

The Sermon on the Mount - Part 4

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon explores the radical teachings of Jesus on meekness, spiritual authority, and the transformative power of prayer in the life of a believer.

Duration: 53:25

Scripture: Daniel 10:12, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Sermon on the Mount"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Job from the Bible. He describes how Job faced numerous trials and hardships, including boils, the loss of his possessions, and the accusations of his friends. Despite all of this, Job remained faithful to God and continued to worship Him. The speaker emphasizes the importance of worshiping God even in the midst of difficult circumstances and encourages listeners to trust in God's plan for their lives.

Transcript

Alright, seeing the multitude, he went up into a mountain and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. And there again, you see the fact that however far off the crowd were, we don't know, but it was the disciples that came and immediately he's teaching them. He doesn't try to teach the world the constitution of his kingdom because they belong to another kingdom.

A kingdom that's diametrically opposed to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, it's, I shouldn't say difficult, it's impossible to kind of measure the atmosphere of Jesus without a crown, without any soldiers, without any material possessions, starting to teach a bunch of people about a kingdom. Isn't it interesting that the wise men came and they said when they came, we have come for what? To see one that is born, the King of the Jews.

You know, people say that when Jesus comes we'll all be united. No, no we won't, we'll be more divided than ever when Jesus really gets to us. Why? Well, because as soon as Jesus came it says Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.

Here you've got Mary and Joseph, John Baptist, one or two others at least, Simeon and Hannah. They're the little conclave, if you like, that believe in Jesus. The rest of the world does not believe.

So the first thing Jesus did before he could walk or talk was divide Jerusalem. The last thing he did on the cross was divide men. One went into heaven, the other went to the other place in the days of his ministry.

It says he went into the synagogue and there was a division because of him. I've had people come to me and say, you know, my daughter came to Christ in your meetings and we put a lot of money into her life and now she's quit training for a school teacher and she's going to be a missionary or something. And I'll tell you what, we had a lovely home before, I don't see anything wonderful about Jesus Christ because we never had any trouble in our home until Christ came in.

And then Mary Jane, well, number one, we always take cocktails before dinner and she refused cocktails. Number two, we get bridge parties, she wouldn't pray bridge. Number three, we have a dance every other week in our big home and she won't dance.

And ever since she's come in, as she's come in as a Christian, there's been division, there's been strife. Well, Jesus brings that. And again, to set up his kingdom.

What is he talking about? He's talking about meekness. Meekness? Hey, meekness, look again, here are these big, let me put it this way, these big, big arrogant Romans, they don't know a thing. Whoever established a kingdom on meekness, you establish a kingdom on force, brutality, authority, subjecting people, put them down.

I remember Mr. Chadwick saying one day, he remembered reading a scripture one day where a man came to Jesus and he said, look, Satan comes to my son, he's a lunatic, and casts him down. And Chadwick said, and do you remember what Jesus did? He walked and he lifted him up. And he said, that's what Satan always does, he drags people down and Jesus always lifts people up.

Alright, Jesus is setting up a kingdom of meekness, when there's arrogance, lawlessness, brutality, living in a slave state. As I say, you could be carrying your groceries through town and the Roman comes up and says, hey, drop it, carry my parcel. You've no option.

You put your groceries down, somebody would steal them, at least it was like our day, they'd steal them before you got back. And he could compel you to go legally one mile with him and then you could drop it down and full of faith at him if you want to do something else. But he could command your life for a mile.

And then Jesus, you remember, says, well now when he does that, you say, excuse me, do you mind if I carried another mile? You say, what? Oh, come on. Somebody goes to court and he takes your coat. Do that these days.

You say, alright, the judge says, I give you my overcoat, my top coat. And he says, if he takes your coat, take the other one off, give him that. Do you know that man? It may take a cent for a loincloth, the man was naked.

If he strips you right down, takes everything you have, just look up and smile. Now it's easier here, you say right now, I believe I'd do that. You don't think so, alright lady, thank you.

Nice to have somebody honest, but anyhow, you know, we're such dreamers, aren't we? You know, the Christian life is so sweet and lovely and sugary. Oh, it's so nice. Christian life's hostility, you're getting slugged, you're slugging somebody else, not some other person, the devil.

As I tried to say earlier, I'd like to see a place. I believe you're grown up, there's nobody around that's important, all the teachers are gone. Oh, Ed, put your fingers in your ears just a minute while I say this.

But I believe you're really grown up when you get a prayer department. I believe you're really grown up when you start realizing that more than meeting drugs and devilry on the street, there's something more than that. Jesus says, if a man has a house full of treasures.

Oh, you're going to some lovely homes. I like antiques, I really do. I like pictures with big frames and I like art and other things.

