

The Voice of God

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the necessity of hearing God's voice and the importance of spiritual maturity in the church today.

Duration: 1:00:30

Scripture: Exodus 20:19, Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 25:37-41, Hebrews 1:1-2

Topics: "Voice Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of examining our motives rather than just our actions. He shares a personal story of listening to a preacher who spoke about the judgment seat of Christ and how it impacted a prominent church leader. The preacher encourages the audience to disconnect from worldly distractions and focus on their relationship with God. He urges them to seek purity, a new vision, and a deeper prayer life. The sermon concludes with a reminder that finding peace, courage, and power can only be achieved through Jesus.

Transcript

We have a legitimate right to sing as we sang earlier tonight, My Jesus, I love Thee. I know Thou art mine. We bless You for that security that we have.

We thank You, Lord Jesus, that when You look down from the cross, You said it is finished, and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. Your Word says, once in the end of the age, He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Your Word tells us, by one man's transgression, sin entered into the world, and because of sin, death.

But we thank You that by one man, not the second Adam, but the last Adam, was able to undo all the first Adam did. We thank You that he lived a righteous, spotless, holy life. We thank You for the cleansing of the blood tonight.

If we hadn't have had that, we would have entered this house defiled tonight, embarrassed. But we thank You for that fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains. The dying thief rejoiced to see the fountain in his day, and there have I, not may I, but there have I, though vile as he washed all my sins away.

The Lord, let this meeting contribute to Your praise and adoration. We can't give You anything. You own the world.

We can't give You the advice. You're the essence of all wisdom. We cannot counsel You in righteousness.

You're the very essence of righteousness. But You desire our praise. You desire our worship.

We would worship You tonight in spirit, and in truth, and in the very beauty of holiness. We thank You for Your mercy to us. As we sang tonight, great is Thy faithfulness.

Pardon for sins. We thank You You've given us that. We thank You that the strength for today and grace for tomorrow.

We thank You You haven't made any miscalculations. We think about how often the automobile people withdraw their automobiles for defects that have been there for years. But we thank You that You made a perfect offering, Lord Jesus.

We thank You that You can make us perfect in holiness, in obedience, in righteousness, in love. God, put a grudge in our hearts, lest we become an embarrassment to God. Don't let us misrepresent You in this evil, perverse generation in which we live.

You've told us in Your Word that whatsoever we do, we're to do all to the glory of God. We ask tonight, in the words of the psalmist, that the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts may be acceptable in Thy sight. O God, our strength and our Redeemer.

Anoint Your Word tonight. Take the veil from it. Take the veil from our eyes.

Take the veil from our understanding. May we go from this house with a deeper assurance, a greater determination to do the will of God. Because You've told us that He that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

So we thank You for Your presence in Jesus' name. Okay, take your seats please. All right, Exodus, the book of Exodus chapter 20.

Exodus chapter 20 in verse 19. I'm reading, obviously, the King James version. The proper version.

You know, people laughed at the old lady in England. She said, I read the King James version because the Apostle Paul read it. Well, he wrote most of it anyhow.

She's pretty smart, wasn't she? Not King James version, but she read the scriptures that are here. Okay, Exodus chapter 20. Verse 19, And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us.

You know, I think that's typical of many services to which we go. We want to hear a preacher, we don't want to hear God. Particularly a preacher who presents something we've always believed, it's merely an echo in our hearts.

We don't want to know what God is saying, we want to know what the popular theology is saying. Don't speak to us, don't let God speak to us. You speak to us.

It's rather a change of tune. They said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die. You know, if you go back to the 17th chapter, Exodus 17 verse 1, And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink.

Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. Moses said, Why do you chide with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord? The people thirsted for water, and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us apart of it? Notice they don't recognize God has done it. They don't say here that you brought us up with a strong hammer and a stretched out arm.

Moses brought it. Moses did nothing of the kind. Sure enough, he was the leader.

He brought them out, but he couldn't get them in. The trouble with the church today, in my judgment, is this. Most of us have come out of Egypt, but we're not living in the promised land.

The church has halted somewhere between Easter and the resurrection. No, don't speak to us, God. But now look at the change again in that 20th chapter.

Verse 18. And all the people saw the thunders, thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when they saw it, they removed, and stood afar off, and said unto Moses, Speak with us.

And we hear, but let not God speak with us. Moses said unto the people, Fear not, for God is come to prove you, that you may, that his fear may be before you, before your faces, and that ye sin not. You see, as we would say, God put on a show there.

They murmured, they complained, we have no water. We, back in Egypt, we had onions and garlics. Why in the world they wanted that junk, I don't know.

But they want to go back to onions and garlics. Ever get near somebody with garlic? Don't they smell horrid? But they want to go back to Egypt. And so the Lord shows them now, he does a display of thunder and lightnings, the earth shakes.

Read the Hebrew, in the epistles of the Hebrews about that. They were terrified when they saw the majesty of God in the skies. When they felt the shaking of the earth, when they hear the noise of the thunder.

Well, if that's what God does, what would he do if he spoke to us? And Moses says, don't be afraid, he's not wanting to destroy you. He wants to speak to you. And that led me off on to thinking of the voice of God.

