

Thoughts on 2 Timothy 2:15

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the importance of studying Scripture to gain God's approval and the responsibilities of ministry in his sermon on 2 Timothy 2:15.

Duration: 53:28

Scripture: 2 Timothy 1:5-6, 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 3:13, 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Timothy 4:2-3

Topics: "Calling"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching the word of God rather than just talking about it. He criticizes the practice of using a text as a mere backdrop for personal thoughts and illustrations. The preacher encourages the audience to study the lives of great preachers and learn from their dedication and passion for God. He concludes by urging the listeners to examine their own lives and consider the true purpose and meaning of their existence.

Transcript

...to Timothy, the second letter of Paul to Timothy, chapter 2, or when God called me to minister. How many of you feel tonight God's called you to be preachers? Let me see your hands. No ladies.

One, two, three, four, five. Only three. Good, good.

Well, you need to pray for two-thirds of the congregation. They don't know where they're going. Okay.

There is no higher calling. In the whole world I'm being called to be a servant of Jesus Christ. Paul here says to this young man, Timothy, that he loves very much, study to show thyself approved unto God.

Now, usually a teacher gets over that first word, study, and starts telling him old methods of study. Now, that's not what he says. He's not talking about... Now, you've got divine approval.

Phillips puts it very nicely, I think, in his translation, for yourself, concentrate on winning God's approval. See, I don't believe in that. I've said to you often, a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

For me, the man persuades me that he is able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day. If you've had a confrontation with God, as the old saints used to say, if you know the crack in the floor, if you know the time on the calendar where God calls, as the poet says, we'll not be able to move

you. Now, when Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians, you remember he visualized the Christian as being a soldier, a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

And as he finishes his letter to Timothy... Now, get this clear. This is, as far as we know, the very last thing that came from the pen of the Apostle Paul. I'm a bit short-winded tonight, I've got to go.

Most of the Bible scholars are agreed that this is a finale in his writing. If you like, it's his last will and testament. And he has a tremendous bond of affection for this young man.

Maybe in his mind he's saying, well, you better watch it, because my mantle is going to come off me unto you. Or maybe Timothy already has made some requests about that, I don't know. It's a remarkable thing that Paul here doesn't mention a word about prosperity.

He doesn't talk anything about a ministry of miracles. He doesn't say become a superstar. He doesn't say go fast and pray and do this, that and the other.

He says, study to show thyself a fool done to God. Now, that doesn't mean he's going to be a superstar anyhow. I don't know anything that Timothy preached.

What did he preach? I don't know. Maybe he borrowed Paul's sermons, like most of us do, and preached them. Keith doesn't always, but anyhow, there's nothing wrong in that.

But you see, what he's saying here, he says, in the first verse of the second chapter, Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ. Then he goes on to tell him, of course, to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Now, in this, he faithfully talks about his diet.

You know, somebody says he shouldn't eat meat, somebody says he shouldn't eat something else. If you have a pastor at church and you're single, the Pope will say, no, he's no good, he's single. How can he tell us how to raise children? He's never raised any.

Then if you ask two or three, they'll say, oh no, we don't want a pastor like him. He probably takes too much time. You know, he never satisfied everybody.

Now, Paul is trying to establish this young man, and he says, he tells him about doctrine, he even tells him about dress. I wonder if he got away with it today. And he tells him about businessmen, study.

But don't just study to be knowledgeable. Study to show thyself approved unto God. Then he comes in and says, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

You know, again, there's no task in the world like this wonderful task of ministering the Word of God. Remember that nursery rhyme, Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard? Real classic, I'm sure you've learned it, most of you have been to college. And Old Mother Hubbard, and she went, there was nothing in the cupboard.

So she couldn't have made an angel cake, she couldn't have made pancakes, she couldn't have made anything. She might have had the equipment there, she might have had the recipe there, but fine, she got nothing to make it with. Now, you know, there's a real joy in having nothing.

You know what it is? You can't lose anything. Isn't that wonderful? I think Socrates said it. But anyhow, that's true.

If you have nothing, if you have no pride, nobody can bring you low. If you've no self-esteem, nobody will shoot you down. If you've no big opinion of yourself, well, I'm a better singer than he is, better preacher than he is, more confident than she is, if that thing's there and somebody shoots you down, boy, you'll go down like a massive balloon that's been shot.

