

The Bride of Christ

by Leonard Ravenhill

The church must be pure and holy in order to meet God's standards and be a true representation of His presence.

Duration: 45:16

Scripture: Romans 8:16, 2 Corinthians 9:8

Topics: "Bride Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by encouraging the congregation to stay and pray for a little while before the meeting starts. He then shares a testimony of a miraculous car accident where no one was hurt, emphasizing the power of God. The preacher then moves on to discuss Genesis chapter 24, highlighting it as a type of the Holy Spirit seeking a bride for Jesus Christ. He emphasizes the importance of having the witness of the Spirit in one's life and the need for the church to be filled with power and authority, starting with the pulpit.

Transcript

Well, to get the record straight, uh, our neighbour, uh, I'm trying to think of a name now. Michelle was, her sister was driving down 16, I don't know what time, just before supper, and something went wrong, they went in the hedge, and the car turned round and round, and then rolled over a couple of times. The two ladies were in, and both the babies were in, and the car's total, all the glass is smashed, the wheels went somewhere, and yet they're not hurt, they're not touched.

Just a miracle that God did. Praise God. Let's look for a minute here, where we were last week, in Genesis chapter 24.

Genesis 24. We said in the, the 22nd chapter is, is a type of the father giving the son, and the 23rd chapter, where Isaac is offered, is a type of, uh, the rejection of Israel for the time being, and this 24th chapter is a type of the Holy Spirit, Eleazar, a type of the Holy Spirit, gone to seek a bride for the Lord Jesus Christ. I just want to take two things out of this.

In verse 16 it says, remember he's laid down conditions as to who the lady will be that he's gone to meet, he doesn't know her, and he's asked to sign. In verse 14 he says, And I will give the camels to drink also. Let the same be her that, let the same be that shall shut up the appointed, that shall haste appointment for thy servant Isaac, and thereby I shall know that thou hast showed kindness unto me.

It came to pass, before he had done speaking, was the scripture says, while he yet speaking I will hear, that Rebekah came out. Verse 16, the damsel was very fair to look upon. In the margin maybe it says, if it does in mine, she was good of countenance.

In other words, she was charming. She was beautiful to look upon, and she was a virgin. Verse 18, And she drank, said drink my lord, and she hasted, let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave them to drink.

Anyhow, there she was at the well, there she's the bride, symbolic of purity. Now if you go down a bit further, in the same chapter, Rebekah now has got to the end of the journey, and it says Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted from off the camel. For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant said, It is my master.

Therefore she took a veil and covered herself. So in the first place, she was a virgin. Typical of obviously of purity.

Here she has a veil with which she covers herself. A type of modesty. One of the chronic things in the world today is the immodesty of women.

I read a long while ago about a woman who was walking around in the skimpiest shorts she had, and she was too revealing, and a man got her and raped her. So the judge sent him to jail. I'd have sent the woman to jail as well.

If it's not for sale, I advertise it. If your body is half naked, you're stirring lust in somebody else, send the guy to jail, send the woman to jail. But modesty has gone out of the window.

So the Lord is looking for what? This man is looking for a bride, and he says, You're not to go back to another generation or another kind of people. You must find a person of my family in order that she may become my son's wife. She has to have qualifications.

She has to have purity. She has to have modesty. You know, I get so many phone calls, Pastor, it's good to see you.

People saying, you know, I live in this town, I live in that town. The church is dead, the church is dead. Well, listen, I don't believe that.

The bride here is pure. She's looking for a lover. She's never seen him, she hears about him.

Well, doesn't the Scripture say, concerning our Lord Jesus, whom having not seen ye love? But she's altogether lovely. Read the 45th Psalm, which is a type, I believe, of a spiritual woman. And it says there that the... Let me read it to you for a minute.

Psalm 45. Verse 6 says, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.

Thou lovest righteousness and hateth iniquity. Therefore thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness for thy fellows. Thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

King's daughters were among thy honourable women. Upon thy right hand they stand the queen in a gold of offer. Hearken, O daughter, and consider.

Incline thy ear. Forget also thy known people and thy father's house. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.

What happens when a young lady is engaged? She's going to be married. Okay. The day is fixed.

Every day she gets nearer to that. What does she do? Oh, get more careless. Doesn't bother.