You remember that God, well, the story is so familiar, Adam sinned. What can you say about it that's new? Well, let me stress this anyhow, Adam sinned. Did he go looking for God? No, he didn't.

What did he do? He hid. He tried to cover himself. Cover himself in the bushes, cover himself with leaves, made an apron to cover his nakedness.

And God went after the man who had disobeyed him. God is the offended one, and yet the offended one goes after the offender. You get the same thing, God goes after Abraham.

God went after Jacob. God went after Moses. He's always pursuing, he's always seeking.

What did Adam do? Well, he went and hid himself. And he heard a voice. I wonder how he felt.

It's like the voice that says, what doest thou hear Elijah? He said, what are you doing here Adam? I'm hiding. Why are you afraid? He gave the game away, because he was disobedient, because his conscience was lashing him, because he was afraid of the majesty and awesomeness of God. And yet God comes to him.

What did he do when the angels transgressed? He put them in hell forever. People say demons are those angels that fell. Well, that's not scriptural.

The angels that fell are locked up, Jude says, they're locked up there in eternal darkness till God wants to release them. That's where the angels are. Where do demons come from? Find out for yourself, do some homework, don't be lazy.

The demons, well, I was going to say, I won't say it anyhow, I'll let you work sweat over it a bit, do you good. But God, as soon as the angels transgress, he casts them out into darkness. He doesn't do that with Adam.

He isn't a policeman, he's a counselor. He comes to rescue them, he comes to deliver them, he comes to tell them he's going to make a propitiation for sins when he gets to the third chapter, something that's going to happen centuries ahead. I find it very interesting to think again about the voice.

I did a little homework myself, I don't do too much, but I did some today. I went through the book of Revelation and found that the voice is spoken of 40 times, maybe 42 times in Revelation, the voice is spoken up. Do you remember what this wonderful man John did on the isle called Patmos? You can see Patmos if you were at Ephesus, the ruins are still there, you can look over the sea and see a piece of rock out of the ground, and that's out of the ground, pardon me, out of the water, out of the sea, and that's the isle of Patmos.

If you've gone to Ephesus and said, well, I'm on a trip, I'm on a tour, and I would like to see your pastor, is he preaching at home? No, he's not at home today. Well, he's in the isle of Patmos, and you take a boat and you go there, and you see the little fellow there on a rock, and you come up behind him and say, are you John? He says, I sure am, yes. Well, he wouldn't say sure, because he wasn't American, but anyhow, he says, yes, I'm John.

I never thought I'd find you in Patmos. He said, I'm not in Patmos. What do you mean you're not in Patmos? Where are you? I'm in the Spirit.

And remember, will you, a bit further up in the book, in the same chapter, he says that when he saw the Christ of God, his hair as white as snow, his feet like burnished brass, his face like the sun in its strength, his eyes like living coals of fire, his tongue as sharp as a razor, I felt his feet as dead. That's the only case I know of in a scripture where anybody's ever been slain in the Spirit. He was in the Spirit on the last day, and he goes down.

What did he do? I'll tell you what he did, nothing. I don't read he ever said a word to the Lord Jesus. The woman brought her alabaster box of ointment and broke it at the feet of Jesus.

Why did she go to see Jesus? She went to worship him. How do you know? Because, number one, she took the most precious thing that she had. You cannot worship God without sacrifice, and your sacrifice may be kicking the bedclothes off at two o'clock in the morning.

I went into my office at quarter of one this morning, to work. I usually go between now two and four o'clock, and have such wonderful times. You know, all those crazy people don't phone you at that time.

The mailman doesn't come, and those pestering preachers don't come asking for counsel that they won't accept anyhow. So nice to be quiet, you know, as the old hymn says, alone with God, the world forbidden. Alone with God, O blessed retreat.

Alone with God, and in him hidden, to hold with him communion sweet. The woman washed his feet. She never said a word, as far as I know.

There's no evidence anybody ever took a bite of food at that banquet. They were so magnetized with a person of Jesus. John, this is the man who had laid his head on the bosom of Jesus.

I hear preachers say, well, you know, he loves us all. He loves everybody. God has no favorites.

If the man tells you that, find a new church. He doesn't know what he's talking about. God has favorites.

I'm one of them, but apart from that. He does have favorites, doesn't he? He went and raised Lazarus from the dead. He went and raised, was the daughter of what? Jairus, and on the Mount of Transfiguration, he took with him who? Peter, James, and John, every time.

I wonder if the others griped about it. Oh, off they go again. He favors those three.

Then John, who is perhaps the most humble of them all, writes that that disciple whom Jesus loved. There was an intimacy between Jesus and John that the others didn't know a thing about. You know, one of your problems, if you're going to walk with God, you better watch out you don't get more spiritual than your pastor.

That's awful embarrassing to him. He may be the laziest guy in the country, doesn't have any discipline, doesn't have to go to bed at a given time, doesn't have to get up at a certain time, he makes his own life, and before long he's moldy. I read a smart thing, you know Americans do say some smart things, not as good as the English, but anyhow.

I read where an American said we're all made in the same mold, but some are moldier than others. Doesn't matter how moldy you are, the Lord can get you into shape anyhow. But you see, there's an intensity with some people.

