

# Spiritual Olympics

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*Leonard Ravenhill's sermon 'Spiritual Olympics' challenges believers to look unto Jesus and endure in their spiritual journey with diligence and maturity.*

**Duration:** 44:44

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:11-12, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:28, Romans 8:32, Hebrews 11:37, Hebrews 12:6, Hebrews 12:9

**Topics:** "Christian Walk"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of the prodigal son and relates it to the journey of a Christian. He emphasizes the importance of patience and endurance in the Christian walk, comparing it to a race. The preacher highlights that receiving a reward or recognition quickly does not necessarily indicate true value or maturity. He also emphasizes that it takes time and refinement from God to develop a person into a strong and faithful servant.

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## Transcript

We're compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. Therefore we consider first of all that we're surrounded with these witnesses. In three worlds, the worlds I believe of evil spirit, the world of angels, and the world of men and women round about us.

We consider the witnesses and we consider the watching, looking unto Jesus. We consider the weights or the impediments that we have, and lots of them will never be solved by praying about them. It's a case of faith and works.

We've got to get diligent about putting off some of those weaknesses that we have. As I reminded you, you have every right to eat but you've no right to be a glutton. You have a right to sleep but you've no right to be lazy.

There are fine lines dividing us from these things which become severe handicaps in our lives. I discovered fairly recently that to oversleep can be as dangerous as undersleeping. You can injure your body by sleeping too much.

We're not engaging certain powers of our bodies. We relax and therefore we get more and more into an attitude of lethargy and it gets harder and harder and harder to do things. Now, there are two main things to do.

In the second verse of this twelfth chapter it says looking unto Jesus. And then in the third verse it says and consider him. There's a great deal of difference between watching or looking unto Jesus and then considering or contemplating the life of the Lord Jesus.

Now we're looking off those imperfect figures again. Remember when it says looking unto Jesus, the Greek there is drawing away. Drawing away from these amazing characters in Hebrews 11.

And looking unto Jesus. And I'm tempted to say and keep on looking. Let's keep our eyes on him, the author and the finisher of our faith.

If you don't, I don't care how many books you read and how many people you watch, you'll get confused. He is the perfect example. Again, Adam started off in a perfect environment and he failed in every issue.

Jesus set off in the most imperfect environment that was possible. He came into the world when it was a sophisticated totalitarian world that was governed by a massive slavery system. There were at least six million slaves in the day of the Roman Empire and Jesus never preached about slavery.

He never attacked those things that were grinding people down, strangely enough. All the time he was talking about spiritual conditions, spiritual life, spiritual goals, spiritual rewards. Oh, we're giving these, these sketches in Hebrews 11.

You know, I think one of the great things in eternity will be when God maybe brings up Abraham or some of these other characters and says, now let's start at the beginning. You know, when God began to work on Abraham, he was 75. Some of you haven't reached that yet.

You look it, but you haven't reached it. And uh, and he didn't finish working on Abraham for a hundred years. And yet that hundred years is all telescoped into a few words there in Hebrews 11.

You have that colossal figure, Moses. Read the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. It gives you something of his life.

He was trained in the universities of Egypt. I think he was one of the greatest intellects the world ever had. I don't know all that he did.

I can guess a lot. But I know at 40 years of age, he was mature. He was considered the next Rameses to sit on the throne.

Well, after all, life begins at 40. So they say. It ends with some of that age too, but it begins at 40.

And at 40 years of age, he's an accomplished statesman. Remember the word, the word, the word. Not my imagination.

The word says that he was mighty in word. Now he wasn't mighty in his, in his oratory because he stammered. God had a job for him.

And he said, Lord, I'm sorry you missed it because I, I, well, you know, I, I have an impediment. I, I, I just get words out and the Lord says, forget it. Your brother's going to be your lips.

You know, if God has got a task for you, he won't take any apologies. You can't straighten God out. If you haven't quit trying to do that, you'd better quit.