Very interesting. And you know, if you're going in that house, Jesus says, to steal all that is. Oh, he doesn't say if you're going, but he gives the analogy.

If you're going to rob a strong man's house, it's no good running in and snatching a big vase and go out, because he'll clobber you. First bind the strong man, then try and get his goods. We don't do it that way.

Now how often when you're going out on a street meeting, I know you say, God bless me, God help us. I wonder how often we really bind the strong man. I used to have a little man who came to a church I pastored, he was a saint of God.

Very poor, but very wonderful man. And he wasn't very healthy and I remember saying to him one day, I said, Mr. Furnable, look, you don't need to come to this church, because I can't teach you much. He was 70 odd years of age and I was in my 20s then, having a big church that had continuous revival.

People used to line up outside on a Sunday night like a movie house to get a seat. We were having a great time. I remember a lot of things about that meeting.

I was ministering one Sunday morning and I'm sure Gabriel was behind me. I look around like that for a moment because somebody said in my ear, when I'm preaching to a crowd of people having a whale of a time, I thought, and a voice said to me, you're not the most spiritual man in this church. I felt like a balloon, somebody stuck a pin in.

I began to consider and then I found a little, little old lady that sat there with a little bonnet on and a ribbon tied under her chin. She had prayed for 40 years for revival in that city. And six of us went with a tent and in six weeks, we didn't know a person in the city, in six weeks we raised up a church of about 700 people.

Still going today. Went to another city and raised the church up of about a thousand members in six weeks. We figured if we went, we lived in the tent, we did not have any conveniences.

We didn't live in hotels, we lived on the platform of the big tent, we pulled our sleeping bags out at night, we ate in the tent, we slept in the tent, we went to the local swimming bath to get our ablutions and we carried water to shave, we carried water to cook. We spent almost the day in prayer. That was our habitat.

We stayed out till midnight to talk to people coming out of movie houses. We didn't have guitars in those days, they had accordions and they used to play accordions and attract people. But we went to cities like that and then discovered that we were not the key.

As I say, there's a little baby coming, I don't know if this year or next, but hopefully this year, and the little creature is there, it's going to come out and be given to the world. It's a baby born. But the doctor who delivers the baby doesn't take it home.

Does he? I hope not anyhow. He delivered the baby, my sweetheart is a state certified midwife in England under English law, state registered nurse. She's delivered I don't know how many hundreds of babies.

I'm glad she didn't bring them home. But you know when you go to an evangelistic crusade everybody says, oh that's Mr. So-and-so, boy he's a great soul winner. Last night a hundred came forward.

Night before a hundred and fifty. Tomorrow night we're expecting others. And we put all the glory around the head of the man.

But I'll tell you what I know of evangelists, they don't know enough, we've got a lot of traveling preachers, not many traveling preachers. Most of the evangelists pray golf half the day anyhow. When they're not golfing they're goofing.

So these fellows really don't know much about traveling. But you see they get the converts at night. So you say this man is the evangelist and you tag him up with being a great soul winner.

When somebody else has done the traveling, he delivers the baby. The doctor isn't going to take the baby home when it's delivered, but he gives it back to the parent. Well one day God's going to level all this out.

But anyhow, going back to this, these old saints were there. And this old man would come into our meeting and I would say to him, Mr. Furnival look, you don't need to come here, I can't teach you much. I can teach these young people sure enough, but I can't teach you much.

But do come to the prayer meeting. And he would come to the prayer meeting. And every time he came to that prayer meeting, and I was at that church about three years.

And every time he came to the prayer meeting he would quote one thing. It didn't matter where he set off, he knew somewhere in his prayer, beginning, end or middle, he would say one thing and never fail. And the thing he said was this, Lord, teach us what is flesh and what is spirit.

And then he would pause, always had a little pause in there, and when he said teach us what is flesh and what is spirit. And then he would say, Lord, teach us how to bind and how to loose. Now there's a warfare, Ephesians 6 says there's a warfare up there in the heavenlies.

Daniel was a great man of prayer. And yet he says for three weeks his prayers could not get through. Why? There was opposition in the heavenlies.

The apostle Paul talks about principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. We haven't explored that area too much. I say again, we've every department in the church except the prayer department.

Purely stupid. We go and try and steal the treasures out of the big man's house. The big man's house is this world, it's full of treasures.

He treasures everybody in this world, Lucifer does, he wants them all in hell. They're precious to him, he wants to destroy them. And if I'm going to snatch them out of his grasp, if I go and snatch that person in the energy of the flesh, well it's flesh anyhow, it's going to fail.

But if I first bind the strong man, and break his dominion by faith and prayer, then I'm going to have far more success. This is why again you get every revival is preceded by a long period of prayer and travail.