In every church you find that, to use a common phrase easy, quality people. You find some people are an inspiration to you in their walk with God, in their talk with God, in their actions for God. And there was something about John that magnetized Jesus, and something about Jesus that magnetized John.

Here is a man who had laid his head on the bosom of Jesus and heard that divine heartbeat. He'd look into the eyes of the Eternal One, and now he sees him with eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet like burnished brass, his face like the sun in its strength. I think it was Fanny Crosby, she wrote more hymns than any other American, over three thousand.

I think I've got them all at home. I think she wrote that, the verse anyhow that says, and I shall see him face to face. How will we bear it? Oh, Revelation says we will.

Well I remember, I've got a speaker, not that I want you to come, the pastor. I always want to say the agape for us, but anyhow, who are they now, the Christian tribe up the road? The pastor's here tonight. Brother Dave Wilkinson came to see me two days ago.

He was so overwhelmed with what God was being saying to him. He's trying to finish a book right now. I'll give you the title of it.

The title is, Put the Trumpet to Thy Lips. It's from the prophecy of Hosea. My wife and I have read it through three times, and maybe tonight we'll read it through again.

And you know, you've got background music almost everywhere you go. The background music, as we have read that over and over again, has been the sound of the trumpet, sound and alarm. Where? On my holy hill, not in the taverns, not in the brothels.

Again, God's problem in America tonight is not Mormonism, humanism, Spiritism, Seventh-day Adventism, any other ism you like. God Almighty's problem in America tonight is a carnal church, a church that's choked up. You can put all the other things together, humanism, communism, Mormonism, Romanism, Spiritism, Seventh-day Adventism, Mormonism, you can roll them all in one big ball.

They are not the number one hindrance in America or any other country. The hindrance in America tonight is as it was in the Old Testament. God's problem in the Old Testament was not Amalekites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites and the otherites.

It was Israel. God's problem tonight in America is an unsanctified church, a church that's still carnal, worldly, fleshly. It hasn't been severed.

That word's been on my mind today. I preached last Sunday morning, or tried to anyhow, on Galatians 6, 14, where Paul says, the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. Now you've seen a lot of stuff you folk that have traveled, but you've never seen a crucifixion.

You mean they're saying something bloody like a bullfight. Nobody here has seen a crucifixion. I found something in making that study.

I may be wrong, but I'm sure I'm right. Right in the middle of the most beautiful poem on love that was ever written, 1 Corinthians 13, Paul, you remember, suddenly sidetracks and he says, when I became a man, I put away a child. When did he become a man? When did he put away childish things? I believe, you have to step back into Galatians 2.20, he was crucified with Christ.

I cannot find any record anywhere wherever a child was crucified. The Romans were wicked, but they did not crucify children. There is a place in his, I do not believe anybody enters unconsciously into a transaction with God, forget it.

God has given you a brain, given you a mind, give you emotions, given you understanding. He doesn't ask you to sign a blank paper without knowing what's on it in the deal. It's open in his word, you've got to study the word to find it, sure enough.

But he says, when I became a man, you know, he's an amazing man. I think the only thing that Paul didn't like about himself was he never got to do what John Baptist did. John Baptist did the greatest thing in history, presented, I introduced you Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Count how many times in Revelation the Lamb of God is mentioned. I'm going to speak Sunday morning, I think, about the bride of the Lamb. I like talking about weddings.

I'm going to live long enough to go to Ronnie's, I hope, but anyhow, that's a good, at least a year away, anyhow. If Jesus Christ is the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, and the judge of judges, isn't he going to have the bride of brides? Do you think he's coming for a crippled, limping church that we have today? A church that has to have a family center next door, so the kids can be brought up like heathens, so they can play pinball and see all the junk, and the poor, weary folk that couldn't bend the in prayer, they thought that, they thought the scripture said, play without ceasing. When, of course, it said, pray without ceasing.

Just like these TV preachers were reading of the scripture one day, they thought, they thought it said, fleece the flock, and it's, it says, feed the flock, you see. You need to have good eyes when you read the scripture. Do you know, the one thing that holds the revival back is immaturity.

We're not mature enough to handle it. We don't have mothers and fathers in Zion that God can trust. There's a time when a girl is too young to bear children, there's a time when she's too old.

I remember saying that in a church, the first time I came to America, and the preacher walked down the aisle on his hands and knees, there was an old-fashioned altar right there, raised his hand and cried, please God, don't let my church get too old to bear. Don't let us get too old to be spiritually pregnant and bring to birth. You see, God wants to get through to us in a special way.

When this new book of David comes out, I don't know when it will come, but I'll tell you what, it's red hot. I hope you'll buy as many copies as you can. He won't make a penny out of it.

The money will be given to missions and whatnot. But he's waiting on God, crawling into his bed at three or four o'clock in the morning. Burdened as I've never seen him burdened in the 20 years I've known him.

Something's going to come forth that's going to be most disturbing. It'll cost him a thousand pulpits in America. People say of him, as they said, as these men say, they said to Moses, speak thou with us and we will listen, but don't let God talk to us.