I tried for years to get God to think my way and I finally quit because he won't. I have to think his way. And Moses is mature.

Moses is a soldier. Moses is a statesman. Moses maybe was the most ideal man in the world.

I am right there. God cut him off and threw him on the backside of the desert. If you want to go to the best Bible school in the world, it's still open.

It's the backside of the desert, behind two trees in Arizona. Get inside of a cave and stay there till God speaks to you. Much easier to read streams in the desert or squirts in the wilderness or something.

Much easier to, to, to, to try and promote my godliness. And God says, no, Moses, I know you're accomplished. I know you've grown in your spirit.

You're beginning to realize you don't belong this group of people. You belong a slave group. Now you get down there and cool down.

And he had to take 40 years to cool down. That's a pretty long while. And then at 80 years of age, God took him up.

But again, that, that fantastic life. Man, he had an experience nobody else ever had in, in, in, in all time. He had the experience of meeting God on a mountain.

Seeing the glory of God pass by. And it's all pushed down into a few verses again in Hebrews 11. One man made the sun to stand still and the moon to stand in the valley of Adullam.

And his name isn't even mentioned. He toppled a city. His name isn't mentioned.

He didn't get any credit. Isn't that terrible? You know, when you do something for God and your name isn't in the church register or something, that's shocking. Well, it is, of course, if you're living with eye service, as men pleases.

I keep saying, God keeps a score. He sure does. Some people get a, get, get credit for something they didn't do.

God says, I know who's behind that thing. He pulled off the prize, but, but he didn't do the labor. And therefore God is just and holy and God rewards.

And so in Hebrews 11, we have the fantastic, again, characters there in, in the Old Testament. That as great as they were spiritually, as great as they were in their achievements, they subdued kingdoms, they wrought righteousness, they obtained promises, they stopped the mouths of lions. Women received that.

But God says, look up unto Jesus, who is the author and the finisher, the perfecter of your faith. You see, the whole of this chapter, actually, if you come to analyze it, it is this, it's showing us that the beginning is a very small thing in the Christian life. When people say, I'm saved from hell, so what? You may have to live 60 years between here and, and the time you die.

And if that's all you have to say, I'm saved from hell, I'm saved from hell, I'm saved from drink, I'm saved from vice, so what? It's still negative. The thing is, what is God working in your life and in my life now? We are his workmanship. And God dares to put an exhibition as though he, he says, you see, look, I, I put,

there, you, you've got Abraham.

Now you look over his life, he is my workmanship. I took him from the area where he was a multimillionaire and I took him up there by the Euphrates and across the top there, if you like, and down through, what we call Israel now, or Palestine as it was, and I'm on his own, he went to Egypt and then he came back. But, but I was in control all the way through.

And he's the most quoted character in the New Testament. Nobody is quoted. Read the fourth chapter of Romans, it's almost entirely about Abraham.

And you know, there isn't a thing in heaven that God has that he won't bring to play in your life if you let him. We are his workmanship. He's ever seeking our dross to consume and our gold to refine.

All right? The context of this scripture here, you have to consider him, why? Well, you remember, of course you remember Romans 8, it's the victory chapter. Romans 8, 28, nearly everybody knows. Romans 8, 32 says this, he that spared not his own son.

You see, that's why you have to keep looking to Jesus, because you're going to say something came in your life that never came in anybody's life until today, which is rather arrogant, don't you think? Huh? Nobody was ever tempted as hard as you, nobody's ever tried as hard as you, nobody ever had the setbacks you have, nobody ever had the defeat practiced on them. And then it says here that God spared not his own son. He didn't spare him poverty, he was born in a worse state than any of us.

He didn't spare him difficulty. Now, without going back, without reading it, do you remember what it says in the 11th chapter? Don't look, no, no, peaking right now, 11th chapter of Hebrews. Let, let me read it for you, and I'm going to miss something out, and see if you can pick up what I left out without looking at the chapter.