And the people who really birth revival do not usually see it, or at least they don't get the glory.

Now if I'm going to be in the condition God wants me to be in, I'm going to be in the condition that's mentioned here in this chapter alright. He opened his mouth and taught them saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom. We didn't know this, it doesn't say there shall be the kingdom, it says if you're poor in spirit, at least you've got your foot in the door.

You've got your foot as it were one step into the kingdom, you're poor in spirit. Now if you haven't done this, when you read the Psalms, read how often, you can get a lexicon or a concordance anyhow, and find how often the Psalmist, he was a king, he was a ruler. But repeatedly he says what? He says bow down thine ear and hear me, for I am poor and needy.

You see all his wealth, all his social standing, all his political power, once he crossed into that room there, that meant nothing at all. His wealth is spiritual or it's nothing, and so he goes in there and he pleads his poverty. Bow down thine ear and hear me, for I am poor and needy.

All again he says, this poor man cried. Well that man's so wealthy, everybody would envy him, he's got everything, what does he want? He's a king, he's a ruler. He didn't have a Rolls Royce, he had a charity, he rode around in it, he had servants, he's got everything going for him.

He even had a guitar, well a harp, and he wrote some of the most majestic things ever written. If you go to Scotland, I hope you will one day, you must hear the Scots people sing the 23rd Psalm, it's their national anthem. Nobody can sing the 23rd Psalm like the Scots.

Nobody can sing Cwm Rhondda or Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah like the Welsh. But David had all this going for him. He doesn't come in God's presence and say, Lord you know, now we've just about completed the book of Psalms, there's 150, I've written 75 myself Lord, this gives me real standing with you doesn't it? He comes calling all the time, I'm poor and needy, whatever I got yesterday will not do for today.

It's even as I got filled with the Spirit 20 years ago, I filled my car with gasoline 20 years ago. Do you think it's still running on that gasoline? Which it was, but anyhow, it isn't, it isn't. You see, I need continually, I need continually.

Look, if say here is a tap, oh I don't know how to draw a tap, but anyhow, this is a spout, the water comes out. If I put a vessel under that, let's say like this, like a cup, isn't that pretty? The water comes in, there's an inflow and then there's an overflow to be an outflow. Do you know what happens? The vessel that is, whatever that, let me say this, whatever that cup stays there, that pipe goes way back here into the mountains and there's billions and billions of gallons of water I couldn't use and the nation couldn't use.

Wherever that tap is flowing and that water is inflowing into the vessel and overflowing and outflowing, you don't see the vessel. All you see is the overflow. The trouble is so very often we project the person.

No, no, no, no, no. I'm not stupid, I don't even want people to like me, it never interests me at all whether they like me or dislike me. All I have to do is give people what God gives me.

If they like it, fine, if they spit it out, that's their responsibility, not mine. Again, drink, judge not by the wine drunk, but by the wine poured forth. So, wherever I stay in a place of obedience, there's going to be an inflow, there's going to be an overflow and there's going to be an outflow.

Now remember this, you've still got nerves and emotions, however sanctified you are, and you've got to watch because the most treacherous thing is to live by feelings. People say, I don't feel saved. Well, do you feel married? You don't have to feel married, you're married or you're single.

I remember a man coming to an altar once and a friend of mine went to pray with him and he said, well, what's your problem? He said, are you saved? He said, yes, and what's your problem? I don't feel saved. All right, he said, will you pray for me? He said, on one condition, what's that? He said, well, right now I don't feel saved, so I'll pray for you, then you pray for me after that. Feelings have got nothing to do with it.

There's only one way I can live in this life, because again, I'm going to meet all the opposition we saw before. I'm going to meet the intellectuals who will oppose my Christian life, I'm going to meet physical conditions, I'm going to meet social conditions, I'm going to meet political conditions, I'm going to meet war conditions maybe. The only thing that will keep me balanced is what John Wesley preached on more than any other thing.

And that is Romans 8, and I guess it's verse 16, I'm not sure I think it is. The witness of the Spirit, the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirits, that we're the children of God. Blessed are the poor.

No, it doesn't say blessed are the poor. Now, what a lot of people have done, most of the modern translations have changed the word blessed to happy. But if you're honest and you go probing into the Greek, you'll find there is no such interpretation of the word from the Greek.

It is not a case of happy. It's more than happiness. Happiness comes from H-A-P, Hap, which means chance.

We talk about happenstance. Well, blessedness isn't conditioned on happenstance. Blessedness isn't conditioned on the fact that you decided to get married and you didn't know that daddy and mummy had the money.

And when you get back home, they've already built your house and furnished it. And there's a Rolls Royce or a Cadillac waiting, that's wonderful. Oh, oh, oh, that's nice.