Now David is determined that God is going to speak through that book if it costs him his life. It will shut thousands of doors in his face. Ministers, seminaries, Bible schools will not want him because it's a prophetic word, it's a burning word, it's a blistering word, it's a burdened word, it's a breaking word, it's a blessed word.

See, children want to choose everything for themselves. Moses said, speak with us that we, and we will hear, let not God speak with us lest we die. Isn't it amazing that people will send millions of dollars to these TV boys that tell them lies and kick you out of pulpits if you tell the truth? A man came to see me this week, do you remember coming to our church down in Alabama a few years ago? I said, tell me the church.

Yes, I remember. Oh yes, oh you really disturbed the church. In the next business meeting that they had they said, we're not having that old charismatic.

That's disgraceful, I'm not an old charismatic, I'm not even old. I mean, I'm getting older but I'm not old. Charismatic? I'm not rheumatic.

Let's hear the voice of God. Don't let us hear the voice of God. The voice is a great, it amazes me when I phone someone, even when I call my son in West Africa or the other son in down South America or the other boy in New Zealand, immediately they come and I can tell their voices.

I'm amazed at the perfection of a telephone. Didn't used to be like that 20 years ago. You used to say something and say, would you repeat that? Would you repeat that? Would you repeat that? And your telephone built as long as you talk.

It isn't like that now because it bounces off a satellite and it's pure, it's beautiful. The voice. Remember Jacob tried to pull a fast trick? On who? No? Come on, who did he try to pull a trick on? His father? Isaac? His mother helped him in the deal, you know.

She took some skin off a goat and put it on his wrist and round his neck and the old man goes and he bends over to his father. And his father says, well okay, I know those hairy wrists and that, but the voice is Jacob's voice. Remember when Peter was standing at the fire, the woman said, I know you, you've got a northern accent.

We know you by your speech. One man is identified always with a rolling, rumbling, marvelous voice. I mentioned his name there.

I said, I think Paul would have liked to have done just one thing he couldn't do and that was introduce Jesus to the world. John Baptist did it. How is a voice crying in the wilderness? How in God's name did he do it? He had nobody to sponsor him.

He had no friends in court. He didn't even have a newsletter, would you believe that? No offense, no offense, Martin. If you're under convicts, I'll talk with you after.

Okay. Here is a man suddenly hurled. From where? I had a young man see me this week.

He wants to be another George Whitefield. Mercy on us. I'd like to be a John the Baptist.

Well, go live in the desert, somewhere, Navajo desert, somewhere between here and California, where there's only rattlesnakes and a lot of stuff out there. John Baptist lives with the wild beasts until the day of his showing forth and then he tamed wild beasts when he came out. What happened? A voice crying in the wilderness.

That voice rolled down that valley. It rolled down every valley in hell. I believe every demon shivered as soon as John said, behold the Lamb of God.

The devil and his cohorts said, now we're finished. Don't think you're smart because you believe the Bible. The devil believes a lot more than some of the preachers do.

He believes in the virgin birth. He believes in the resurrection. He witnessed them.

Your poor dumb preacher maybe has nothing but a degree. Well, maybe by degrees he'll get better. A voice crying in the wilderness.

If you do some homework, you'll find that John the Baptist was more than a hellfire preacher, more than a blazing evangelist. You'll find 27 different points of doctrine. He was a theologian in his own right.

We never think of him as a theologian. But his voice, in Matthew chapter 7, verse 21, it says, or verse 16, pardon me, chapter 7 of Matthew, verse 7, pardon me, chapter 7 and verse 14, okay. Because straight is the great and narrow is the way which leadeth to life, few there be that find it.

Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or pigs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Verse 20.

Wherefore by their fruit ye shall know them. Now here it is. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? Didn't we get big crowds? Didn't we have a super show on TV? Didn't I build monuments in my name? It's got my name plastered over it. Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? In thy name we cast out devils. In thy name we've done many wonderful works.

Then will I profess to you and say I never knew you? Depart from ye, ye that work iniquity. You say, well, how does that work? Doesn't God know everything? Didn't God know what they were doing? Yes. Didn't he know their works? Yes.

Why does he say he doesn't know them? He doesn't say he doesn't know their works. He said, I don't know you. You never had a love relationship with me.

You were never married to my will. I wasn't number one in your life. You didn't give me priority in your thinking and your acting.

You were so occupied with your ministry. What a devastating thing. You get the same thing in Matthew 25 and verse 11.

They told Cursed. Let me read that to you. No, it's not verse 11.

What verse is it? 21? 41? Okay, thank you. I marked it in my testament, not there. Yeah, then shall they say also unto them on the left hand, depart from ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

What are they done? The righteous, verse 37, shall the righteous answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungered, or fed thee, or thirst and gave thee drink? When saw we thee as a stranger, and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? When saw we thee sick, or imprisoned? And the king shall say, Beverly, I sent you in as much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me. You know, when you gave that man a raw deal, you didn't give him a raw deal, you gave Christ a raw deal. When you did something for that man that nobody knows, you didn't do it for him, you did it for Jesus Christ.

You see, if we kept that in focus, it would change our lifestyle. What a shocking thing when it comes to the final day, and we stand there again, as you will do, as I will do, before a billion people. You say, I wouldn't

like to stand up before this crowd.