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, slain with the sword, wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented. Now, what did I leave out? These are the things, the hostilities that come on the soul, these are, these are the enemies, these are the things that wear us down, these are the things that test every virtue that we have. They test our strength, they test our courage, they test our faith.

They test whether we say, well, I don't know, maybe God's forgotten me today, or say triumphantly, hallelujah, he, he's working it out after the council of his people, his own will. Stoned? Yeah, they were stoned all right. They were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword, they wandered around in sheepskins and in goatskins, they were destitute, afflicted and tormented.

Now, now, that's all harassment, that's all suffering, that's the stuff you think the Lord would say. Now, that's what I bring on the devil's children, that you dear darling children, I put a label on you, thou shalt not touch front and back, so when Satan comes over you, oh, I was going to blast that man, that woman, but there's a label on, God says those are my darlings, now don't touch them. What did I leave out? Well, wouldn't you think that in the midst of all those things which, which, which are fierce on the body and on the mind, there's a little thing injected there, and the word I left out was this, they were tempted.

Would you have put temptation on the same level as being cut with a sword, and destitute, and afflicted, and stoned, and sawn asunder? Doesn't seem to belong the same bunch, does it? We were gathering grapes last night. They're wild, they live down the back of our field there, and so we were, we were getting

some grapes. My, they were nice, but you know what I noticed? I noticed some black lovely bunches of grapes, and in the middle of one you'd see a red one that wasn't mature, and in some of them there were big, big green hard grapes.

Now, they were all in the same bunch, they'd all had the same race, they'd all had the same sun chance, they hadn't all matured the same. I happened to turn the radio on last night. I like to watch athletes run.

I used to do a bit of running myself, and there was a six mile marathon. Now, that's a long way to run, six miles. I've done it myself, and I was carrying it.

Now, how long did they train to run in that race? They didn't say, oh, it's only a month to the races, I better get going. Man alive, they'd be limping, and wobbling, and the knees would be friendly knocking together, if they only trained a month ago. They'd been training four, and five, and six years.

Now, they're going round, and round, and round, and round, and round, six miles, and the winner got a gold medal. I don't know how long it took him, I put argument, let's say 30 minutes. There's a hundred yard dash, ready, go, and almost before he can say Jack Robinson, they say, so-and-so won, number one, number two, number three.

Now, it only took him 10 seconds, 10.9, if he'd been a good runner, he'd have done it in nine point something. But the amateurs, they're not as good as some of the professionals. What did he get? He got a gold medal.

For what? For running for 11 seconds. The same gold medal the other man got for running 30, 30 minutes, 30 seconds, or whatever it was. Where's the value? After all, you need a lot more stamina and endurance to keep running, running, running, and somebody falls out of the race, and somebody goes on, and one man stumbled and fell over the side, and before long, you see some drawing away, and the others, you think, well, there must be old ladies at the back, they're so far away at the back, and the other is going on like a train, and they say, there's only two in it, and this man's going to do it, and suddenly the second man goes, like an arrow past the other, he gets surprised.

Hmm? Well, isn't it like that in Hebrews 11? You find some of them didn't live very long. I think one of the most beautiful characters in the, in the New Testament was Stephen. I doubt if he was 19 years of age when they martyred him, butchered him.

The apostle Paul, I think, maybe preached 40 years, 35 years, and then at the end of the race, they get the same reward for what reason? That each of them could say, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. God takes 30 years over one man, he takes three years over another, but this man comes to maturity quicker, this man runs the race, this man carries the burden, that man does the thing God says, and God says that's it. I remember a while ago, somebody, a few years ago, somebody talking about a young preacher that had died.

Well, there's an old preacher down the road, he lost his usefulness years ago, he's been retired about 25 years, he's about 85 years of age, and you know, isn't it strange that one preacher lives to be 85 and the other dies at 35? How do you explain it? And this man said, rightly or wrongly, he said, well I'll tell you, God doesn't take the oldest, he takes the rightest. So if you get right spiritual in a few years, you may pop off to glory. And if I bury you, I'll just say, and he was right, he was right.