She does the very opposite. I remember a case in England that I... And when I tell this story, it always moves me. A young couple in World War II.

I was in World War... I wasn't in World War I, but I was living. World War II came, and this young man thought he would never have to go to war. But he got his draft papers, and he had to go.

He came to see his girlfriend, and he said, I've only three days, and then I'm being drafted. Well, she said, you've promised ever so many times you're going to marry me this year, this year. Well, he said, let's go to town.

And so they went to town. They got her a bridal outfit. You know, all the trimmings a bride needs.

Lovely shoes and everything else. He had to go off to war. So she put these things away in a drawer.

She got a sealed envelope a few days afterwards, and in it he said, when you get this, I shall be on the ship. I don't know what our destination is. We're under sealed orders to go to another country.

But I want you to know this. I love you. I'll be true to you.

And when I come back, I'll marry you as quickly as I can. So off they went. The boat went.

And she got letters pretty regularly from him. And then suddenly the letters stopped. And so she had no news at all.

Then she got a letter from a friend who said, Well, I saw your boyfriend in a certain position and almost the whole platoon was wiped out. Maybe he's dead. But she wouldn't believe it.

She had a photograph of him and she kept it there in the bedroom on the dressing table, as we say. And night by night she'd look at it. She'd give it a kiss before she went to bed.

Well, three years passed and she didn't hear a word about the fellow. And she kept taking the last letter that she had. And by the time she'd used it for three years, it was pretty ragged.

And he had a letter at the other end and his letter was pretty ragged too. Wednesday night came. A knock at the door.

The girl's mother went and there's a soldier and he just says, Oh, the mother said, Come in, come in. And he says, Well, where's Peggy? She isn't dead. No.

She isn't married. No. She got a boyfriend.

No. No. Where is she? Oh, she had a tiring day today.

She's upstairs. Could I see her? Wait a minute. So the mother went upstairs and in England we have those big old doors.

You know, they have keyholes this size. You can nearly walk through them. Never mind, look through them.

So the mother, you know, being a kind of, she wasn't nosy. She was just inquiring. She put her eye down and looked through.

She couldn't believe it. There's a daughter fully dressed in regal bridal gear with her arm round the picture of her boyfriend. Mother thought, Boy, that's, she's got it badly.

And she has a picture in this hand, in the other hand she has the love letter. And she, mother said, saying to herself, She's read it hundreds of times. She knows the thing.

But she got the letter again and kissed it and put it down. And then she thought, No, he'll come one of these days. She picked the letter up, put her arm round the picture.

There's a knock at the door. Well, that was the first time there was a knock at the door. The second time, the fellow, the woman said to the boy, Well, when you turn the knob, be careful.

It, you know, it makes a noise. I mean, those doors have been there years and the old lock was rusty and the thing, you know, when he turned up, it goes. And she thought, Good night, who's coming? And she looked up and in the mirror she saw a reflection of this boy.

And he saw and he stood there. He said, Peggy, I've read your letter a thousand times. I've read it in danger.

I've read it when the bombs have been exploding. I've read it when I've been injured. I've read it over and over.

And I said, The thing I've clung to is this. You said, When you come back, George, I'll be ready. But he said, I didn't think you'd be so ready.

And he, she went up and said, Oh, it's nice to see you again. She can. You think she did? No, she was flying without a license.

She jumped up in his arms. He grabbed her. Oh, darling, darling.

So wonderful to see you. I've imagined. I never thought you'd look so beautiful.

And to think you're as ready as this. Listen, I don't care what people say about, I believe Jesus may come today. They're liars.

They don't. They need a half day's announcement from God to get unlatched from uncleanness, unlatched from bitterness, unlatched from bad spirits, unlatched from a thousand things. They're not ready.

It's a fallacy. And the thing that's keeping Jesus from coming tonight is not communism and otherisms. It's the church is not ready.

Here, the bride had to be a pure bride. She had a veil. She was modest.

If a man like that demands a lady that's pure and beautiful and attractive, she veils herself. She doesn't flaunt herself before the world. She keeps herself covered so that when she takes the veil away and sees him, he'll see her beauty.

He's been living for this. Do you think Jesus died for this dirty, rotten system we call Christianity? Not on your life. Not on your life.

