

Revival Series 2

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of personal responsibility in spiritual life, and the need to balance growing in grace and knowledge.

Duration: 54:24

Scripture: Hebrews 2:3, Hebrews 3:1, Jude 1:17, Jude 1:19-20

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of immersing oneself in the Word of God. He shares his personal experience of realizing that he needed to be obedient to God and disciplined in his study of the Bible. The speaker criticizes those who prioritize money and entertainment over spiritual matters, stating that the only solution to the world's problems is a spiritual one found in the Church of the Living God. He also highlights the significance of memorizing scripture and warns against neglecting the little things that can have a big impact on our lives.

Transcript

Song of Solomon. Verse 6, the latter part. They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept.

In modern language, people say something like this, the shoemaker's children usually have no shoes. I remember in Ireland, not far from where my wife lived, there's an old-fashioned shoe repairer down the road, and his children's shoes were the worst in the district. For the simple reason he was always repairing everybody else's, he hadn't time to repair his own children's shoes.

Or, across the road there's a beautiful garden, in England they'd say it belongs to a duke or a lord, and you couldn't find a daisy, you couldn't find a weed or anything in the garden, it's always immaculate, it's, you know, manicured so beautifully. But when you come over the road and look at the garden of the gardener, his garden's all full of weeds. He's taking care of someone else's property, he doesn't take care of his own.

One of the distressing things to me, when moving around the country, and in other countries, is to find that after you get over the initial state, you know, stage of being strange and a little afraid of each other, the pastor begins to unload his heart and say, well, you know, since I came to this church, I think I've reached an all-time low in my own spiritual life. Now, you talk to the people and they say, this fellow's the greatest preacher ever had, man, you should hear him, how he can handle the Word of God, and he has a

marvellous way of bringing the whole world to view, you know, our obligation to lost men and women. On one hand, he's a success, again, he's looking after the other people's garden, he's neglecting his own garden.

Now, what is the secret of maintaining the spiritual glow, to use a phrase that James Moffat uses? You see, it's not much good having revival fires outside, if I've no revival fire in my own heart. And this is where it all begins. Now, the question is, what degree or what percentage, if you like, we like to talk in percentages, what percentage of the responsibility for my spiritual development depends on me and how much depends on God? Is it all of God and none of me? Or is it all of me and none of God? Or is it a 50-50 deal? Well, I'm not going to try and fix the percentage-wise of this thing, but I'm quite sure that this morning the Lord kind of stressed upon me to keep reminding you of our personal responsibility in our spiritual life.

Again, no man that ever lived ever had a bigger Bible than you have. I don't care how he expounded it, you can take me to, I have a number of books in my office, I'd like more, but I have a couple of thousand, my wife thinks I have about 1,999 too many. She'd stay with this one book, but anyhow, I look at all those learned men there and I think of, well look, Spurgeon, what did they publish recently? About 55 enormous volumes of Spurgeon sermons and each of them have about 50 sermons in, so that's an enormous range of stuff that he got again out of the Word of God.

Then you go to Adam Clark and you see Adam Clark brought these great volumes of exposition, but the fact is that none of them ever had a bigger word than you and I have. All they did was use it better. There's a very fine commentary by Albert Barnes.

Albert Barnes did all his studying between 5 in the morning and 8 o'clock. He wrote the whole commentary between 5 in the morning and 8 o'clock, when his mind was fresh. You know, I hear so many people say, oh I'm a night bird.

Do you know why? Part of that is weakness, it's not strength. You'll find in the Word of God, the great men of God, repeatedly, you read of Joshua, you read of Jeremiah, they rose early in the morning. We love that hymn here, don't we? Holy, holy, holy Lord God almighty, early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.

You know, once you're up and dressed and you've had a nice day, it doesn't take any moral courage or strength or decision to say, well you all go to bed, I'm going to sit here and read, read my Bible, read something else. That's the easiest thing in the world. I don't like parodies, but somebody... No, I won't even quote it.

But the fact is, again, that it's a hard thing to have your own resurrection every morning. You see, you can be as spirit-filled as you like, the Holy Ghost isn't going to lift you out of bed at 4 or 5 o'clock. You've got to make that decision, and mornings like this, it's not always easy.

It's so nice and snug, you know. Even if you get up, maybe you go and bathe, and men say, oh I could take 50 moments, and we'll get in bed again, you know. And we don't like to think it's weakening to the flesh, and yet it's a lack of discipline.