Your life does not fluctuate like that on circumstance. It does not fluctuate on happenstance. The Word of God says your life is hid with Christ in God.

Isn't that wonderful? Here's your life. Take this as your life, there's your life. It's hid with Christ in God.

Man, you've got an awful lot of protection there. Isn't it true what Hudson Taylor said, that whatever the circumstance is here, by the time it gets to you here, it's God's will for you. I say to you, what are you? You say, I'm a child of a king.

All right, I'm a child of God. Well, I'm suggesting that if the devil wants to kick you today, he can kick you that way, or he can crush you this way, without a permit. You get a permit for everything these days.

From getting a don to getting married. They're not in the same category, but you've got to get a permit for everything. Well, you say, before Satan can attack my life.

Yeah, he has to stand up in line there and say, Lord, I want to attack Leonard Ravenhill. Are you sure? Mm-hmm. Yeah, I'm sure.

Because I've used the figure often. Here's a, here's a, here's Job. And remember, it's not the attack of, it's not the challenge of Satan to God.

It's a challenge of God to Satan. Has thou considered my servant? Isn't that great? Now listen to it. Because we're going to come to that at the end.

We won't get to it. But actually, at the end of the chapter, remember the, the opposition we get to this teaching. Or the teaching of Jesus is, he says, be ye therefore perfect.

But God said to Abraham, walk before me and zigzag as you like. What did he say? You said, no, he didn't. Well, what did he say? Right there, he did.

Walk before me and be thou perfect. Hast thou considered my servant Job? There is none like him in this. A perfect man, God says.

I wasn't perfect in all his understanding. He was perfect in obedience. The only perfection you and I have is spiritual perfection.

Not mental, not physical, not emotional. It is spiritual perfection we can have. And perfect obedience.

If it isn't so, why do you sing hymns like blessed assurance? Perfect submission, all is at rest. Perfect submission. The Apostle Paul says that there are times in your life when you'll be so frustrated and challenged that he says all you can do is stand.

And then when it gets hotter, you withstand. You're not out of the woods, you don't understand. But you stand and you withstand when you don't understand.

And if you learn that now and live another 50 years, which I'm sure you won't because Jesus will come. But, I hope, but anyhow. If you learn that secret, you've learned a big secret.

That you stand and withstand even when you don't understand. God has no obligation to explain anything to you. Why should he explain anything to you? So, Satan goes to Job.

God says to Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job? Job is perfect and upright. Do you know what Satan says? Let me remind you. Satan says, look, I've been going to and fro in the earth and I just can mess anybody up except one man, Job.

I can't move that fellow. I just can't do a thing with him. I can't discourage him.

I can't wear him out. And I've suddenly realized why it is. Oh, God says, what did you discover, Mr. Lucifer? Well, he said, look, there's Job.

That's him there, like my pencil. And you put a fence around him. That's what Satan said.

I didn't say it. You put a fence around him. Pull the fence away.

You say he's perfect and upright. Do you know why he's a good man? You say he's the most pious man in the world. Well, I'll tell you why he's the most pious.

Because he's the most prosperous. He's the richest man in the world. But you pull the rug from under him and see what he does.

You take that fence away and let me get to him. And God says, no, no, I won't do that. I'll tell you what, I will do it.

I'll pull the fence in a bit closer to him. And you can destroy everything around. So Satan comes and has a whale of a time.

Job goes to bed a multimillionaire and he wakes up in the morning bankrupt. Hasn't got a thing. Satan goes to report to God.

Well, the Lord says, how did he get on? And Satan says, not too good. What did he do? Well, he was worth a hundred million when he went to bed. But I destroyed everything he had and he's bankrupt.

What did he say? He said, well, the Lord knows what he's doing. But you've still got a fence around him. Take it away.

The Lord says, I'll pull it in a bit closer. Now the first stroke was what? Bankruptcy. The second stroke is bereavement.

He killed all his children. Well, how did he get on? I didn't get on any better. Why not? Well, I showed him, look, you're bankrupt and now you're bereaved.

Broken in heart. What did he say? Well, I'll tell you what we would say. We would say we were prospering, God was blessing, the Lord gave.

And the devil came and took it all away. He says the Lord gave. And the Lord took it away.

He wouldn't give the devil that much credit for doing it. Well, that's not funny to lose millions of dollars one day and lose your family the next day. But you see, you've still got a hedge round about him.

Now take it away. The Lord says, all right, there you are, look, I've taken it away. Now what are you going to do? The first stroke against him was bankruptcy.

The second stroke was bereavement. The third stroke was boils. Now what do you do? And then his friends came.

Boy, as you say, friends like these, you don't need enemies. They came round singing and sighing and sobbing. They sat with him for seven days and didn't say a thing.