You'll have to stand up one day before billions, and give an account of the deeds done in the body, every one of us will. A judgment for the believers, a judgment for the sinners. And in that great day, some of these ministries, God is going to say, I never knew you.

David was telling me, one of the outstanding preachers in the country, talked with him not long ago, and said, what time do you spend in prayer? I've 3,000 members in my church, do you think I can spend time in prayer? Huh? It's like saying, I'm running so fast, I've no time to breathe. You see, there goes some awful revelations at the judgment seat. Again, not what we did, but why did we do it? Not why didn't we, not what we didn't do, but why we didn't do it.

God is going to judge motives more than the action that we've done. What motivated us to do it? I told a story often, when I first came to America in 1950, I would dash home after preaching at night, sat at Sunday night, switch on the little box, it only had two little stations on it, here and here, and listen to a preacher up in the northeast, northwest of the United States in Portland, packing in about 2,000 people every Sunday night. He would say, we had a marvelous Sunday night.

Last Sunday, we had 35 people saved, 20 people received the baptism of the Spirit, and 11 were healed. Come on, so and so, they're coming down the aisle now. And I visualized what was happening, it wasn't on TV.

When that man finished his amazing ministry of 25 years, he had been to Africa and had pictures, you know, everybody with their hands up. He reported, we saw Pentecost two nights in succession. Two nights, we had more decisions than they had on the day of Pentecost.

It didn't last as long. We had them. He was very seriously ill the year before he died.

He said one night to his wife, his wife brought him his usual glass of warm milk and kissed him good night. In the morning, he called her to his bedside. He often made prophecies about himself, about the church, about the nation.

Called his wife to his bedside and said, call my assistant, and call the deacons, and call pastor so-and-so, and they all got around his bed. Wife thought he's going to say, you know, he'll die at four o'clock tonight or tomorrow. He said, last night when my wife went out of the room, Jesus stood there at the bottom of my bed.

His eyes like a flame of fire. Just as he's pictured in red, his hair as white as snow, his feet like burnished brass, his face like the sun in its strength, his tongue had sharp twedged sword, and he pointed to me and said, son, your 25 years of ministry are wood, hay, and stubble, and when I torch them, all you'll have is ashes up to your knees. 25 years of ministry, there are six things that can happen in your life.

You can have a Christian life which is made up of wood, hay, and stubble. They're all above the ground, aren't they? They're all inflammable. Silver, gold, and precious stones are hidden in the ground.

You can take silver, or gold, or precious stones and put fire to them, you won't change them. You'll purify the gold, you'll purify the silver, you won't consume the jewels. And he said, your ministry is wood, hay, and stubble.

Oh yes, you've written books, of course you've had some of the greatest evangelistic meetings in history, but your ministry was not to me. There was no love relationship. I tried to woo you into the secret place.

I tried to make love to you in the spirit, but you were so busy, you ran off, you planned, programmed. I preached to the ministers in the, of the Southern Baptist Church, about three or four years ago, in Alabama, hundreds of them. Usually if I give a word to preach, I say, Lord, what will I preach six months ahead? When I said I would go, the Lord said, preach on the judgment seat of Christ in the morning.

Lord, the people are gathering in the morning. At night it will be packed out, at night. No, the Lord said in the morning, so I preached on it.

When I finished, I gave the illustration of this famous preacher. The chairman of the board came up, the chairman of the group of the Southern Baptist Convention in that state came up, president, and he said, when I came in this morning, I had a pain from the crown of my head, right down to my shoulder here. He said, now after that sermon from Brother Raven, I've got a pain from my head to the soles of my feet.

What can I do about it? He said, that's about the most awesome illustration ever heard, that a man who has invested 25 years of time and money and travel, and God says it's ashes. So much showmanship today, it won't stand the fire of God. The gold is hidden.

There are so many wonderful hidden ministries. A lot of intercessors in it. David said to me the other day, he said, Len, I'm getting more and more news from groups that are heading away, praying, interceding.

We have a dear little lady has been to see us, I think, once Martha, I don't know, twice, and she with a group are away in the Rockies, about 30 miles up inside the mountain there, outside of Pass Denver. They worship every day, I don't know, she has a paper round. Imagine a paper round in the Rockies, at four o'clock every morning, and they pray for hours and hours and hours a day, in an old disused Methodist church with a pot-bellied stove.

And they struggle to throw the deep snow up to their waist, but they go every morning and have done that for 16 years. What are these under the altar? The prayers of the saints. You notice in Revelation, there are no sermons under the altar.

Most of them shouldn't be preached anyhow. What are these under? Prayers never die. There's a remnant in America today, stronger in prayer than any period I've known.

I've been coming to America since 1950 anyhow. I get wonderful news of young men, teams of young men, who pray every Friday night on the basis, if you can do it there down in Lyndale, we'll do it in our church. One young man went back and started a prayer meeting.

Three months after he called me, he said, do you know two-thirds of our church praying every morning for two hours, afternoon three hours, evening two hours, seven hours a day? In busy America? What an awesome thing if God has to say to us. Depart from ye, ye cursed into everlasting fire. I was a hunger, you gave me no meat.