Now if the Christian life calls for anything, and again, I don't care which great man you look to. You can look to Wesley, Finney, any of the great characters, they have been men of discipline. What's the difference between men on the football field or other fields? The man that disciplines himself is the man

who excels always.

And I've got to have control of my spirit and my mind and my body. I am in control. It's my mind, it's my spirit, it's my body.

Now let's turn over to Hebrews and to the second chapter. Let me remind you again that this epistle, as much as issues by evangelists, very often they come thundering down on the third verse of chapter 2, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? That has nothing whatever to do with unsafe people. The book is addressed in the third chapter, verse 1, Wherefore holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession.

So the book is addressed to holy brethren. It has got nothing at all to do with people in the world. Again, let me remind you that after the Acts of the Apostles, the whole balance of the New Testament is to the Church.

There's no epistle to sinners. The whole of the New Testament, apart from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, is trying to get the Church of Jesus Christ into shape. Trying to show us our responsibility, trying to show us our obligations.

Now notice the stress here in verse 1. Wherefore we, who's the we? The folk mentioned in chapter 3, verse 1. We believers, we ought to give a more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Then jump to verse 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Now how great is that salvation? Well, it goes on in a verse to say, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, number 1. Number 2, it was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. And number 3, God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders and doubters miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

So the margin says distribution of the gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will. Now we need to stress that. We talk about Romans chapter 8 and what is it? Verse, well let me check it and see.

Romans 8, I think verse 26. Or maybe not down in verse 26. Verse 27.

He that searcheth the heart's north, what is the mind of the Spirit? Because he, that is the Spirit, maketh intercession for us, the saints, according to the will of God. There's the determining factor in everything in our lives. The Holy Spirit prays according to the will of God.

Here the gifts, verse 4 again of chapter 2, are distributed according to the will of God. I don't think I have any right to tell God what to give me. I can covet earnestly, pardon me, the best gifts according to the will of God for my particular life.

There may be some gifts I don't need. There may be some gifts I don't have I do need. And therefore I need to find God's will and pray through until those things are made real in my life.

But where to, pardon me, again. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Now we have to comprehend to the degree made possible in two ways by our intellects partly and by revelation. Now many of you have been to Bill Goffard's meetings and I stayed in Bill Goffard's home when he was a schoolboy.

As a matter of fact I said something over the table that night and he said that as soon as Ravenhill said that I got hold of it and it's been a guiding factor in my life. He said that quite recently to one of the most

famous men in America and that man told me he said you said over the supper table one night the secret of the Christian life is obedience and Bill said I grasped that and decided I would be obedient. Now that was a turning point in his life according to what he said but the other factor was this that at that time in school he was not smart to use a common phrase, he was not smart.

And so he made up his mind that he would soak himself in the word of God because as it says in verse 12 of chapter 4 the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing assembly of soul and spirit into the joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart. Now the thoughts and intents of his heart at that time were these I'm going to get on a course and I'm going to be obedient to everything that God tells me. And included in that was the fact that God was going to insist that again he be a disciplined man.

And so he began to memorize the word of God. I've often said no man is smart who knows everything in the world about philosophy and all the other things that go around, psychology all the other parapsych or anything you like. No man is smart who knows all the intricacies of psychology and doesn't know the word of God.

No man is dumb who knows the word of God and doesn't know the other thing. For after all isn't this book just God's wisdom? And what Bill did I understand and what my boy David did too without knowing that Bill had done it anyhow. But he made up his mind to master the book of Proverbs.

Now there's a thing I recommend to you. It's so full of counsel, it's so full of wisdom. It's so full of gems or pearls or whatever you want to call them.

Little nuggets of truth that come up so many times in life. Exhortations, corrections, provocations, inspirations. Things that would go disarm.

And therefore if we know that word of God we're going to make, it's going to make us wise unto salvation. And being wise unto salvation keeps us from ten thousand snares in other areas. Now again what responsibility, what proportion of responsibility is mine in developing my Christian life? In the last verse of the second epistle of Peter it says that growing grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now there are some people who grow in grace and they don't grow in knowledge. There are some people who grow in knowledge but they don't grow in grace. I've met people who are literally walking Bibles.

But you know what, they were brittle and sour and critical and hard to get on with. They were just so full of knowledge that they'd made a kind of fortress of their particular, say eternal security or pre-millenniumism or something or pre-tribulation rapture. And boy they could fight with both hands and both feet.