We old cadgers are still around here. Now this is a race, this is a fight. Paul says, I'm not a shadow boxer, I actually fight real foes.

I don't wrestle in a visible field, I wrestle in an invisible field. I'm not running to get the applaud of the crowd outside, I don't care, he says, I'm crucified, I'm dead to all those things. My one desire, my one goal is that I may please him.

As he says writing to Timothy, isn't it, where he says that you may please him who has chosen you to be a soldier. All right? We're to consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners. You know, in the obstacle race of the spiritual life, the believer is constantly making discoveries of God's faithfulness, of the reasons why God is working in certain areas of his life.

Let's say that in verse 5 of this same chapter, chapter 12, and he hath forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, my son. You know, I sometimes wonder if we've really discovered the fatherhood of God. I was reading that in Galatians today, excuse me, where the apostle says, I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth not from a servant.

Oh, you say, just a minute, just a minute, that little fellow there is going to inherit 10 million dollars. The servant there gets a hundred dollars a week for being a servant, and you say there's no difference. I didn't say that, the bible says it.

There is no difference in the servant and the son. Why? Because as yet the son has not become old enough and mature enough to inherit the estate that the father has for him, and therefore legally he's kept from inheriting that fortune, inheriting that wealth. Now when he comes to a certain place, he can go and take his credentials and say, well I, I, I've got a birth certificate, I've got an aunt here who knows that legally I am the child of so-and-so, and I've come to inherit my wealth, and therefore it's bestowed upon him when he comes to the place of maturity, not because he's an heir merely, he must be more than an heir, he must be mature enough to handle that which has been left for him.

Do you think this is why the church is staggering around in its poverty right now? That God says, well I've many things, Jesus said that to his disciples. I say reverently, God pity you and me, if at the judgment seat of Christ, God says, well Ravenel, look, I want to tell you, there was a certain place in your life where you, you, you got to the door, you got your hand on the door, and suddenly I had to bolt the door. You are not capable of handling that which I had, because the word of God tells us very clearly.

But Jesus said to his disciples, I have many things to tell you, but you can't dare them, you can't dare them. I remember after a bombing raid in England, I went up to a certain area and the street was cordoned off, and I said to the policemen, uh, uh, well every cop in town knew us because we'd street meetings on a Saturday night, and he said, Mr. Ravenel, I, I, I'm sorry, but you can't go past this rope. It's devastated.

There are some bombs that haven't gone off yet. But I said, I've got some of my flock there, some of my people live behind those houses, just let me run in and out. He lifted the rope, he said, be as quick as you can.

And as I went, some children tried to run after me, said, hey, hey, come back, come back. My uncle lives up here, my aunt lives up, come back. When I got back, he said, well, uh, pretty devastating, isn't it? You see, I couldn't let these kids go.

No, there'd been a bombing raid. There were chair legs up in the trees, there were people's legs up in the trees. There were babies blown on the roof, there were people's bodies that splattered against the wall, it was a, it was a hellish sight.

And he said, if they saw that, my, those little kids could be terrified, they could have nightmares, they, oh, they could go crazy. Is this why God will hold some visions from us? Oh, we like visions of heaven, and we sing in our head visions of rapture, now burst on my sight. Are there visions of horror and terror that God won't let us share in, because we're so immature? But the herb was teaching us, and I hope we will learn it.

I don't know that chorus yet. I know what it means when we talk about visions. I know Gilmore went to Mongolia because he had a vision.

I know Judson went to Burma because he had a vision. I know Fenton Hall went up an area of the Amazon nobody explored because he had a vision. I agree, the one thing that kept, what, what kept Paul going? Other men quit, evangelists quit.

On one occasion he said, well, Alexander's gone away and somebody else has gone away. All men pursued me. Oh, I thought all men crowded around you if you were spiritual, not on your life.