That's pretty good. We couldn't sit for seven minutes, most of us, without talking, but they sat for seven days. Then one of them speaks up and he says, there's sin in your life.

Somebody else comes in. All started accusing him. And just like the devil, he took everything Job had and left him with a nagging wife.

But anyhow, what happened? He's bankrupt. He's bereaved. He can't sit down.

He's too many boys. He can't stand up. He can't lay down.

Poor old boy, he scratches where it itches and then he jumps up. Oh, then we leap right to the end. And you know what he did? He stood on his ash heap.

Boys, bereavement, bankruptcy, bewildered, broken, baffled. And he jumped up and he said, well, hallelujah. I want to tell you all something.

That even if worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. I know that my Redeemer liveth. But wait a minute, in between he did something greater than that.

What's greater than that? Because it says that when he was broken and bereaved and baffled and bewildered and bankrupt, he shaved his head and he fell down and worshipped. Don't you think that's gorgeous? Do you think it might take that to get you and me to learn to worship? You see, God is blessing me. Why? Well, because I'm making money.

I'm doing this, I'm doing that. I'm being popular. They've asked me to go sing with another quartet.

They've asked me to do this. All me, me, me, wonderful me. How will the world exist when I die? But anyhow, there it is.

It's all me, me, me, me, me, me. And the Lord says, look, I'll show you. I'll take everything you've got.

And when he's lost everything, he shaved his head and he fell down and he worshipped. I think that must have rejoiced the heart of God more than anything else. Let's go back to this.

What is it? Poor. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Oh, you don't find many people poor in spirit.

But do you remember what the apostle says? Look at the reference yourself. What did it say about the Lord Jesus? He was what? He was rich, but what? Come on, say it now. He was rich, but for our sake he became poor.

That's going downhill and then it turns to come up that we through his poverty might be made rich. How rich was he? Well, I don't know, but I'll tell you what. Every vein of silver in the world, he put it there.

Every nugget of gold, he put it there. Every opal. I've been in Australia and the wonderful opal fields, he put all those there if those are treasures.

And he did put the stars in their silver sockets and he does hang the moon up in space and he did make everything that's made. And angels did fall down and worship him and cherubim sang his praise. And not just in Isaiah were they singing holy, holy, holy, but in the fourth, is it? Yes, the fourth of Revelation, it says they ceased not by day and by night to cry holy, holy, holy.

And he left it for somebody to pull his beard. Now, you try that on one of the fellows around here. You don't have as many beards as you used to have.

Let somebody pull your hair and oh, that hurts, but on your face. They plucked his beard out so they pulled the skin off, the flesh. Somebody hoisted some dirty phlegm and spit it in his face.

There's a lovely old hymn that says out of the ivory palaces into it. He was poor, he was rich beyond any conception we have. Why? He put life into everything.

Then he has to hang on a woman's breast to feed himself. Unless she fed him, he'd die. All the resources of eternity were his.

All the majesty, all the glory. There were times when he had a heartache to get back to heaven. He says in John 17, Father, I'm not looking back to getting up there, you know.

I want to be there with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. How often do you think he dreamed about it? Or he went on the mountain and he remembered the glory he had with the Father. In a world we don't know a thing about hardly.

A world where there was no strife, all angelic beings. Where everything was holiness, not foulness. There were no Romans exterminating all their enemies.

There were no people in poverty. There were no blind, lame, lepers, dirty, filthy, lousy people. It was heaven, perfect beauty, the beauty of holiness.

And he laid it all on one side. He was rich. He even crammed his wisdom into a little brain.

Because he laid aside his glory. The theologians have what they call the kenosis theory. He emptied himself.

Because you see these first two things in this marvellous, marvellous Sermon on the Mount. He opened it. What is poverty? Well obviously it's the opposite of riches.

But actually, pardon me, what it means here, poverty and after that what do you get? Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are they that mourn. These are the emptying sides.

The others are filling, but these are emptying. He emptied himself. I think it's Wesley that says he emptied himself of all but love.

And bled for Adam's helpless race. Or again, he was poor to give me treasure. He was slave to make me king.

You see, people say, what do you mean we're going to do in heaven? Are we going to just sing forever and ever and play harps and all the rest of it? Why not? We'll be so amazed when we get to heaven of how little we understood God. It's going to take us a billion years to even wake our brains up if you like. To realize how far he stooped from the heights of glory to reach a sinful rotten person like me or you.

That for thirty years he was deprived of everything. He laid his glory by, Charles Wesley says, and wrapped him in our clay. The Jews couldn't take him.

Messiah is coming and when he comes, he's going to put down his enemies. Again, I tell you that in Acts 1 verse 6, they were still hanging on to this. When Jesus says, I'm going to ascend, I'll come again.