If you got in their way you're going to get kicked around. They're just full of knowledge. But it is not balanced with grace, with gentleness, with meekness and with love.

Now there are other people who say, oh I don't care much about doctrine. I've heard people say it on TV, we don't bother with doctrine. Well you better.

Because the word of God tells us that we're to take heed to sound doctrine. There's so much false doctrine around that I need to be fortified with sound doctrine. But sound doctrine is not a weapon, a club by which I'd beat you into submission and I feel that I've, you know, I've vanquished your idea.

There's an old saying, it's better to lose an argument and win a man than win an argument and lose a man. Now that doesn't mean that you compromise in your theology, not at all. I noticed this morning's news said that the Pope in Hungary is getting those people around.

He's not had any reception like he's had anywhere else, it's a communist country. But he's trying to say, you know, there's not much difference really between Islam and between the Jews and us. We all believe in God and Islam at least recognizes Jesus Christ.

Boy isn't it nice, you put it all down. You don't have any, you know, somebody said recently, well where are the Protestants, what do they protest against these days? Just about nothing. Now there's a way to protest, there's a way not to protest.

I don't believe in protesting with guns and taking a militant attitude like that. That way to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. That's an obligation on us.

Not a faith that was delivered to me in my particular church necessarily, but a faith once delivered to the saints which again is the word of God. Now we need to keep this balance, grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And when you put those two together it's like, you don't hop around on one leg.

I mean shoes are getting awfully expensive, why don't you try hopping on one leg and when you've worn that shoe out, hop on the other, you say that's ridiculous. And yet we try to walk on one leg so very often, don't we? Growing grace and balance it with the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Now, the question again is, how do I build up myself? Look what it says there in the epistle of Jude.

The epistle of Jude is really an epitome of the whole of the Old Testament. It's a book that you could very, very easily, in my judgment, a book you could very, very easily memorize. Let's look at that from verse 17.

It's the last book before Revelation in case you're bugged about that, I don't suppose you are, but there it is. Verse 17, but beloved, Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual having not the Spirit.

Now, here's a gap between there and the next verse, but ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, praying in the Holy Ghost. There are two things in that verse, obviously. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

We'll come to the praying in the Holy Ghost later. Now, doesn't that put an obligation on you? Doesn't it put an obligation on me? Building up yourselves on your most holy faith. Again, I don't know how many of you are here, maybe 24, 20 people this morning, 24, 25 people, OK.

There is no way in which all of us are going to march, we're all marching to one tune in one sense, there is no way in which, let me change the figure, we're all going to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ at the same rate. For instance, you take 25 seeds and put them in the ground, they get the same rain, they get the same sunshine, and one comes up tall like this, the other's thin, one goes fat, the other's small, or take children round the table. You feed them all the same and one's skinny and it doesn't matter how, you say, you need to eat more and he eats more and he eats more and he doesn't get any, he doesn't get any fatter.

My wife says sometimes if she looks at the menu she puts weight on nearly. I don't, I get away with it pretty good, I think for my age particularly too, you know. As you get older you ask a gentleman at the back, he has a problem maybe with a bit of weight.

Some people do, some of us don't. Nothing to do with our mentality, it's the way you're built, it's glandular trouble, other problems. But when it comes down to the spiritual life it is not like that.

Now again, all the disciples did not grow at the same rate. We just read Peter, Peter finishes his two epistles by saying, again, now keep your balance, growing grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now he says something that no other apostle said as far as I remember.

He says we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. Why? I've heard people say, God doesn't have any favourites, you know. Oh, I think he always had, I think he always will have.

How many disciples were there? Oh, two of you know. This school needs pushing along. No, you're a bit shy.

Alright, twelve disciples. Jesus went to the house where Jairus' daughter was dead and he took with him how many disciples? Who did he take? Peter, James and John. He went on to the Mount of Transfiguration and he took with him? Okay.

He went into the Garden of Gethsemane and he took with him? Well, why? Why didn't he take the other nine? Oh Jesus, you're discriminating. Man, he couldn't have done that this day. They'd have had a union after him or somebody.

Discrimination. You're not doing the right thing. Was it that he detected in some of them a keener appetite? After all, isn't this part of growing in grace? What's a part of growing in grace? Hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Sometimes I eat when I don't even feel hungry. But I know there's a certain amount of input I have to have. There are certain things which will feed my body.