You think they want to carry burdens if they can get away without it? Do you think they want to endure hardness as a good soldier on Jesus Christ? One of the key words in the epistles of the Hebrews is endure. They endure the seeing him who is invisible. He endured the cross despising the shame.

We've turned that word out now. It's enjoy it. You'll get filled with the Spirit and boy from here out it's ecstasy, joy.

You go to a five dollar breakfast and ten dollar banquets and whoop it up and see some half-saved film star and hear some prophecy that's not too sound and brother you've got it made. Glory, it's wonderful to be filled with the Spirit. There happens to be another side to the coin.

This greatest man that ever lived if you read Corinthians 1, Corinthians 4 says to this present hour we suffer need. We have trial, we have hardship. See God isn't running a nursery, he's running an armory.

He doesn't say come here and I'll feed you with a bottle. He says come here and I'll put you in a battle. There's an endurance.

All right, one of the things that we discover surely then is that the fatherhood of God. I have the father and with Jesus Christ God has freely given me all things. Now I don't know how much of that are you discovered.

I sometimes think it's totally unfair to ask we guys to preach to a crowd of people. When you go to the doctor, go to the hospital, what do they do? The first thing about it is they take your temperature and they check up on you and they stick a lot of information at the end of your bed and the doctor comes and reads your chart and boy you've got your medical history. Now if we had to do that every night I'd have somebody at the door and I said well this is a medical chart, spiritual chart, here's a woman she's very run down and this man has got high blood pressure, this woman's got low blood pressure, this woman's got a fainting heart and this woman's got a weak will and this man over here is half dead and that man says I know where to start preaching.

I don't know, I have to guess. I have to guess just what your spiritual, no I don't have to guess at all. I'm just to give the word God gives me and let it fall where it falls and fit whom it fits and you get nothing that's your own fault.

You see we're all on such different levels. The river that you have in Ezekiel 47, water to the ankles and then to the knees and then to the loins and waters to swim in. Now where are we tonight? Where are you tonight? Answer the question, I'm not going to try and answer it for you.

All right verse six, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth some of the sons he received. He doesn't say that and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Why? Well this is how we prove the love of God.

We think we prove the love of God when, when everything goes our way, when you get a better job, an increase in wages, problems get solved, obstructions are moved out of the way, looks as though Gabriel and the archangels were working overnight to clear the road ahead of you for the 24-hour trip you're going to make before you go to bed or 12 hours. Man it's marvelous, all the agencies of God are working for me and the scripture says this, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Why does he do it? I wouldn't dare to guess but I'll tell you what it says in this verse, he does it because he loves you.

Come a bit further down the chapter, oh next verse, if ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as sons for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not. You see in the government of God he knows where to put the pressure, he knows the time of chastisement, he knows the methods of correction, he knows that works out what works on one person will not work on the other person. Now whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and he scourgeth every son.

But coming down to the ninth verse, we have fathers of our flesh which corrected us and gave them we gave them reference, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits and live? Now isn't this the whole problem? Why does he scourge us? Because we're not in subjection. I got beaten up many a time when I was a kid, didn't you? Did your father ever correct you? For what? For rebellion. Isn't it the big problem in the world today? The world's in rebellion.

People are in rebellion against the status quo. If a thing has been right so long it's a proof it's wrong to the modern mind. Can't be right if it's been, it can't be the real thing if it's been right so long let's upset it.

And so we live in a day of women's lib and everybody else's lib because we rebel, we rebel against spirituality as God wants it, we rebel against morality as God wants it. After all I can't prove to you in the scripture that Satan got kicked out of heaven because he got drunk. Or that he beat up Gabriel.

Or he started stealing a block of gold off Main Street in heaven. There's no clue of that. The reason that he got thrown out of heaven was the same reason that Adam got kicked out of the garden of Eden.

He rebelled against authority. Now you know as well as I know that before long a child will begin to try to assert its authority and you have to try to correct that child, show your authority. And this is exactly the problem that God has with us.