What is the church that Jesus saw? I told you before, I don't take any notice how much people criticize the church. Jesus criticized it. People say the church is dead.

It isn't dead. It's worse than dead. If a man is dead, the law has no claim on him.

He can't be made to pay his debts. You can't command him to serve or do anything. He's dead.

He's out of focus with everything around that's alive. The church is worse than dead. Jesus said it.

I didn't say it. He said she's poor and naked. The veil is typical of modesty.

Nakedness is typical of what? The very opposite, impurity. And it's Jesus. It isn't the devil saying this.

It isn't some hot, high-gear evangelist. Jesus says the church in the last days. I don't care whether guys believe in the pre-trib, the post-trib.

What's the other trib? Mid-trib or no-trib. What most of them agree on, we're living in the Laodicean period. This is the day of the Laodicean church.

What is she? She's wretched and naked and blind. A blind man can't sense danger. He can't see a house on fire.

He can't see a child in need. Blind. The church is blind tonight.

Dear God, if we believed in hell, this place would be packed out tonight. We're blind to eternity. We're blind to the fact that we have an obligation to five billion people in the world that we'll never reach the way we're going.

The church is wretched and blind. What do you think Jesus feels looking at his bride tonight? He's not coming for a limping, lame, ragged woman. He's coming for a pure church, a holy bride.

We sang it tonight. With his own blood he bought her and for her life he died. The church is a playground.

Oh yes, we have a lot of young people coming to our church. Why? Because you're telling them you want them all at the mission field? No, because you excite them about the sports field. That's right.

It's not that we've got a passion for Jesus. Jesus, that's a life from hell. And the hindrance to his coming tonight is the church is impure.

He's not coming for an impure church. He's not coming for a blind, old woman that's creeping around asking for help, that has no sense of danger, no sense of an obligation. And if she has, what can a blind person do? And wretched in the sight of God.

Dear God today, there have been people offered more worship than I've worked with. I tried to spend some hours in prayer and quietness and preparation today. And I think of my opposite number in a prison in Russia or in Afghanistan today.

A man has not a bath for a month or maybe six months. Has not a decent meal. And yet he's offered praise as pure as angels have done it today.

He has no creature comforts. Our blessings have become a curse. They attract us.

They take too much of our time, too much of our interest, too much of our concern. Paul talked about a man and remember, Paul was so hot. Even holy men couldn't keep up with him.

So don't be troubled, Sonny, if one or two people are here. Paul out-fasted everybody, out-preached everybody, out-sacrificed everybody. And he says of those holy men that were with him, they had the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but they lost their anointing.

No, they didn't lose it. Everybody says that. I fall in the trap myself.

I read an article yesterday about people who've lost their first love. It doesn't say that in the Bible. I'm going to say I'll give you a million dollars if you can find it, but I don't have a million cents.

What does the Word of God say? They've left their first love. They've made a deliberate choice and the love they should put out on him, they're putting some of it. It's Christian service.

It's activity, acting. We love to prove to ourselves we're spiritual by doing this, by doing that, by going somewhere else. I told you maybe last week with a young guy that called me from New York and I knew he was agitated.

He said, Brother Ravenhill, I've come up to New York to help in crusades. Well, why? I'm sent 200 up there. Dozens of churches sent people.

I've got young men in my office. I'm on my way back from New York. I've been up there three weeks.

He said, I went to West 42nd Street. That's full of pimps and prostitutes. It's the dirtiest hole in New York.

Girls sell their bodies. They'll nudge you, put their arms in yours. Every crudity, nudity.

It's all there. And he said, Mr. Ravenhill, I go up the street in New York. I'm treading on the heels of the man in front of me who's giving out tracts.

He's treading on the heels of somebody else in front of him giving out tracts. Then I come down the other side of West 42nd Street. They're giving out tracts.

They have little microphones and they hold a little speaker near you. Jesus loves you. Jesus died for you.

Jesus wants to save you. Jesus can stop the drug habit. And he burst into tears.

He said, Mr. Ravenhill, and his daddy is one of the greatest known preachers in the world. And I didn't ask who he's working with. I just know his daddy.

He said, Mr. Ravenhill, what do we do when evangelism fails? I said, we go to God and get to the upper room. I told somebody today in my office, or yesterday, I said, there isn't a Pentecostal church in America. If there is, tell me where it is.