There are certain things, fish and other kind of things supposed to stimulate the mind. Well, I should eat a whale if that's the thing. But by the same token, there has to be an intake.

Alright. Jesus took with him Peter and James and John. Why? Maybe he detected they had a greater hunger.

But you think of that awesome experience they had on the Mount of Transfiguration. It never, never dimmed in the mind of Peter. He's writing years after.

And he says, we were with him on that holy mount. We saw him. We were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Now the awful thing about that is this again. And it just shows again, you can't live on the peak spot in your life. Only Peter says we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Only Peter denied his Lord as far as I can see in a vehement way anyhow. You see, the whole danger is, so often we want to live in an ecstatic experience. Well, wasn't it he who said, well, why don't we stay here and build three tabernacles? Wouldn't you like to do that? I mean, after all, it's not too bad living around here, is it? Bit rough at times, but I mean, wouldn't you rather be here than, say, in Iran right now as a

missionary? Or Cambodia? Or a hell hole like, well, Cambodia or Vietnam? There are a lot of our brothers and sisters there today that don't have a shirt to the back, that are picking junk out of garbage heaps in order to live.

Women trying to feed babies and they've no milk to give them. They watch other children die. Boy, some folks have it rough.

And yet these boys are always spouting about, God wants you to prosper and everything else. Well, if that's a sign, God isn't very careful about some of his children in Russia and China and elsewhere today. No, no, no, no.

It's easy to sing, turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face. The things of earth will grow straight into the lips. But I'll tell you this, unless you keep your eye on him, the things of earth have a tremendous pull on us too.

And not only in material sense, but prosperity. Look at that brother over there. He even ran the gaffer.

He gets a lot easier jobs than I get. Or that fellow in the office doesn't have as much work as I have. And once you start looking to the right and the left, you're in trouble.

That's why you see when you get this awesome, and I think it is awesome, awesome catalog of people in Hebrews 11. What an amazing bunch they are. And then the 12th chapter says, looking unto Jesus.

The Greek says, looking off. Looking off those men, they were marvelous men, but they were very imperfect men again. Nor got drunk.

Abraham told a lie. David committed adultery. Look at the bunch.

They're all spotty. They're there not to show us what super men they were. They're there to show us that even if you've got a serious crack in your life, God's able to fill it in and use you again and make you a vessel unto honor.

You don't keep blundering and deliberately getting cracks in your life. But if there's been one, just because somehow you fell into temptation and trial and you got down, I have a letter, I didn't read it this morning, from a man that I met just about a month ago. He came in our meetings with a towering figure of a man, very imposing character, a man about, I think, about 40 years of age.

And he nearly squeezed my hand off. He says, Oh, brother Abner, have I wanted to see you for years. A few years ago, I was one of the most successful Baptist preachers in the country.

And where I went, you couldn't get the crowds. They opened the windows, folks stood outside and so forth and so on. And then somehow, I think, he got a cocktail or something and from that he began to drink and from that he went down and he lost everything.

Lost his home, lost his children. The only thing, his wife has stood through thick and thin. The only thing he didn't do was commit adultery, but he broke about every other law in the book.

And he said, I can't believe that once I was up there in power and authority and then I went, got the skids and down, I went like that. And I stayed like that. I stayed in that state of misery.

I stayed in that state of bondage for years until somebody gave me a couple instead of Revival Tariffs. And immediately, somehow, I sensed hope. And from that time, he said, I began to search.

I began to feel this hungering and this thirsting. Now, he said, I'm not aspiring to be restored as a preacher. I'm aspiring to get into that close relationship with God that I had before.

I have an insatiable appetite for the Word of God. I sleep little and I eat much of the Word. I explore the Word.

My prayer life is balancing. So again, it's growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But here is human responsibility.

It is not all God's responsibility that I mature in grace. Again, you bring your children to the table. Do they all eat? One of them can't wait.

His eyes open before you finish grace. And if you opened yours, you might find him popping something in his mouth while he's saying grace. He just can't wait to eat.

Nom, nom, nom. Ma'am, oh, let's get going. The other one sits there and says, I think we've a ball match.

You know, our teacher was fun. Now, come on. Oh, yes, yes.

And he eats a little bit and he says, You know what, I think I should swap some of my stamps. And you say, would you mind just eating your lunch? And you've almost to get his nose down and I'll put a feed bag on him to get him to eat. The other guy's gobbling it up.