It says that they, our parents, they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure but God doesn't quit in a few days. I guess you've tasted this already that you've come into an experience of life and God has started some manipulation and correction and you've got through it and you sail along for a

while and feel it's great and suddenly boy the pressure comes on again and you say hey what's this and the Lord says well I straightened you out there but there's correction needed here. There's another area in which you need some chastisement or you need some correction or you need some provocation to make you run back.

Now before you start squealing about it remember this the key to this is keep looking unto Jesus. Why? Because he had exactly the same trouble. What does it say here? Stepping back there we said that in the midst of this persecution and the destitution and affliction and being tormented that in it it says that they were tempted.

Well then let me look there at the end of Hebrews chapter 2 it says in himself he hath suffered being tempted and therefore he is able to suck at them that are tempted. Did you ever sing a hymn like this? I need thee every hour most gracious Lord. You've sung that many times.

I need thee every hour in joy or pain come quickly and abide or life is vain. I need thee every hour and part of that hymn says this temptations lose their power when thou art nigh. Now he doesn't take temptation away he gives strength to get over and through that temptation.

As I say you sing I go to church we sing sweet hour of prayer sweet it calls me from the world of care. The only problem is the world of care is there when you get out of the side of the church again. Your prayer didn't solve a world of care it gave you strength it conditioned you to go out and surmount that world of care.

Now it says here not merely the Lord Jesus was tempted but he suffered being tempted. What is there in temptation? Well number one I have I have a bad habit of telling God how courageous I am and how much I'll do for him and so he says well go on exhibition and let me see you work it out. Words are cheap they're easy you sing them you talk them.

Get out there where you're by yourself where there's no atmospheric support where nobody gives you a hug and says nice to see you I've missed you this week and you get there all by yourself and it seems you're the only one in the world and all hell is let loose on you and everybody else is going free. He suffered being tempted he suffered the 40 days when he was tempted and tried. None of the ransomed ever knew how deep the waters crossed.

There's a veil there's a veil drawn over the deepest experience Jesus had that three men could have shared and they let him down. And I find over and over and over again in the case of the disciples three times he came to them in Gethsemane and three times they were asleep. I wonder how often he comes to the church today and he says you're sleeping and finally he says sleep on he gave up on them.

As I say again tonight the greatest peril to America tonight is not who's fighting to get in the White House the greatest peril to America is that God might walk out on us very quickly he's just about sick of it. Because his threat is not to the White House but to God's house I will spew you out of my mouth. I remind you again he he quit the Jews two thousand years ago and he hasn't bothered with them for two thousand years but they're going to be restored again according to Romans 11 going to be brought back into the into the vine and become fruitful but he's left them.

Why am I tempted? Number one I prove to God in my temptation that I can overcome those temptations by his divine strength. I'm an exhibition to the world and they can look on me and find that I can endure

temptation. Number three do you know why Jesus can say you can get through because he says I've been tempted on all points like as you have.

Now you can listen to somebody who's been through the school of experience. Honest to goodness I don't take much notice a lot of notice of 20 year old preachers. I listen to them I'm not saying I can't pick up some spots of wisdom but after all they're only kids they're only philosophers they haven't been through the school.

As I've reminded you before there's nothing more crazy than the way what we put men into the ministry. They answer 20 questions they get a diploma and they're preachers. Apparently it takes God 20 years to make a man so said E.M. Bounds the greatest prayer warrior America ever had maybe because it takes 20 years for God to refine the man to test the man to put the pressures on the man.

You see he says he has suffered being tempted. Do you ever feel depleted after you've been tempted? Why am I tempted? Number one I prove to God in my temptation that I can overcome those temptations by his divine strength. I'm an exhibition to the world and they can look on me and find that I can endure temptation.

Number three do you know why Jesus can say you can get through because he says I've been tempted on all points like as you have. Now you can listen to somebody who's been through the school of experience. Honest to goodness I don't take much notice a lot of notice of 20 year old preachers.