Do you know where it is? In Pentecost, the deacons have to fill in with the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. And it was a deacon, a young fellow, maybe not 20 years of age, by the name of Stephen. He did signs and wonders and miracles.

When God, when Jesus went looking for men, he didn't look for the fastest growing synagogue in town. He went anywhere. He found men by the seaside.

He found a tax gatherer. Even had the IRS in those days. Sin's always been around.

So what did he do? Stephen, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, did signs and wonders and miracles. Do you wonder, the orthodox people, the fundamentalists, hated him? Every time you see that young man, somebody is saying, oh, I went to a meeting and Stephen was there. And he cast a spell of purity over us.

He spoke to the blind and their eyes came. He spoke to the lame and they walked. That's the deacon in the Acts, chapter 6. That's a Pentecostal deacon.

There are no deacons in America today. There are no evangelists in the world, in America. Or England.

Why not? Because the 8th chapter tells you about a man who was what? An evangelist. By the name of Philip. Then you go to the 21st chapter of Acts, it talks about Philip, the deacon.

One of the seven. Not a different Philip. Philip was one of the early deacons.

What's he doing? Signs and wonders and miracles. And the pastor's wife got healed. And so there's joy in the pastorate.

There's joy in the church. It doesn't say that. It says there's joy in the whole city.

The whole city was alive with God. Why? Because all the wreckage that the devil had done, these men were casting out demons, casting out blindness, casting out paralysis. That's normal Christianity.

We're so subnormal, if we ever become normal, we'll think we're abnormal. Did God help us? But you see, until we hunger and thirst after this, we'll still keep up. Oh, our church has money.

Our church has... I don't care what in the world it has. Does it have the presence of the living God? I told you, I'm waiting for a Pentecostal church where the pastor will go to the door and throw the doors open in the morning and say to the crowd outside, the crowd that's seen every rotten thing about religion in the past year, and shout to the crowd, this is that which was spoken of by the prophet. That's Pentecost.

Anything less is not. Oh, you'll say you're radical. Sure I am.

So was Jesus. This seems out of context. It says, Leonard, please feel free to invite everyone from your prayer meeting tonight to the 10th anniversary.

That's tomorrow night. They're going to have a celebration in the next room. You're welcome to go.

They're going to have a birthday cake and mixed drinks, hot and cold water, and coffee, I think. But I'm saying that to say this, when Keith Green came and knocked on my door the first time, I looked up, there's this big, towering Jewish boy with his mop of black curly hair. And he made a hug at me.

He says, I've come to see you. I said, obviously you have. He didn't know why I came.

I said, no, he said, because they tell me you're the most radical man in this area. I said, sure, that's a nice reputation. Stay around, you'll catch it.

What did they say? These men are not drunk. That's what they say of the clergy today. These men are not drunk.

When a man's intoxicated with God, he's generous, he's vocal, he's reckless. You can't in any way design what he's going to do. The curse of our church is you can predict everything that's going to happen next Sunday morning.

The first 20 minutes, we stand and we sing and we shout, we're happy. And then the choir does its stunt. And then you have the offering.

And the building fund. And then some other fund. And then finally you get to the message, which is about 20 minutes.

And often you wonder where the message is. But anyhow, there you are. God's going to restore the power and authority in his church.

Starting with the pulpit, brokenness, confession. I had a very famous American in my office yesterday. He edits one of the best papers in the country.

And he asked me some questions. I told him as straight as I could. There's no brokenness in the pulpit.

Why should there be brokenness in the pew? If I don't believe the word of God, why should you believe it? If we don't believe it and act it, why should the world believe us? The trouble is we believe it, we don't behave it. But going back to this horrible picture, I tell you, some nights I can't sleep. I got up last night, went to my office after midnight.

Seeing the church blind, staggering around. She ought to have more vision than anybody in the world. And she's blind and she's crippled and she's helpless.

And she's naked. Could you imagine Jesus coming? One of the stupid things that little boy that used to preach at PTA, what do you call him? You know, he'd smile like a Cheshire cat. And he said, you know the world is envious.

He said, I've built this place to let the world know Christians can be as happy as the world. Isn't that a dry one? Good Lord. We don't need happiness when we've joy.