Well, it's the same here. It doesn't matter what school you go to. Some of us sit back and relax.

Some of us have an incurable, insatiable thirst for the Word of God. But again, the exhortation here in Jude is, but beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost. Now, how do I build myself up in that? That's the crux of the matter, isn't it? How do I build myself up in my most holy faith? Well, let's keep in the context.

Verse 21 says, Keep yourself in the love of God. That's one way to build yourself up. Keep yourself in the love of God.

Well, all right, brother Ray, how do you keep yourself in the love of God? Well, isn't it, isn't it, John says in his, I think, his first epistle, chapter 5, somewhere there, here's one way to keep yourself in the love of God. If you love me, you will keep my commandments. All right? If you're going over a field, and up north it's already happened, the roads have become, well, not quite impassable, but anyhow, you can't see the boundary line.

And you're very thankful that there are some markers down the side of the road. And you try and keep between those markers, otherwise you're going to go down in the ditch or get into trouble. So you've got some boundary lines.

Well, then, keep yourself in the love of God. How? Because if you love me, you'll keep my commandments. You'll keep yourself in the boundary lines of the word of God.

Well, how can you do that if you don't know the word of God? You've got to know it. And not just be able to say, oh, let me flip over to this chapter, or flip over that. But some way you store it back in your mind.

I guess the smart folk would say in the repressed complex of your subconscious. Anyhow, that's a little box you have there. And you can store things there.

Because, you see, the Holy Ghost will bring to remembrance whatsoever things we've what? We've learned of Him. If I asked you what is 2 Chronicles 7.14, most likely you know. What is it? All right, my people, all right.

What is 2 Chronicles 7.21? Now, the Holy Ghost can't bring it back because you never learned it. But if you have it there in your mind, back. You talk about a quick reflex.

You talk about having a computer. There's no computer. Do you know your brain has about 3 million cells? No, I think it's 3 trillion now, somebody said.

They've upped it recently. Inflation. But, all those cells.

Now, you say they're not all working. Well, maybe they need something to stick in them, you know. You need to stick a verse of Scripture in everyone.

And if you did, you'd get the whole book. It's amazing how little of the Word of God we have really, as we say, committed to memory. Or, they used to say in the old days, learn by heart.

In the days of Diocletian, there was a very famous man, a preacher. And he said to himself, one day, the situation is going to get so bad that Caesar is going to start opposing the Christ. For after all, we live in one kingdom or the other.

The kingdom of Jesus, the kingdom of Caesar. And he said, I see Caesar is getting a bigger grip. Like we say, the government is getting a bigger grip.

And so he said, what I'm going to do, I'm going to commit so many books of the Bible to memory. And one day, the day came when it was a horrid, wicked, vile thing they used to do. But they did it.

They burned his eyes out. They used to put a poker in the eye and burn out the eye. And when they'd done that, and somebody commiserated with him and said, well, isn't this a vile thing? And now you can't read your Bible.

He said, I don't need to. I've got it all in there. I've got it all in there.

If you go to New York, you'll see some Jewish boys with little flat hats and rubbery long curls down here, you know. And I believe it is a law amongst that, I don't know, the Hasiak Jews, whatever in the world they are, the one sect of the Jews. And you know what they'll do? They memorise the first five books of the Bible.

The first five books of Moses, which, because Moses is their, almost their Christ, at least he was their great emancipator. He was the saviour of the nation physically. And therefore they'd memorise, well, the psalmist, isn't it, the psalmist who says, Thy word have I hid in my heart, but what? I'm thy, not sin against thee.

When I go to the door in a shopping centre, you know, these doors, you just get there, the door opens. I always think of Peter going in prison, the door opened of its own accord. But, you know, it's exactly like that with the word of God.

If you have the word of God, Thy word have I hid in my heart, when I come into a situation, that red light's going to flash. Because I've hidden His word in my heart. And because, why have I hidden His word? Because I love Him.

I've known people, girls, who, the first love letter they got, some of you never had them maybe, but cheer up, it could happen even to a gaffer, you wouldn't know. But, you know, I've known girls who memorised the first love letter they ever got. Man, they turned it over and turned it over and read it till it was, you know, it needed to be re-typed.

If you get one like that, make 50 copies, because you'll wear the first one out. But, you know, this love letter, well, isn't this what God's word is, really, to us? It is a love letter. Now, if I'm going to build myself up on my most holy faith, I must know what that faith is.