I was thirst, you gave me no drink. I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me not, sick and ye in prison and ye visited me not. Then shall they answer and say, Lord, when saw we thee unhungered, or a thirst, or stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison? And he shall answer them as I answer you saying, inasmuch as he did it not to one of these little ones, he did it not unto me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment. Now figure it out yourself. I'm not talking theologically, I'm talking about the fact here.

If there's one book I'd like to write, I'm trying to write one now, I'd certainly like to finish what I have of only part of it on the judgment seat of Christ. Surely is the most awesome thing, almost the most awesome thing, that lies ahead of us. Of the whole ministry.

I can give you the names of the five, six, seven, eight leading men in the country. I can tell you how much they get every week. There's at least five of them drawing a million dollars a week.

Every dime of that they have to answer for at the judgment seat. It isn't their money, it's God's money. They say, send me God's money, send me God's tithe.

The voice. The voice of Jesus, I think, in anger. The first time we hear his voice is what? Matthew 11, 28.

Where Jesus says, come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Why do you want rest when he's told you have it? Figure that one out.

Ye shall find rest. This is the most restless age in history. Nobody can find rest or peace or joy, not outside of Christ anyhow.

But when you hear his voice say, come unto me, how wonderful. Think of the anguish. As I said before, we quote so often from the book of the Revelation at funerals and whatnot, oh well, there shall be no tears.

But the scripture of the same book says, he wipes away all tears from their eyes. Where does he wipe the tears away? I believe at the judgment seat. When all of us will be an open book, just as I can open this book anywhere and read it, your life will be an open book to God.

Nothing will be hidden, everything shall be revealed, the word of God says. And how wonderful if he says, well come to the right, well done thou good and faithful son. Look at the redeemed.

I'm going to dwell on that Sunday morning. All the things that lie ahead of us, there are four outstanding things I think ahead of us, that will supersede every other thing in history. You know the world outside has a pity for us.

It says, you know where my son is tonight? He's with a crazy bunch, they go to prayer meetings. What do you think about that? Your dad's boozing his head off, he'll be an idiot tomorrow morning, but he thinks he's smart tonight. Or somebody else.

Just because we've got things in right perspective, just because eternity has become real to us, just because we're finding, as Isaac Watts said, the hill of Zion, yields a thousand sacred sweets before we reach the heavenly field. You can find peace in Jesus, no sedative can give you. You can find such courage in Jesus, and no electric shock can give you.

They can find such power in him. You know most of this book, to most of us, is totally unexplored. We just go up and down to one chapter, one chapter, two chapters.

Instead of getting the vast horizon of God's revelation. We need to hear that voice every day. I guess if I were to press you, you'd surely say, I don't want God to say to me in that great day, depart from me.

I want to hear him say, well done. The only way you can keep on track is to hear God's voice day by day. Sometimes it's an inward impression, as John Wesley said.

Other times it's the word of God that leaps out and grabs you. This is the revelation he's given. He's got nothing more to say.

How firm a foundation these saints of the Lord. What more can he say than to you he has said. I like to rub some of the guys that come to see me, rub their noses in the floor, you know, in my kindness.

Why? Oh, you know what my church was when I took it over? It only had 600 members. Now we have 4,500. So what? What have you done? Maybe they're all castaways from another denomination anyhow.

They couldn't put up with the pastor and soon they won't put up with you. They'll go two blocks down the road somewhere else. It's easy to build a congregation without building the kingdom.

You know, some of you young preachers, you don't have maturity. But let me tell you something, you can have authority. Maturity comes with years.

Authority comes by abiding in his presence, by listening to the voice of God, by doing the will of God. He that doeth the will of God abideth forever. I believe God's going to raise up in this generation some men greater than any in history.

I don't think God put his plan on one side after Finney and Wesley and all these other amazing men. It's a bigger task. It's a bigger demand on us.

It's going to take men with greater vision, greater passion, greater unction. It's not just the result of my will, it's abiding in the will of God. It's being near to the heart of God.

It's knowing the timing in the things of God. Sure, it's an awful day. But I'll tell you, when David does get his book out, there are some people going to have sleepless nights.

There are more lost people in the world tonight than there have been in any period in history. The world population is teetering on five million, and five billion, and I don't believe there are half a billion, say, people in the country. And then asked me this week, how many people do you think are really born again in the nation? I said, two percent of all professing Christians.

A hundred and twenty from the upper room filled with the Holy Ghost. Now we're supposed to have 75,000, 75 million charismatic, spiritual people below me. If a hundred and twenty could turn the nation upside down, what should seven million do, or 70 million? I said that in church last Sunday, Monday.

One of the big shots from Christ for the nation was sitting under my nose. I said, what about your bunch? You've 1,500 students there, and nobody knows you're in Dallas, except you. How many students do you have at Springfield? Assembly of God, big outfit there.

Two thousand students. Anybody know they're in town? Oral says we have 4,000 students filled with the Holy Ghost. Oh, shut up, Oral.

Nobody knows in town that you're there. There's as much prostitution as when he started 20 years ago. There's as much drunkenness, there's as much wickedness, there's as much crime.