The less joy you have, the more entertainment you need. The more amusement you need. And he says, the world is envious because Jesus is in the restaurants here.

Jesus goes around on the train with us. You didn't know that. And Jesus is in the swimming pool with those naked women.

That's blasphemy. But they try to produce something and it's not there. That's not there.

Where did this woman go? She went to the well. And the first thing she did was water the cattle, as it says. And then she put the bucket down again.

She's going to receive all the inheritance. The wealthiest man in the world has bestowed everything he has, Abraham, on his son. And she'd heard this.

Boy, do you think women could keep quiet for the most eloquent thing in the world? Telephone, telegram, tele-women. Boy, that news went across the desert like fury. Have you heard the news? Abraham has given everything he has to his son.

That wealthy man with super wealth, super abundance, he's given it all to the son. And God says he gave everything to his son. And the bride is going to inherit everything the son has.

He's going to rule over the world before too long. Isaac Watts wrote that years before Wesley even, Jesus shall reign where'er the sun doth its successive journeys run. His kingdom stretch from shore to shore.

Till moon shall wax and wane no more. Blessings are downed where'er he reigns. The prisoner leaps to lose his chains.

The weary find eternal rest. And all the sons of ones are blessed. I'm wanting to see, God knows how my heart take for years for it.

I wanted to see something like this. Let me say this. I got into a plane.

And the plane was kept for 15 minutes waiting. Then an old man, Ben's an old man, and his son came and sat next to me. He said, I'm sorry we've kept the plane so late.

And the plane was going to, where's the Mayo Clinic? Rochester, New York. And he said, we've come up so many thousands of miles and we're going to the Rochester Mayo Clinic because there's nobody in the world has what they have there. I want to see a church so anointed with God that they'll come from near and far to that church.

Not just to see them in Icarus, but because God the Holy Ghost is there. As I've told you, now you can get the books, The Seven Pioneer, Seven Pioneer, Seven Pentecostal Pioneers. You can get it from Joe, what's his name? Oh, Jack has it.

Oh, I'm sorry. Jack, that's the fellow in the white shirt there. He has it.

And you have the other one, Azusa Street. Read them. And when you read it, you'll know why I said there isn't a Pentecostal church in the country.

I believe the Pentecostal message, as in the Word of God, is the only answer for this world. Most preaching is giving lectures. Go that way for that.

Go this way for blessing. Go this way for something else. I want to go in a sanctuary where sometimes there won't be a word spoken, but the Holy Ghost will be so powerful that people kneel and pray.

Or people say, I'm healed, I'm delivered, I feel inward bondage has gone, inward corruption has gone. That's what God wants. So she went to the well.

Okay. I could make a lot out of that. I was reading the 12th chapter of Isaiah today.

With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation. The wells, not the well. The wells of salvation.

And I began to make a list of different wells. And what you have to do to get there. You have to have a passport to get there.

Then I cancelled it because I found it all in one verse. In 2 Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 8. 2 Corinthians 9 and verse 8. Notice, and God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. All grace, always, no time when it doesn't work, all grace is available at all times and all sufficiency in all things.

In other words, there's not a situation in which there's not sufficient of God to give you the answer to that situation. He gives beauty for ashes. He gives the oil of joy for mourning.

He gives a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Paul says, having nothing, yet possess all things. We want to make a shortcut and get a bit more, add a bit more to what we have.

And he says, no, having nothing. The church that thought she had everything and boasted of it. Poor, blind, silly, stupid church.

Oh, we've a wonderful church. We're the best church in town. Why, is the Holy Ghost there? I said to somebody today, I'll tell you one thing, brother.

When the Holy Ghost comes, you never pronounce the benediction. I watch a guy on TV and he says the Spirit is moving and ten minutes after he dismisses the meeting. Who dismisses the Holy Ghost? When the Holy Ghost is there, people stay two or three hours afterwards under conviction.

They don't even need help. I remember standing out of that great historic church just round the corner from Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Gate, when Martin Lloyd-Jones was preaching. But actually that day, my good old friend Duncan Campbell was preaching.

And when he came out, four lovely nurses came up to talk with him. Then he came over to talk with me. He said, Mr. Raymond, you see those young ladies? One of them is a leading nurse in, I think it was Guy's Hospital in London.