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You see he says he has suffered being tempted. Do you ever feel depleted after you've been tempted? After all Jesus is exhausted he'd been tempted for 40 days. And when he was physically through nearly Satan says well listen make some bread for yourself.

Get out of it. He's exhausted. I had a preacher friend who used to say to me sometimes you know when I've got so used to preaching it costs me nothing.

Well then I say it's worth nothing and it does nothing. Because I happen to read of Jesus that when a woman touched him he perceived that virtue had gone out of him. And it went out of him it'll go out of me will go out of you.

Shall I render to God that which cost me nothing? Maybe the greatest living expositor of the Bible. He has five or six new books on Romans. I think I've got six of them.

There's one or two others to come. And he told me personally he said brother Ramiel I do not find it difficult. I love to expound the word.

I love to write. I love to meditate. But prayer prayer exhausts me.

I find it a tremendous battle in the place of prayer. And who doesn't? Who doesn't? I don't think Satan minds how much we say about the word of God. How we describe it.

But when we get down to live it and breathe it and let it work in us and work through us. And we start getting into a place of engagement against the principality and past. It's an entirely different thing.

Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are. And until I've been tempted I have no authority to speak to that man. I can say to him listen I'll tell you what the scriptures say.

But if I say I'll tell you what the scriptures say plus you know what I was once in this very situation you're in. And sit down 10 minutes I'll talk to you and tell you how God got me out of this situation. Then he's an authority.

And as I've said repeatedly a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument. If you've been through that school of suffering. If you've been through that school of temptation.

If you've been through that school of correction. And somebody else says you know I think the house the walls are going out and the roof's coming in. You say well hold steady a minute I want to tell you something.

You know oh you're not assured. God is so merciful and God is so patient. I'm learning more and more and more these days that that one of the things we have to do we have to be under authority.

I have no authority except God giving me that authority. I say this is a kind of a wild guess. But you've no right to expect authority your authority to be obeyed in your children if you're not obeying some authority God has put you under.

Sometimes when I think of these legislators saying let's do this and do that. Man we're gonna have to deal with crime. You notice what they never deal with at the White House or Capitol Hill.

They never deal with adultery. It happens to be in the same list of sins as murder and stealing and lying and everything. But you see there's so many in adultery up there that they're not going to pass a bill about adultery.

Oh you must obey laws we make on capitalists. What about you obeying the laws that God has made? No no no they're not going to fall into line with that. You know really it's really simple.

We could put the world straight overnight really shouldn't we? Life will only work one way and that's God's way. We're looking a hundred different ways. How could we do this? How can we do that? How can we get out of this mess that we're in? Very simple.

Have a revival of true New Testament Christianity which would involve again the Ten Commandments. Get rid of self-love, love of the world, love of the flesh, love of the other thing. Oh we could have it but you see it's extremely difficult.

You see if there's anything that marks the day in which I live it's freedom. I remember not too long ago talking with some young fellows. They'd broken away from home.

They'd become hippies. They'd gone to the devil and everything else and uh I don't doubt they were saved. Man their Bibles were marked up.

They'd got notes. They'd gone to every meeting they could go to. They'd got notes on everything.

They'd written in the backs of their Bibles. They'd written everywhere. And uh finally after they'd been a day or two to hear us I sat down with one of them and I said well uh tell me how about this wild life of yours? Where did it all start? Well it started in the same place.

Rebelling against authority at home. The old man fed out of being at half-past ten. Well that's all right for 16 year olds but not when you're 80.

And I wasn't going to come in at half-past ten and I wasn't going to do this that near. Finally I said this to him. Listen are you really straightened out with God? He said yeah yeah I quit all the dirty habits.

There's no sin in my life. I got victory in those areas. Uh and a matter of fact when I got straightened out after about a month I I I called home and I told them you've got a new son.

I've been born again. He said I went down the line and told them just about everything that happened and I I heard my mother cry and I heard my dad say well that's wonderful isn't it? And I said I think it is. He said yeah praise the Lord it's great.