I can only know what that faith is by the word of God and by the revelation of the Spirit on that word of God. Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now, look at verse 24.

Verse 21 says, keep yourselves in the love of God. Verse 24 says, there is no one to Him that is able to keep you from falling. Now, there's the divine side.

But you see, we don't appropriate all the riches there are in Jesus Christ. 1 John 5, 21 says, little children, keep yourselves, what? From idols. Well, if you keep yourself from idols, you're going to build yourself up in your most holy faith, aren't you? Some people get idols, even amongst preachers.

Oh, I go a thousand miles to hear so-and-so. They won't go a hundred yards to hear another one. I don't think that's right.

Unless you're coming to hear me, but apart from that, no, that's not right. Oh, there are other idols. You say, I don't have any idols.

Look, the thing that you love more than you love Jesus Christ. I would suggest that the one you talk about more than you talk about Jesus Christ has become an idol. I've read something of Pascal.

Pascal. I got about half a dozen of his books last year. He's a very remarkable man.

He died at about, I'm not sure, I think he died at about 39. Good night. He'd lived about a dozen lives in the 39 years.

He'd explored so many things. He's a super intellectual, sure enough. But Pascal said that perfection is made up of trifles.

But perfection itself is no trifle. It's made up of trifles. Again, as the good book says, it's the little foxes that spoil the vine, eh? It's the little things that will, you know, you don't need the Sahara Desert in your eye, do you? If you do, you won't get it.

But I'll tell you what, if you get one grain of sand from the Sahara Desert, you'll think you've got the desert in your eye. That one tiny little thing can knock your eye out of kilter. And you know what? When this eye begins to cry, this brother over here has fellowship with it and he begins to cry as well.

And you discover that not one eye goes weeping, but before long they're both going weeping. And then what do you do? You're stalled. You can't do anything.

So a little grain that is so small that sometimes they have to take an enormous magnifying glass, you know, if you have to go with a bit of steel or something that gets right on the retina, sometimes they put a machine, well, it isn't really a machine, it's not a telescope, it's an enormous magnifying glass. And then they can see that little thing which is totally invisible to the naked eye, but it's paralyzing your sight and it's giving you pain and making you feel sick all over. Now, some things as trivial as that coming up and upset the Christian life, there are some things which should not upset me at all.

After all, the Apostle says what? He says in weariness, in fastings, in painfulness, in tribulation, in distress, in famine. Now, that man's got an awful balance. When you think of his life, all the amazing things that the Apostle Paul went through.

He staggers me. I'd like his maturity. As I've put it for myself, I'd like his power.

Why? Because he could raise the dead. Wouldn't you like that power? I think it's going to be restored to the church. I'd like his peace.

Why? Because he said he could glory in tribulation. I'd like his poise. None of these things move me.

Boy, you don't find many Christians in that category, do you? None of what things? Tribulation, distress, famine, nakedness, perils of mine own country and perils of the deep. I'd like his passion for me to live as Christ. I'd like his purpose, this one thing I do.

Well, all those qualifications are open to me and open to you. But you see, you've got to take time to be holy. You've got to separate yourself.

This one thing I do. Paul was so hot in the things of God that even the preachers couldn't stand up with him. He says, all men forsook me, nevertheless the Lord stood by me.

Now, do I want to be stripped of everything and everybody, that I may be shut up to God and be, as it were, kind of one of God's supermen? I'll tell you this, if you're going to be much for God, you'll have to be much with God. God doesn't shout his secrets from the housetop. If you're going to have a secret, pass it on to somebody, you usually wait and whisper or you get them along and say, now, just between you and I. And God is going to give you secrets.

He's going to give you something sometimes you can't share with the dearest person except that your wife, I think wife and husband shouldn't have any secrets on those levels either, as long as your wife is one that can keep a secret. But there are secrets that God will give to us that you can't share with anyone at all. Mary kept the secret.

Have you ever wondered what she felt like when maybe Joseph began to be suspicious, he was pregnant and she had said nothing? When did the Lord tell? When did the Lord tell Mary? When did the Lord tell Joseph? It must have been hard on him, it must have been harder on her. It must have been harder on the

relatives. Do you think, well, I think, you know, I remember they used to have autograph books in the old days, everybody used to come up, you know, even at school, sign my autograph, sign my autograph, they've gone out, I'm glad they have.