Five of them there were. And he said, she said to me, what you've been talking about today, and he'd been talking about the indwelling Spirit of God, about becoming a new creation, the stony heart going and a heart of flesh coming, a sensitive heart where there'd been insensitivity, a loving heart where there'd been a hating heart, a heart that was just filled with God instead of filled with self. She said, I want that.

But Mr. Preacher, she said, last year there was a big crusade here in London and thousands went forward. And we went forward one night. And she said, we came back the same as we went out.

We're not going again. Nothing happened. There's no miracle.

You say the new birth's a miracle. We went through the formula. We said a prayer.

But there's no change. We're not changed. We're not new creation.

What in the world do we do? What about the meetings you had in Scotland at the end of 1949 into 50? Well, he said the Spirit of God came down and people stayed writhing in agony. Writhing in agony under conviction of sin until the early hours of the morning. And she said, who does the follow-up work? And with his Scottish way, he says, Ach, Ach, he says, you need anybody to follow the Holy Ghost.

That wonderful word, where is it in? In Romans 8, I think, 16, the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit. John Wesley preached on that more than anything else. It's essential you have the witness of the Spirit.

Either he witnesses with condemnation and guilt or he witnesses with peace and joy. It can't be both. And she said, well, I want something that lives, that vibrates, that lets me know I'm in a relationship with God.

Well, that's exactly what God wants too. But the church today is indeed blind and naked and wretched. What does she have to attract the world? What does she have? Get that book, Seven Pentecostal Pioneers.

Read the middle story. Stephen Jeffreys. And this happened, you know, 50 miles from my home.

And I went through part of it. They had meetings, they had no money. These precious, poor, broken Pentecostal preachers came and rented a hall seating 2,000 people.

And all the churches were against them. These Pentecostals, these tongue-speaking people. Everybody was against them.

But God was for them. The man who has God is not in the minority. One man with God is a plus.

But that works back on us. Christianity is Christ plus nothing. We're so rich.

Oh, we've got our ordination. We've got this, we've got that. Forget it.

It's stinking rags in the eyes of God. We need to get stripped of all that and purified. I thank God often.

I know you think I'm an oddball, and I am. Often when I'm praying by myself, I thank God for the incorruptible Holy Ghost. Nobody can bribe Him.

Nobody can buy Him. I was at a meeting one night, and I didn't know, and I'd have said it if I did know. There was a whole host of men who came from a full gospel business meeting.

And they'd done some good. And I said, you know, if the Holy Ghost could be bought, you guys would have pulled your checkbooks out and bought Him and He'd be a board member for you. But you can't do it.

He's incorruptible. He's the mighty Holy Ghost. He wrote this book.

He's the mighty Holy Ghost who put this world together. He's the mighty Holy Ghost who came to the empty womb of a woman, and there he began to live and start this marvelous thing we call Christianity. As I told you last week, and I didn't say this.

Forget my English tongue, if you can. It's a fellow that's living in America today said this, Christianity was born in Palestine and it became a religion. It was taken to Greece and it became a philosophy.

It was taken to Europe and it became a cult. It was brought to America and it's big business. Isn't that terrible? Now, don't shoot me.

I didn't say that. I just echoed it. I'm looking for something so majestic no man dare stick his name on it.

If he does, he'll drop dead. Wouldn't it be nice to go to a church some Sunday morning when the pastor says, now, we're not going to have any choruses right now. I have a few people I want to kill.

That's Pentecost as much as healing. Go to church. Good Lord.

We want another Pentecost. If we had another Pentecost, we'd be in jail in six days. I've done that sometimes.

I've preached. When I used to preach my heart out and preach hellfire, people would say, I haven't slept for five nights. Well, nowadays, they'd take you to court and sue you for that.

Get a lawyer to say, you're driving my wife nutty. Well, you've said that about her for years, so why didn't you find out sooner? So, what about it? The trouble is, we know what's going to happen Sunday morning when we go to church. The New Testament church was unpredictable.

You did not think that was going to happen. And sometimes in revival, God comes in the first minutes, and sometimes people have sat there for hours and nobody has ever said a word, and then God has come. And you remember that meeting more than any other meeting you're ever in in your life.