I said I think you've one thing to do to prove you've ended your rebellion and as a love gift to your parents what's that? I said go home and live with them for the two years you've been away for four years. After all that was a prodigal. The prodigal knew an inheritance was coming but he was impatient.

I want it now let's get it. He blasted the whole thing. What was the first thing he did? I will arise and go to my father and I will say I have sinned against heaven and in my sight I'm not worthy to be upset.

Do you remember how the father was looking for him day after day when he went he put that ring on his finger a sign of endless love. The circle isn't it uh ring is a sign of eternity. It's endless robes on him and shoes on his feet and there was great rejoicing and merriment.

Now he could have written home to his father and said I'm a different boy and I've given up all that lousy living and I admit I've been living in debauchery and sin and vileness but but listen I'm going to prove something to you. I'm coming home and you know what he did when he went home? He said he didn't say daddy I'm coming home I'm your son you know that I mean you know I've got this birthmark here and and you know my voice if I listen son you don't have to argue like that but he says listen daddy I want to tell you something I'm not coming home as a son I'm coming as a servant because the son in the house can do as you like a servant does as the master says and he says I'm telling you now that my repentance is genuine I'm coming home to live here and it may be more difficult than when I when I left but I'm living in subjection. Reading a bible will not make you a saint.

The only thing that makes us saints is when we accept the truth of God it gets in our bloodstream and I say Lord I'm living as far as I know in total subjection to your will. You can't give God any gift in place of obedience. You can own all the gold in America.

It will not satisfy God if you're disobeying. You say well I'm going in the ministry but I'm not going to a foreign country. I can't put up with bad living and bad smells upset my stomach.

As a matter of fact I got my own a little church in Kansas right down on the crossroads a lot of farmers there they bring me half a cow and bring me milk and eggs I got it I got it all made. Do you remember

when Samuel went down to see the man of God Saul and he said well how are you getting on? Oh oh he said look at the valley filled with the choicest of my flock see all those altars smoke ascending I sacrificed thousands. I just given God everything and out of the ticket there a sheep began to bleat and oxen began to low and the prophet says well if you've done all you said you've done what meaneth the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of all he said the people easy to push it on somebody else the people said you know that happens to be a prized bull that's worth 15 times we're not going to kill that are we let's keep it and we'll use it a bit later for the Lord.

Hey look at that young man there well yeah but he happens to belong the royal family of the Amalekites he's a handsome man he's the finest athlete he can run after a deer and catch it he can shoot an arrow better than anybody else he's the finest man and we spared him. Do you remember at the end of the journey when somebody came to David and said did you hear the news what news Saul fell in battle he did well isn't this his armband oh yes that's a royal armband isn't this his spear isn't this his crown yes it is where did you get them I got them from an Amalekite standing over him now if he had done as God said you see he didn't destroy the Amalekite so the Amalekite destroyed him it always works that way 99% of obedience is still disobedience there's no selection in obedience this was partial obedience argument got 99% of what he asked but and then that thing turns around and destroys him shall we not be in subjection he says to to God partial subjection is not subjection but after all again God doesn't pull any tricks all God is seeking in my life in your life is my broth to consume and my gold to refine keep looking to Jesus because if you look to that person over there do you know what well God happens to have stopped dealing with that man he's come to a place of spiritual obstruction and it's too difficult for him to take up his cross and go and you say well he's getting away with it he's making as much money he's as popular he's as nice but if you knew in his spirit that man's got a cold spot colder than any refrigerator you've got in your house why because he's come to a place of disobedience so you keep looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher turn your eyes upon Jesus look full in his wonderful face why should we keep looking at him number one because he is our wisdom Jesus Christ is made unto me wisdom and when I need it I go to him oh I may get advice from other people but it's not really wisdom he is the source of wisdom Wesley said in one of his hymns deed you lover of my soul thou of life the fountain art I like that freely let me take of thee bring thou up within my heart and rise to all eternity

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