I sign more than I want to but anyhow, there they are. And I remember one saying in a book, it said they say, what do they say? Let them say. Now if I'm going to grow in grace, if I'm going to hear God's voice, I'm going to get out of range of a lot of other voices.

If I'm going to accept what He says to me, I'm going to have to reject a lot of things that other people say to me. Not because I'm superior, but because God is saying something specifically to me. Now I've got to keep my step, what's your idol? I was in a Bible school for a while and it amazed me that almost every time we went for lunch or a meal, that almost every time, in summer, the whole conversation was the baseball team in town.

In winter, it was the football team. There was supposed to be one or two Christians on it. And I heard more in that school about football and baseball every day, over and over and over again.

Now I don't think that thing ought to be. If I'm going to keep my step, if I'm going to build myself up in my most holy faith, I'm going to keep His commandments. Number two, I'm going to keep myself from idols.

Number three, I'm going to take time to be holy. Why does a fire go out? Yeah? Why does it go out? You don't replenish it. You get a new house and you put a, somebody lit a big fire in our house before we got there.

Man, all that wood, spare wood. And when I walked in, whoo, I could hardly get in the door at all, but stuff was blazing away. It wasn't like that when I got up this morning.

It was pretty chilly. Now, you're going to keep doing two things if that fire is going to be perpetuated. Number one, you have to get the dirt out of the way.

You have to keep taking the dross away. And number two, you've got to replenish. Keep replenishing.

Keep replenishing. Otherwise, there's going to be no continual burning. You have to do that in the spiritual life.

I don't care how the fire of the Holy Ghost comes upon you. It's not a perpetual thing. There has to be a constant renewing.

Finish as you have repeated baptisms of the Spirit walking over Boston Common. Now, that doesn't mean if you walk over Boston Common, you'll get baptisms of the Spirit. But I'm just saying this that he said he wasn't one installment.

It was over and over and over. Over and over and over that he had these endowments of power. Now, another way for me to be to mature and not just maintain what I've got, but increase what I've got is to do what Paul says when he writes to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 6.11 and then, what, the other is 6.15. Ephesians 6.11 he says what? Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. And again in verse 16. No, verse 13.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having them all to stand. Now, what have you to do? You've to stand and you have to withstand even when you don't understand. Because if you've enough grace and strength to stand and withstand you don't need to understand.

Now, we'll never explain God. I don't care who in the world comes to teach. There's nobody can explain God.

But you can experience God. Now, he's given me the equipment to combat the world, the flesh and the devil. If I'm going to go in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

If I'm going to build myself up in my most holy faith. Then I'm going to have to defend what I've got. I'm going to have to fight principalities.

I'm going to have to fight darkness. I'm going to have to fight heresy. But the equipment is all given here.

We're not wrestling against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. Against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Now, I think this mysterious and in some ways magnificent in some ways a horrid character.

This Ayatollah Khomeini is one of the rulers of the darkness of this world. Again, I'm staggered that a wretch like him can call a whole nation which he did the week before last. He called the whole nation to five days of prayer and fasting.

And the whole nation there isn't one leader in this. I don't care who it is. There's nobody in the nation yet has dared even to call the church of Jesus Christ, never mind the nation, to five days of prayer and fasting.

I wonder where these big shots are with all the TV programs and everything else keeping up the same silly little, well it's not silly, they're doing the same thing in the most critical hour in American history. The most critical hour in world history. There is no way out except a spiritual way out.

We're in a human dilemma. It was created by human thinking and human desires and humanism and yet the only answer is a spiritual answer. The answer is in the church of the living God.

But who cares? You've got to get more money and you've got to entertain the crowd. Again, let's not first of all think that America's honor is at stake. Mr. Carter was saying last night, I forget that.

Not because I'm English I don't care a hill of beans about England's honor. If America comes in my thinking before God then I've got an idol. My nationality is more than my redemption.

The first claim on me is not America. The first claim on me is God. My first hurt is not that America's in the gutter right now which she is in many areas.

And I deplore it. I'm sorry about it but first of all it's God's name that's dishonored. There's nobody with the courage in the nation.

I wouldn't have thought I could get five minutes. I'd stir those boys up I'll tell you. Whether I got on CBS or any other airside I'd still like to say my bit just for five minutes.

And call the whole nation of believers not the unbelievers. The scripture says what if my people are called by my name? I said yes that's a valid scripture. Notice it doesn't say if the drunkards and the reprobates and the sinners it doesn't say that.