There's another book, I don't know, Jack has some, I suppose, The Spirit's Invasion of Wales. It talks about the young man, I'm through with this, 26 years of age, when God used him in 1904, he was 26 years of age. He had already prayed 13 years for revival.

From being 13 to being 26, and then God came. When he was with about 30 people in a little place, and his cry to God was, Lord, bend us, bend, no, bend the church and break the world. That was the cry.

And the Spirit of God came. So, he goes into a building with 800 people and sat on the front bench for three solid hours and never said a word. Our congregation had run out.

They say the pastor's asleep or he's had a stroke. For three hours, he sat there and said nothing. And then he stood up and preached for 15 minutes.

The glory of God came. He went and spent the rest of the night on his face to be anointed for the next night. The congregation dare not leave the place.

The Holy Ghost sat, everybody there. Nobody said kneel, they knelt. Nobody said fall prostrate, they fell prostrate.

And the revival began that way and it went on and on and on until something like 300,000 people were saved in less than a year. It wasn't a crusade. It had no backing.

You never find anybody asking for money in a true revival. You never find a meeting that stops at nine o'clock in a true revival. You don't dismiss the Holy Ghost.

Boy, we've so many clever methods. Lord, bless this little method. Bless.

Boy, I'm glad I don't have to cry to God for money. I'm glad I don't have to ask the deacons for something. I just want to walk in the light.

I want you to walk in the light. And I want you to crave that somewhere God will raise up deacons like this and evangelists like this. I told you last week, I guess, about the young man that called me.

And he said, Mr. Redfield, I'm writing a book. I said, what's the subject? He said, In Search of an Evangelist. Boy, that's a title I'd like.

And so I went in my office and then I began to read the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. I found about ten things that that man had to have to be an evangelist. That's why you don't find a revivalist spoken of when the whole city shakes in God's name, what do you expect it to do? You can't heap anything on that.

It's like striking a match in face of the blazing sun. I don't believe there are 100 people in the 230 million people in America that not 20 people have ever been in a revival. A revival that stops the traffic.

A revival where the lights never go out for months, weeks and weeks and weeks in the sanctuary. A revival where the prayer meeting never ends. The other morning about 3 o'clock, maybe 4 o'clock, I found a little book I hadn't seen for years.

I'd like to get it reprinted. Power from on high. Written by Greenfield.

He was in that revival, that amazing revival in Wednesday. When was it? Wednesday the 13th of August 1727. There were Baptists there, Moravians and others.

They'd been arguing theology and one day they said let's forget it and look to Jesus and wait on Jesus. And the Holy Ghost came. At precisely 11 o'clock the Spirit came.

On the 13th of August 1727 the Holy Ghost came and they began to pray. And a hundred years after they were still praying. Not the same people.

That room was never empty. Boys and girls, 8 and 9 years of age, prayed with traveling prayer. They'd heard about travel and they prayed with tears and stoke and crying.

And those handsome golden haired guys stood on the slave blocks down. When I was in St. Thomas and St. Croix down there I wanted to see the places where those guys stood. They took the black people and sold them.

And then these golden haired guys stood up and said sell me. And they took the money too and said give it to the pastor so he can send it back to pay the freightage for other men to come. And then they went into the camps, the plantations.

And the rule was when you get there they tie five men together. Always get in the middle so you can witness to the two on either side. They put an iron collar around their necks.

They put a big leather strap around their waist and they fastened them to a plow in the great heat down there. And they became slaves, voluntary slaves. And that's how they evangelized that country.

By getting rid of the dear black people who were perishing, being whipped and worked to death. But they evangelized it. And they launched modern missionary efforts.

You see there's no cost in being a Christian in America. Good Lord no. Oh, give a bit more of your tithe or a bit more money for the building fund or something.

Forget it. I want to see something God builds. I want to find people so hungry for God that every night they want to pray.

And two or three nights a week there's intercession. We're not going to move America any other way. We've tried every scheme, every fancy thing.

We try to work something up and what we need is somebody to come down. A person. Not a breath of air.

Not a new theology. A person. Just as the Holy Ghost invaded the virgin womb and created Christ there, I need the Holy Ghost to form Christ in me.

If I don't, I'm not a Christian. Christ in you, the hope of glory. That's what it's all about.

