sure i've been waiting for this for nearly 40 years you know they're going to chop my head off tomorrow and as soon as it goes off i'll be absent from the body present with the lot hey but look at all the trouble you've been through you've been in prison more often than you've been in palaces you've had

more riots than revivals you've been beaten your back is like a plowed field i notice your eyes are a bit lopsided and you've hardly any teeth they knocked them out and they dragged you by the feet out of lystra this is must be what the brother was talking about yesterday the afflictions i don't know but anyhow uh and i say what's your philosophy of life you say the same as jacob all things are against me oh sir no he said i never dare insult god like that all things are against me all things work together for good to them that love god now either you live in that street or you live in that street you take away that defense and let me hit that man and you know what he'll do as soon as he loses his millions he'll curse you to your face and the lord says satan i never take notice from you

but i'll tell you what i will do i won't take the fence away like that but what i will do i'll pull the fence in a little bit nearer to job and you can destroy everything outside of the fence and so lucifer comes down and takes everything he has he goes to bed a millionaire he wakes up bankrupt and the lord says well how are you getting on with job did he did he squeal no no he said uh he just said well it's all right the lord knows what he's doing uh will you take the fence away and let me hit him and he says no but i'll pull the fence in a bit nearer and you can destroy what's around the fence the first time he destroyed he took all his possessions and he was bankrupt the second time he came he killed his seven sons and seven daughters and job went to 14 funerals in one day and that's a

pretty good load the first stock was bankruptcy the second stroke was bereavement well i i was very busy running the universe what did he say did he curse me no no no lord he didn't curse you tell me just what

he said he looked up into heaven and he said the lord gave him the devil took it all away no oh i must have read the amplified uh what what does it say amen the lord gave and the lord has taken away oh when everything's got you see god has blessed me he's blessed me he's blessed me he's blessed me me selfish little me he has really blessed me he's letting his own children starve to death in china and his little children starve to death in russia and in parts of germany and in parts of spain but me he has blessed to make me a envy of what you have because the more you have the more

responsibility at the judgment but you see my friend this so often when we're getting blessed we say the lord blessed me and soon as adversity comes we blame the devil oh no no no no come on are you are you a football for the devil to kick that way if he wants are you a dead leaf for the winds of adversity to kick that way if you want i was preaching in a street in ireland after a saturday night meeting we we got the village boys there and an old methodist preacher said to me would you would you come and drink some tea at my house and eat some cakes well if it's free i usually go so i went along and when i got there his wife showed me this beautiful big old house it was loaded with antiques and all kinds of lovely things and she said you know my husband's a bit of an oddball well i i

frankly i've just formed that opinion of her that she said my husband's an oddball he looks through telescopes all the night and he looks through microscopes all the day well i didn't ask her when he slept but it was interesting and uh while we were eating he said to me brother amy did you ever look through the eye of a fly well i've been asked some stupid questions but i i thought i thought that was about the king of the bunch did i ever look through the eye of a fly and i said no i never did for the simple reason i've never been a fly would you like to look through the eye of a fly i said i sure would he got his microscope and he got a piece of glass with a little dot on it about as big as the end of that pencil and i said what's it's the eye of a fly put it under the microscope turn

the knobs i turned it what can you see i said i don't know tapioca pudding uh frog spawns soap bubbles hundreds of bubbles put your watch underneath i put my watch underneath it was 25 minutes before six oh oh i said now i can see about 350 watches well a good guess actually 500 the eye of a fly which is again as big as the fine point of a pencil has 500 different lenses on it and every lens is set at a slightly different angle every one of those not two of them alike and in case you've forgotten a fly has got two eyes and you think you're smart you're gonna catch the fly the silly thing can see you coming a thousand different ways no wonder you can't catch it i said is that really true he said mr ravenhill that the slant of every one of those little lenses on the eye of the fly there are

500 of them they're all set at a different angle and i said praise the lord he said what for the eye of a fly i said no but you think god who designs the eye of a fly that a boy may kill or a bird may jump on it and eat it up are you going to suggest he designs the eye of the fly and he doesn't decide my life that my life is happenstance and chance he redeemed your personality then he might fashion it and conform it to the image of his son and it's his business how he does it the first stroke was bankruptcy the second stroke was bereavement the lord gave and the lord has taken away not the devil and then the third one and the lord says you satan says you take that thing away and let me hit him and he'll and the lord says go on now i've been tempering him you know i've been preparing the

sheep he's been shorn a little now you can go skin him if you want and so satan comes the last time and what did he do well he can't hit his material things he's bankrupt he can't hit his family he's buried them all and here's satan upon me here's job sitting in his house now he he gets the last stroke bereavement bankruptcy bereavement boils he can't sit down he can't stand up there he is sitting on his ash heap you