I ask honestly in God's name, what's wrong with us all? But they're sitting and go rotten when you profess with 4,000 people filled with the Holy Ghost. Nobody dare face the question. I asked that professor from CFN, Christ for the nation, last week, he had no answer.

I asked all these different men that come. You see, somewhere we've got away from printing the menu. You ever go into a restaurant and give you a gorgeously polished thing, you know, big thing this size.

You look at it and say, I'll have number one. Oh, I'm sorry we ran out of that half an hour ago. Well, my wife wants number three, but that's only Wednesdays and Fridays.

Oh, we'll take number six, but that's only evening after six o'clock, and you can't get a bite. But that's all the church is doing today, we're printing the menu. You know, a little guy let you read to him so long, and then he says, show me daddy.

I believe the world outside is saying you yell, and you shout, and you scream, and you have all your fancy shows. Show me! Show me! Where is the glory of the Lord? Where are the beautiful garments of holiness the church should wear? Where is the authority? Where is the power? God sought for a voice. That's all we know about John Baptist.

The only thing he tells us about, what kind of clothes he wore. Isn't that interesting? I'd like to see some Baptist preacher in the same clothes, if he had the same anointing. Imagine the pastor of the fashionable church down in Tyler, Sunday morning, going in with a leather girdle around his lungs, and the smelly old camel skin around his neck, with fleas popping off here and there.

Boys, the deacons would arrest him before he got in the pulpit. But God's going to find his name. Friend, listen, it's no good having a heart as wide as this, if your heart's as shrunk as that.

God doesn't measure our heads, he measures our hearts. He doesn't measure us by our theology necessarily, he measures us by our relationship with him. Our love relationship.

I preached once in that famous church on Northside there on Boston Common. It was there that that wonderful hymn was written. The organist and a member of the church wrote that hymn, My Faith Looks Up To Thee.

Thou Lamb of Calvary. I said, would you sing it before I preach, which they did. I love that stanza that says, May thy rich grace impart, no, yeah, may thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal, inspire, as thou hast died for me, so may my love to thee pure, warm, and changeless be.

God help us, we go up after we've sat four days in a seminar, about as useful as going to a cemetery. Very often. We've got a bit more knowledge.

Most of us here are choking up on knowledge. We've knowledge, we can't work it out. We don't want new theological books.

We don't need new seminars. We need a new wave of obedience in the church of Jesus Christ. We're going to hear him say, sell all, and that will mean maybe postponing a marriage.

Sell all, it means giving up a business career. Sell all, it means severing relationships with friends or your church that you've loved and been brought up in since you were this height. The greatest thing in the world is to hear the voice of God, as far as I'm concerned.

My heart dances for joy when I hear his voice. I would rather hear God's voice in rebuke than anybody else's voice in flattery. If he rebukes me, he loves me.

If I'm coasting on and it's all so easy, forget it, you must be sick. We should be able to kiss the rod that he chastises us with. His correction is to move us to perfection.

Perfect in love. Perfect in obedience. Perfect in doing his will.

Well, you know what? This is a prayer meeting. What do you think about that? We're going to pray. I'm going to ask you to pray especially for dear brother David.

I know he's got an awesome task. He's got to finish off that book. There aren't many guys go to bed at three and four o'clock in the morning as David has been doing.

You sit and talk to a little machine and your secretary goes and he's sweating and bleeding over that thing. And I need prayer for Sunday morning for ministry. We need to pray for these other fellowships around the country.

I said to Martha today, there are the dear Browns at the back. They're the patriarchs of this area. If you don't know what patriarchs are, look up in the dictionary, but anyhow.

They're the, oh my, should I say? Betty, would it be all right if you say you're the old timers? I mean, they're the original papa and mummy of this prayer meeting. And I still get people, somebody called Martha today and said, the prayer meeting is held where? Last day. Oh, well, you weren't born here, were you? You're here tonight.

You've moved around a lot. You're here. We've moved around a bit.

Finally, we're here. There are people around the world that have come as a result of that prayer meeting in the house there and they've gone out and they've given birth spiritually. You take on the atmosphere in which you're born.

You'll get born in a worldly church. You'll be worldly all your life till the Holy Ghost gets hold of you. Isn't it something now when we have a sanctified bowling alley next to the church? They open a bowling alley and ask somebody to pray over it.

I think they got mixed up. You know, I read about Peter. It says he was bald.

They got it all mixed up. I'll tell you what, all those things are going to dry up before long. There's going to be a sudden surge into maturity.

When I became a man, you remember the day when you gave up every blessed thing which tonight is an hindrance to you and you won't give it up. Don't pray about it. You don't need to pray about it.

All you have to do is be obedient. You don't have to ask God if you should keep the Ten Commandments. You could better keep them.

You'd be in trouble. I'd say some of you thought you don't keep the Sabbath. Don't you pray for a loved one or someone else if you're fooling around on Sundays in Canton Fair.

Forget it. Some of you go to movies. You've told me you went to movies.

Some of the students around here. We go to movies Sunday night. You keep the Sabbath day holy.

Somebody who used to come here a lot said, I don't think I have to keep the Sabbath day. It's Old Testament. I said, your neighbour doesn't think he has to keep the other commandment.