As I went to this big shot yesterday, I said, there's one thing I want to say to you. And I was finishing. I talked about ten minutes after, but anyhow.

I said, you men are not even honest. You cover up carnality. We're only human.

We're not only human. A man who has God the Holy Ghost in him isn't just human. He's the best man to honor.

You can't say to a man who's backsliding and always rough with his wife and carnal in the home, you can't say, well, you know, dear darling wife, I'd like to be better. But even the great apostle Paul finished his day by saying, O wretched man that I am, that's a lie from hell. He didn't.

He finished up the road saying it isn't. In Romans 7 he said, it's not I, sin dwelleth in me. In Galatians he said, it's not I, it's Christ living in me.

You can't have the indwelling Christ and the indwelling carnality. One has to get out of the way. Who preaches salvation? We're preaching forgiveness.

Jacob told me today some statistics he'd just got from Josh MacDonald. 47% of girls go into church. I forget the age, it was ridiculous anyhow.

I've already had some sex relations. 50% of boys that go to churches, by the time they're 17 are sexually active. Do you know why? Because there's no fear of God.

People say, what did Mr. Coop say? If you're going to have sex, ask your partner, do you have AIDS? In other words, ask and be afraid, not afraid of God. There's no fear of God. Where is the fear of God? There's no fear of God in the clergy.

There's no fear of God in the seminaries. We fear death, we fear a Russian invasion, we fear an atomic war, we fear the collapse of the world financially, but we're not afraid of God. I want that holy fear.

I want to live closer, and I'm trying day by day to live closer to God than ever. There's another thing I want. I don't want fame, I don't want to be known, I don't want money.

The Bible says, having food and clothing lets me content, and I've got food and clothing. I want to see a revelation of God, the Holy Ghost, that my generation has never seen. And it can start in meetings like this, it may be an old ball of fire that comes from heaven, it may be a touch of God where you say, God, there's something in me that hinders you, I'm part of the bride, but I'm unclean.

I'm unclean with pride, I'm unclean with blindness, I've lack of vision, I lack understanding. Lord, purge me, breathe on me breath of God, that I may love what thou dost love, hate everything God hates, love everything God loves. Sonny, you're going away next week to preach? Or you're going with a pastor? They're going up to Oklahoma to do some scouting, and look, they're not taking an Indian guide this time, but he'll be going up later.

So let's remember to pray for them tonight, and let's pray for our brothers and sisters in captivity. You know, I have an idea that maybe God Almighty will send the fire of the Holy Ghost to another country to make us angry that he doesn't come to us with all our ornate choirs and our lovely system. Stand up, sit down, good Lord.

If I were a pastor, I'd have a button on my desk and say, everybody rise. I'd pop them all up and sit them all down. We're so mechanical.

I want the Spirit to come with a breath. I want you some nights or days when you're at home or driving, the Spirit will come upon you with such tenderness and brokenness you may have to pull over to the side of the road. You can't see through your tears.

You can't explain your grief. I want to be like Jesus. Do you do? Do you want to be a man of sorrows? What do you think Jesus is doing right now? I'll tell you what he's doing.

He's sobbing over his church because it's the same. Yesterday and forever. I believe he's broken hearted over, not over criminals, not over those poor Cubans and other rebels.

I believe he's broken hearted over his church which is wretched and naked and blind and miserable. She's not pure. She's not holy.

She's not divorced from iniquity. She's a flirt. In pure language, she's a harlot.

Though she professes his name. But he's going to get her people. I've told people that the last two or three days.

More than ever I'm convinced there's going to be a break somewhere. There's going to be an invasion of Wales. Yes, there's going to be an invasion of America.

I believe he's going to do as he says in his word. It's going to be a swift work. It doesn't take long for a fire to sweep through a forest.

It soon burns out of control. And there's going to be a move that no man will control and no man will stick his name on it. And it's going to be supernatural that there's no explanation.

It will baffle the media. It will baffle the newspapers. It will baffle the TV.

It's going to be God birthed, God sustained, God directed, and God honoring. We don't have that just now. It's going to come.

I hope you'll stay and pray for a little while. Let's sing a chorus and then if you have to go, leave quietly. But at least try and stay 15 minutes while we get the meeting going.

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