And they said, will you restore the kingdom at this time? They were still at a grudge in their hearts against the Romans and everything else. And I can imagine Jesus thinking, oh, oh, you poor dumb people. Have I been with you so long? Haven't I set the kingdom of God up inside of you now? As Mr. Spurgeon said on one occasion, a little faith will bring heaven into your heart.

A little more faith, no pardon me, a little faith will take you to heaven. A little more faith will bring heaven into you. But after all, isn't this what this is all about? Isn't this a heavenly disposition? You see, we need to meditate on these things.

We read them too quickly. What is meditation? Did you ever stand looking in somebody's face and they're talking to you and they say, you see what I mean? You say, no, you're looking straight at them. You know what they're talking about.

You see them there, you know what they're talking about. And then while they're talking, you say, oh, oh, I see what you mean now. Well, why didn't you see it a few minutes ago? You'd be meditating on it while they were talking.

So Paul says, writing to the Ephesians, in Ephesians 1.18, that the eyes of your understanding been enlightened that ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what are the riches of glory, well, pardon me, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who do believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places. Far above. Now this is not what he's going to be when we see him.

This is where he is now. Right now Jesus is far above what? Principality, power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world but in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Now you look at the 6th chapter of Ephesians and you see principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. It's as though here you have it's as though here we have the visible world in which we live with all its satanic systems that are all corrupt. From politics to religion it's all corrupt.

Here it's full of violence it's a kind of a sewer. We've been trying to put Humpty Dumpty together again and we can't. So here is the world with all its corruption.

And above the world there's a kingdom of principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. They've got headquarters on earth. The world of God talks about a place where Satan's seat is Washington if you like.

But there it is. This is the world of men this is the world of principalities but wait a minute wait a minute don't give up. Here is another kingdom.

The one we're talking about here in Ephesians 1 that Jesus is there exalted above what? He's above all principalities and all power and all might and all dominion. Now if this world here is bringing power onto this world here which it is if you and I live in the heavenly places in Christ we have authority over that world too. And we break up that power before we come into this world.

But we think we're going to sing people into blessing or preach people into blessing. Somehow we've got to relearn how to break that dominion of Satan. After all that's what Jesus did didn't he? And we've got to do that.

And we do it by faith. We do it by knowing God's word and knowing God's mind. Look at the word of the apostle here for a minute.

Two Christians in 6. Verse 10. This is Paul's testimony. You know this, this, this when we talk about Jesus people tend to say now look, look, after all he was a son of God.

But wait a minute he was a son of man. And in case you want to get an alibi for unbelief or failure or weakness the Lord gave us a super edition of a man by the name of the apostle Paul. OK.

And he lists all the things he had. He was of the tribe of Benjamin. He was of the seed of Abraham.

He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He had wealth. He had social standing.

He had intellectual power. And he says all those things that were gained to me I counted them but lost. I counted them but dung that I might win Christ.

Now look it's one thing when you're over here you're living in a world of let's put it here here's the world in which we live. And he lives at the top of the tree in culture in religion in social standing in intellectual power. This is the apostle Paul.

Now it's one thing to give it up to come over here into a kingdom of a despised people because they were still despised in the days of the apostle Paul. He leaves his father his mother his synagogue his intellectual standing. Everything everything everybody else is reaching after he says they're nothing.

I don't think I've ever seen that in him my richest gain I count but lost for what I think of him. He only said it he did it. Now it's one thing to leave all those riches and come over here into this world.

And then you think of the tremendous area that he covered as a preacher. But it's another thing that because you do that you end up in a jail here. You get behind the bars.

It's the only window that you can see the world out of. He's lost everything there. He's going to lose more.

He's literally going to lose his shirt. They're going to tear the coat off his back. And when they've torn the coat off his back they're going to tear the skin off his back.

It's loss loss loss loss losing losing losing losing losing losing Ten. As sorrowful what paradoxes as sorrowful yet always rejoicing as poor yet making many rich isn't that great. The only way you can make people rich is become poor.

The only way Jesus could ever get through to us was become one of us. Take our limitations take our physical body no hunger no tiredness no the betrayal and even friends will work out on you sometime. There's no other way of getting in but becoming one of us.

He was rich but for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. So Paul bears without himself in his own life he says a sorrowful yet always rejoicing as poor yet making many rich. Could you kind of imagine this morning how many millions of people through the world have read the epistles of the apostle Paul.

Even today if he only gets rewarded for today he's going to be a super millionaire by our count when he gets to heaven. After all he wrote 14 epistles if you include Hebrew which I think he wrote. And they've been translated into dozens of languages and they've been issued in billions of volumes and you know what he's never collected his royalties yet.