Thou shalt not commit adultery. And you can't stop him committing adultery. You're breaking one commandment.

He breaks the other. And if you break one, you're guilty of all. God has hinged revival onto keeping the Sabbath.

Read the fifth date of Isaiah. Take your foot from my Sabbath. That's for footballers, see.

Take your foot from doing your pleasure on my holy day. The Sabbath, not half of it, the Sabbath is God's tide on your time. It's his 24 hours, not, not giving God that Sunday morning service and an extra buck in the offering and then dashing off to Canton Fair amongst all the junk.

Now I talk straight, you notice that, and I walk straight. You won't have to get somebody to interpret the Greek while you're around here. I can tell you without the Greek.

It may make you weak, but that's all right. Do you know the Christian life will only work one way, and that's God's way. God is not committed to bless anything you do that's outside of his word and his will.

Whether you like it or not isn't the point. He has said it. And he says if you love him, doesn't say you'll give extra in the offering or do some other thing.

He says if you love him, you'll do what? You'll keep his commandments. And I believe that means what they call the Decalogue, the ten commandments as well as the new commandment that you should love one another. There's a needy world outside.

I'm hoping that if you do go out of this area, you'll go with a spark of fire that God put in your heart in this prayer meeting. I mean these prayer meetings every Friday night. As the old poet said, more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

We do need to pray for these prayer groups. We need to pray for that group I told you about in Urbana in Illinois last week. Young group of young men that have met for eight years.

They've had street meetings. They've had meetings in the parks. They've been punched, pushed around.

They've been bruised. Some of that group have been kidnapped in America for preaching. They've been lampooned in the national newspaper as being a sect.

You see they're so near to God that everybody thinks they're idiots. The fool is that everybody outside that group are the idiots. I don't mean just their number.

I mean who are not walking in the light as most people. They've severed themselves from radios, from tv, from worldliness, from worldly habits, for worldly customs. They meet every day for prayer and intercession.

I'm sure as God looks down from heaven he sees these groups. That little bunch up behind the rock is there. Meeting every morning at four o'clock.

A group up in Illinois there, suffering for his name's sake. A group in Virginia that are praying. A group in Kansas City came down to see me.

That's the church where they pray two hours in the morning, three hours in the afternoon, and two hours at night. And they're not writing a book about it. Tell you what you'll never... Here's a word of wisdom if ever I gave you one.

You never see a prayer meeting on tv. Now wasn't that worth coming to this meeting to get to know that tonight? I'll tell you what, that every prayer meeting is a tv show in hell. Every prayer meeting twists the thorn in the side of the devil's flesh.

He hates prayer. He fights you on your prayer life more than anything. Now face up to it.

You give a time to prayer and everybody, your cousin you haven't heard from in 20 years will phone you. Somebody else will call you up. Somebody else wants to tell you some nonsense.

You know God is a... all he's looking for is a bride. That's what he's after. Well if you want to come Sunday morning you're welcome, if you can get a seat.

Go up to Brother Dunn's first and if you can't get in with Dunn come down to us and you may not get in with us we don't care. But God is looking after pure people. Purity precedes power.

Purity means purpose. Purity means progress. Purity means passion.

Purity means victory. If you haven't got it cry to God for it here tonight. You've got a sympathetic audience.

Tell God to take out the unclean thing. Purify you. Ask him for a passion for souls.

Don't if you don't mean it. He may turn the heat on you till you can't sleep at night. I'm happy I don't know.

I slept one night, I don't know, slept two hours last night and I'm a bit older than most of you. And if I can do it you can do it. You can't find me a man that's moved his generation to God that hasn't been a disciplined man.

Wesley went to bed at nine every night. I go to bed every night at nine now. Won't get it tonight but normally I do.

Get up at four or three. Got up yesterday morning I thought my I feel so fit it's marvellous. Oh maybe I should make a cup of tea so I put some water on and look at the clock it's 10 minutes past 12.

Where have I been? Got up this morning it was uh What was it? Friendly past. I got five minutes extra this morning. I saw a statement by Follet.

He was a real old time assembly of God preacher. One of the greatest men this nation's had and nobody recognized him much. By every book you can buy him.

By Follet. F-O-L-L-E-E-T-T. His family came over in 1666 when the Huguenots were driven out of France.

He's a marvellous man intellectually every way. And he had a saying in a book I think Martha read it to me there. What was it? What did he say? Lord help me to live until I die.

Isn't that good? You say well I'm going to live to. No you're not. Some of you are only existing you're not living.

There isn't enough in the world to magnetize you. There isn't enough in Jesus to magnify you. You're in no man's land.

Until you get severed from the world, the flesh, the devil, all the trivial things, all the vain things which charm me most and help me least. You get no progress. Well I better quit talking.

Let's go to prayer. Cry to God. Let's cry that God will give us a new incentive.

Give you a new vision. Give you a new power. Give you total purity in your heart and your will, your emotions, your life.

Deliver you from the vain things, empty things that charm us most and help us least. Let's believe God. Let's kneel in prayer.

Please feel free to pray. Pray. Thank you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4361.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/the-voice-of-god/>

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