think the devil would have taken his nagging wife but he needed more tribulation and so uh the lord had left her behind as well and uh and he gets it rough from his wife she said i know what's wrong with you and there he sits on his ash heap as black as you can look in any direction look outside all my buildings have gone my crops have gone the sabians took my crop somebody

else stole my camel somebody else stole my i got nothing and look there i can see now those 14 graves boy that's rough too and look at my poor old body sagging under the weight of these boils there's a little fella called billed at a shoe height he wasn't so big he's only a shoe height and the little fella's there in the corner and he points the finger of scorn and says why don't you curse god and die and that really got job and he jumped up and faced his bankruptcy and his bereavement and his boils and he put his hands up he says look things are pretty bad right now i can't see any hope anywhere and what he's saying is this you've got me walled in but you can't roof me in you may have as it says in what two corinthians 4 8 there we're trouble on every side and yet not this we're

persecuted for and not forsaken as mother as not muffed j b phillips says we're not down but we're not knocked out and that may be knocked down in a fight and get up and win the fight we're knocked down but we're not knocked out and so job gets up and he looks at all the bankruptcy and all the boils and all the bereavement and all the blackness and all the despair and he sings his hallelujah chorus and he says well things are pretty bad but listen i want to tell you world and flesh and devil i want to tell you something then if it gets worse than this and even the worms destroy my body yet in my flesh shall i see god i know that my redeemer lives you can destroy everything outside you cannot destroy one thing inside the devil can't get inside of me and destroy my faith or my hope now by

the faith and hope and love these three the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold after all there are only three things we're going to take out of time into eternity you're not taking a cadillac and your yacht and all the pretty things you wear and there are only three things you're not going to take tongues into heaven we won't need them the tune was written by a man called laurel mason they were both member laurel mason was the organist in the church and we sang that that lovely that lovely hymn my faith looks up to thee and i like the second stanza that says may thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart my zeal inspire as thou hast died for me so may my love to thee pure warm and changeless be a living fire my circumstances may change my world may break up i

may have temptation it may not work and satan brings pressure and trial and trial and trial and even more trial and he isn't touching that man over there and that rather kind of makes you squirm why doesn't god level it all out to no no no he doesn't do that it's your faith and he can't test your faith through that man he tests your faith through you those vows you made this week are going to be tested before very long i mean they're the same two words but it just depends which way you to you you shift them now what's the difference between evil thoughts and a world of difference evil thoughts come out of an evil heart thoughts of evil come from satan well you say that's as clear as mud uh how do i know whether they're from inside or outside well if they're from the inside you'll meditate

on them and get a lot of satisfaction out of them but if they're from the outside when satan comes you'll brush him off and say oh now come on i i've got victory over that i'm past that already and then it says a little further in the chapter if you read it it's a wonderful epistle it talks about having faults most of us have them some don't but most of us have them and it says that uh we're going to be uh sometimes get in trouble because of our fault and sometimes we're going to be accused wrongly now you shouldn't sit down and cry because somebody accuses you of something unless it's true went upstairs bathed shaved came

down wife was still busy said well there is my yes i'm bringing it right now and he said uh about my shoes well i didn't see your shoes i left them here in front of the

fire we have open fires we don't have all the creature comforts you have you know switching a little diet and he left them in front of the open fire and little mary came in and thought well adult people are so stupid those shoes are wringing wet my daddy thinks they're gonna drive out he's crazy so she opened the oven door and put them in the oven to dry while daddy went and shaved and she came in smiling and he said did you see my shoes yeah have you hidden them didn't hide them daddy what did you do well daddy she said and she opened the oven door and there were the shoes and they were dry it was only a case of who they'd fit the toes were turned up this way the heels were turned that way and they were a mess and he got that pair of dry shoes up what do you think he did took the little

girl put her over his knee and really beat her up no no no no no she wasn't faultless but she was blameless she got no motive that was evil she didn't say i'll keep my daddy from church her motive was the best in the world but she did the right thing the wrong way and sometimes our motives are very pure but sometimes we stumble over something we've got faults there's a story on record of mr wesley that that he used to say that he feared neither men the devils and you know that man i think proved in his history that he didn't he went through tribulation and yet somebody said one man said he was the most hilarious christian joy of the lord was always on him though he suffered so much he rode more turnpikes than i suppose any man in history he may not have ridden more miles but

anyhow on paid turnpikes i think bishop asbury out rode him but not on turnpikes where you have to pay but never once in all the 50 years he rode horseback never once was he molested by one of those notorious highway men the lord guarded him as i tell you again he spent all his time all his energy in promoting the things of god promoting the message of holiness urging people to get into a good state of spiritual health and live the life of victory for the lord jesus and as he which have called you is holy don't let anybody put the scarecrow in the field there's no such thing as sinless perfection but there is a better state of grace than many of us are living in and so let's go on and possess our possessions thank you

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