Won't that be wonderful? When as we tried to think very quickly last night of people. Can you imagine the apostle Paul going forward I say well well sit back now sit back. Gabriel bring me a drink of water out of the river of life and you bring me some fruit from the trees.

Because we're just going to sit back and relax and what and watch Jesus rejoice as he presents his servant the apostle who went every way every inch of the way like the master did. And God's going to get his great computer because his mind is a computer in that sense that there's nothing God ever misses. And if you've read that book by um what's his name J.I. Packer knowing God.

Do you remember he has a phrase about the second chapter somewhere where he says it is an awesome thing to live every day under the eye of an omniscient God. Now that's the only way to live. But when you think that God is going to reward the apostle Paul for all those missionary journeys.

Maybe give him a diamond in his crown for every piece of flesh they ripped out of his back. You know they they had a cat of nine tails uh it was it was a whip like this with a with a lash on it and then at the end it had nine lashes and at the end there was a copper spike on them and they they plied that through your back. Remember his back was ripped open.

Well every every stripe that he had every bit of suffering as that hymn Matthew Bridges hymn crowning with many crowns says of Christ who every grief hath known that rings the human breast and takes and bears them for his own that all in him may rest. There isn't a grief that you go through that God doesn't register. There is an emotion that you go through he doesn't register.

We're going to be evaluated in eternity in a very different way than we think very often. But again think of the apostle Paul coming up for his reward. Think about millions millions of people have been blessed through him apart from what he did in the days of his flesh.

It's going to be fantastic. His prophecies his utterances he's got to be rewarded in that day. He was poor he was poor the only way for him to get to millions of people was to lose his social standing to be an outcast as a Jew to follow this despised Christ of God to go to jail to do all the other things and he was poor but he said look I've got a secret.

I'm poor but I'm making many rich. I have what nothing. Isn't that something? That should make you smile.

He had nothing. Did he have a wife? I don't know. Some people say he did.

He had a thorn in the flesh. But some people say no that's not that it's not that. Some people say no he did not have a wife.

He did not have children. I didn't have a home. He shackled up in prisons with other fellows.

The greatest man that lived after Jesus had nothing. He couldn't write his name on a single thing and say it's mine. He had nothing.

And yet he says so sublimely I possess all things. What's the good of having everything if you've no peace and joy inside? You've got nothing. So little Freddie Prinze comes out of a gutter somewhere where in Brooklyn.

Smart handsome nice jovial fellow. Freddie Prinze has nothing. He comes up he comes up.

Successor Rolls Royce. More money than he can handle. He says it's difficult to live this life and I used to live and I had to steal the bread or steal something or do something and now here I am I can't handle it.

And he's what about 22 years of age and he puts a gun to his head and kills himself. And so have so many others. They've got everything.

They've got nothing. Paul says I have nothing. I've got everything.

I'll tell you what I have. I have peace and joy in the Holy Ghost and you know what I've got? Well he didn't sing the hymn it hasn't been written by that good Englishman yet. Amazing grace how sweet the sound.

When we've been there 10,000 I don't sing 10,000 years that won't be a tick of the clock in eternity. We should change it. When I've been there 10 billion years bright shining as the sun.

We'll stand up endless days to sing his praise. I don't like many modern songs honestly but I like one amongst others. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

My we wish we'd bared our backs and carried bigger burdens. We wish we'd had this flesh more under control that it doesn't make us go to bed when it wants or eat when it wants. Somebody told me about an old lady in uh uh where uh one of the Scandinavian countries Norway Norway I think.

An old lady that for years had had rheumatism. One woman she's getting up no bones and she when she put a leg out of bed the old bones you know. I got my mother used to do that sometimes you could hear the leg go like that like that and they said she said she looked down she says now look it's no good complaining because if you knew how far you were going today you'd grown louder than that anyhow.

So I think she got everything under control don't you think so? You'll become a slave to your body, slave to eating, slave to appetites. Now you don't have an appetite that isn't right if God hasn't sanctified then they'll kill you but but keep everything under control. Your body, your sex life, your thinking, your sleeping, your eating they're all there in your personality.

All right Paul says I was rich but uh I became poor that others might become rich. I have nothing and yet I possess all things. Look in the eighth chapter of verse nine before we quit here.

If that's what it is. All right yes. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor that you through his poverty might become rich.

You know sometimes we think if we work hard and we study hard and I get a diploma and do this and you go home and your grandmother thinks you're the greatest thing in Spurgeon. She hasn't heard you preach of course but anyhow that's what she thinks. And and you know you just kind of get a little inflated and then you say look I wouldn't have a thing but for him.

The only reason I've any riches at all is that he became poor that I through his poverty might be made rich. You know God has so many ways. Let me just do one thing.