It says if my people are called by my name what do we do when we have a citywide crusade? Do we go to the taverns? Do we go to the nightclubs? Do we go to the houses of prostitution? Or do we go to church and take church people to another church? We don't go looking for the rescued or perishing do we? Do we go down some hell hole like you've got in big cities in Dallas or Houston and say listen if you're a church member you're not allowed on this bus get out of it. We've come for the lost sheep. Are you a sinner? Have you given up hope? Are you crippled with sin? Are you eaten up with lust? Have you got venereal disease? Have you a prison record? Are you a prostitute? Are you a homosexual? Are you chronic in some area? Listen you're the guys we want.

See those Pharisees was it in the 15th? Is it in Luke where you know the story of the lost sheep the lost silver and so forth and it says that the Pharisees what? Said this man receiveth sinners. I think that's the nicest thing ever said about Jesus. After all you wouldn't have had much chance would you? I'm sure I wouldn't.

No I was raised clean on the clean side of the road you know good methodist home all the rest of it. But I'll tell you what one day I realized you didn't have to be bad to come to Jesus like folks say. As a matter of fact he didn't come for bad people.

When I say to people Jesus didn't come into the world to make bad men good they, you know oh I thought that's why I supported Gene Chalmers and Agape and others they go now no no that isn't why Jesus came into the world. He didn't come into the world to make bad men good. He came into the world to make dead men live.

Not everybody is bad but everybody is dead. I know some unsafe people and you won't tell anybody outside of this room will you? And it's going on tape so it will only go around the world. But you know there are some unsafe people I like a lot better than some safe people I know.

They've got more gracious dispositions they're more generous they're more loving. Now I say keep yourself up build yourself in the most holy safe house. Well keep yourself in the love of God number one keep yourself from idols take time to be holy and feed on his word put on the whole armour of God God doesn't have to second guess God doesn't have any afterthoughts God doesn't have anything to add to what he's written two thousand years ago he doesn't say oh I should have said that to John on the Isle of Patmos and I forgot all about it.

You know I put P.S.'s at the end of my letter then I put a P.S.S.S. on and P.S.S.S.S. I got more S's on the end of that thing than you ever saw in your life.

But God doesn't have any afterthoughts he has given us again in the hymn I'll throw in the foundation I like that hymn it's a great hymn what more can he say than what's the other to you he has said what more can he say than to you he has said to you who for Jesus to refuge you fled he hasn't left anything out there is no reason in the whole wide world why we should have lapses in our spiritual life trials yes difficulties yes adversity yes lapses no times when I feel told no not if I put on the whole armour not if I'm keeping my daily devotional life not if I love him and adore him granted sometimes God seems further up that's not the problem if God chooses to withdraw a little from me that's not my responsibility my responsibility is when I

draw from him and I know I've drawn from him I'll never forget once in a certain conference a well known missionary a book had been written about him and he came to me we were staying in a big palace of a house in England and as I walked out of the lecture hall of that great big home he followed me down that beautiful place lined with gorgeous pictures and everything you know and he grabbed me by the shoulders and he wept on my shoulders he said Ravenhill you know everybody thinks I'm a hero they see my pictures they're a foreign country and everything but you know my spiritual life had lapsed there a long while before I came home and I have found missionary after missionary who says I got so involved in externals you see we're activists we like to be doing and God isn't so much concerned about our doing as our growing not so much about my fervor as my faith I can supply the fervor some of us are more volatile we get easily I get deeply stirred about sometimes a little thing will drive me to my knees and make me weep sometimes reading a book won't do that now if you want to take the other side of the picture the way to get sour the way to dim your Christian life the way to put water as it were on the fire in you is become critical these are things against our spiritual life gossip will help to dim your light unkind judgment will help to do it but mostly the time has gone here mostly neglecting the word of God neglecting prayer and neglecting fellowship with the saints let's keep it in order because the scripture clearly says first of all our fellowship is number one with the father with his son Jesus Christ and with one another and very often we turn it round and we make fellowship with each other a substitute for fellowship with the father that the Lord thy God is a jealous God thou shalt have no other God if you want to reduce it into other language you shall have no other friend before my friendship you shall have no one you admire before your admiration for me no one you love more than you love me because he says you are to love him with all your what? heart and and and and there is not much left for anybody else thank you

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