They're showing me the card I've got two minutes. And if I run over that's all right. How is God going to do it? You know it's always nice to look at the finished product and say well I'd like to be like that you know.

There are two characters in the Old Testament that I can't find a flaw in. I can find a flaw in everybody else I think. Just two.

One is Daniel. I can't find a thing wrong in Daniel's life. He walked perfectly with God as far as I can see.

And the other is Joseph. All right here's Joseph. Let's put it this way.

Here's Joseph. He's up here with his father and family and his father sends him down to Dothan to take some sandwiches for his brothers. And they're envious because he's always dreaming dreams.

He dreams that one day the moon's going to he's the moon and the stars are going to fall down another day all the sheaves fall down. And they they said this old dreamer keeps upsetting us. He's up here in with his father.

He goes down to Dothan and when he's there his brothers sell him and they put him down into a pit. And the Ishmaelites come along and they sell him and they take him down to Egypt. And when he gets in Egypt he's a handsome attractive man and a woman has a design on him and he won't get fouled up.

And so she lies about him and he goes to jail. He's as innocent as a babe. So he's come down from here he goes to Dothan to take some sandwiches.

From Dothan they put him in a pit. From the pit he goes down into Egypt. From Egypt they put him down into prison.

Now as far as I can see he went to prison when he was about 13 or pardon me when about 17 or 18 years of age. And he stayed in prison and in bondage until he was about 30. Remember there's a magic word I don't know why.

But in the old testament in the OT a man could be a soldier when he was 20. He could be a priest when he was 25. He could not be a high priest until he was 30.

John Baptist never preached before he was 30. Jesus never preached before he was 30. The apostle Paul didn't preach before he was 30.

Joshua did not. Neither did Moses. You don't go back.

I don't know why. I've never found the answer to that. But there it is.

All right here it is then. He's with his father. He goes and takes sandwiches.

They sell him and put him in a pit. From there they take him to Egypt. From Egypt he goes down into the prison.

And when he gets in prison the bottom falls out and he goes down here. He prays and helps a couple of guys. They get out of jail and he's still there cooling his heels.

From being about 18 years of age until he's 30. Why? You want to be like Joseph? Really? Really? When Paul went to prison what happened? He says they took me to prison and then they put me in an inner prison right in the middle. Why? He hadn't got an atom bomb in his pocket.

He hadn't got a gun. He was a helpless man. He was a powerful man.

So they put him in the prison. God says go down, down, down, down, down, down. Then everybody goes out of jail and leaves me.

What's God doing? But wait a minute. Then he starts going up and up and up and up and up. And he gets higher.

This is where he was before. He gets right up here. Where? Because the spirit of wisdom was upon him.

And when the king is going out of the country he puts a chain around this fellow's neck. And he says you're the ruler and I'll put your ring on my finger. All that.

Emptying, stripping, lowliness, humility. Wait a minute. When God starts going up, up, up, up, up in his life.

You see, if God wants you at the top of the ladder, if this is the ladder here, all this, this, this, this is the ladder. If God wants you up there, all the demons in hell and all the men on earth will never stop you from getting there if he wants you. But if men put you up there and God doesn't want you, you'll fall down anyhow.

Wesley, one of his great favorite hymns was, open a door which earth and hell may strive to shut but strive in vain. It's right. I don't like the tract.

I think there's a lot of nonsense in it in one sense, but it's true. God has a plan for your life. Sometimes I'm tempted to write a new version of scriptures.

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness crying, God has a plan for your life. But that's not the way you go about it. But if you're a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ, he has a plan for your life.

And if you're listening and you obey, don't worry you don't make the grade as well as somebody else. Try, don't get lazy and indolent. Use your brain, use your mind, use what God gives you.

But you may not come up as quickly as others. You may be left behind. It's all going down, down, down.

And you think, Lord, I've hit the bottom. And then you discover you go through the bottom. Then you know you're going to start coming up before too long anyhow.

But it's not easy, you see. Well why doesn't he do it in her life? Why doesn't he do it? Because he's making you, not her. That's why, I have a bit of sense.

The greatest that lived, Jesus was emptied of everything. He emptied himself of all but love and bled for Adam's helpless race. But look what he did for us.

The apostle Paul and he loses everything. Social standing, religious standing, no longer considered a classic intellectual Jew, everything's gone. Then God gets hold of him and starts to inspire him.

Oh yes, yes, the Lord loved him. And he says, when I went down the Damascus road, the Lord revealed himself, Teo, to me. And then he put him back in the school that's still open if you want to go.

It's the school of silence. He says, on the Damascus road, God revealed himself to me. But when I went in the wilderness for three and a half years, he revealed himself in me.

Now tomorrow we'll talk a little more about this anyhow. Thank you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19820.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/the-sermon-on-the-mount-part-4/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net