But then there's a responsibility in not having anything. Remember the man came at midnight and he knocked on the door and he says, Hey, hey, wait, hurry, come on, a friend of mine has come on his journey and I have nothing to set before him. I frankly feel that's where the Church of Jesus Christ is tonight.

We haven't anything in the average church that the man in the world wants. Do you think we have? Well, he says, I don't know, I saw films, they go to movies like I do, and when they get browned off, they go in, they don't pray, and they go here and they go there. Surely one of the outstanding features of the New Testament church was, again, that when you entered church it was totally unpredictable.

You know, we say, Lord, have your way today, and we mimeographed last Wednesday in the church office what he has to do Sunday morning. It doesn't make sense. It doesn't to me, I'm sure it doesn't to God.

But Paul is saying to this young man, listen, Timothy, show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Now, in chapter 4, and verse 1 he says, I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick in the day that is appearing. You know, he's writing to a guy that may be not more than 18 or 19 years of age.

He doesn't, he isn't muttering some nursery rhymes. Again, as I see it, a little earlier he had said, remember that the Lord Jesus Christ, he's the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, who dwelleth in light and approachable. He doesn't mention the virgin birth.

As a matter of fact, he doesn't mention the virgin birth in any epistle that he wrote. He's saying, listen, you get back, that's real. He doesn't question it, he doesn't cast any doubt on it.

He says, listen, let's throw that up the road, remember. He talks about the possibility of Christ coming in his day, he says, and he's the King eternal. Don't let somebody kind of argue, because a little earlier he said, now don't get, I don't even say so often I could talk names I won't.

Oh, we don't bother about doctrine. Oh, is that right? Like say you went down to the doctor and say, now you have some trouble with my backbone, wouldn't you remove it? A lot of Christians have had it removed, I'm sure, but why do you need a backbone? That's the support. And doctrine is the skeleton, if you like, of our Christian life, on which the flesh comes, on which the, not only the flesh comes, but the skin comes, into which God breathes.

Now Paul says, preach the word. Previously he had said in verse 13 of the previous chapter, from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith that is in Jesus Christ. Now he's not letting this fella get away.

You see, if you were brought up in a godly home, with a godly mother, godly father, godly grandfather, you'll have a lot more responsibilities. It's a judgment seat for the guy who was born of a prostitute or lived in the hell all his life and got rescued at 16 and 17. He doesn't doubt his salvation, but he doesn't have your background.

From a child you'll know the holy scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation. But you see, the word of God says you've got to work out that salvation. God makes the provision.

Again, Jude says, building up yourself in your most holy faith. Supposing the normal status quo exists, say, for 10 years. 10 years from tonight.

Maybe I'll be looking down from there. But anyhow, you might be having a meeting. How much progress do you think you'll... How much will you have matured in the next 10 years? I mean, all the resources of God are yours.

They're yea and amen to those of us who are in Christ Jesus. Now, what really got hold of me was when Wayne said, would you like to speak to the class? And actually I was thinking at that time about a class of young men that, well, many of them destined, if you like, to become preachers. And wondering what I'd do if... what I'd like if I was sitting where you are and you're standing where I am.

It was a bit nostalgic. My mind went back to 1930. I went to a little Bible school in England.

That's a good way of back, isn't it? And in 1950...1970, I went to this little school and the president came in and it was a custom there. Every time a tutor came in to teach, a brother stood there and said, rise brethren, everybody stood to attention. And they said, rise brethren, the president came in.

He said, take your seats, brethren. It's each other's. And then he said, hmm, hmm, hmm.

Are you all sure God has called you to be preachers? He said, it's a good job he did. I wouldn't have done it. He said, none of you are very promising material.

You don't even look bright or intelligent. Or may you have been traveling and you're tired. Well, that could be so.

But you see, God is going to lay hold of this young man, Timothy, and make him one of the outstanding men. And so in chapter 4, again, in verse 2, he's told to preach the word, not preach about the word. Have you noticed how often a man will stick a text up and just as though he's throwing, you know, those, what do you call them? It's not fair, you throw some circles on them, hoopla.

And all he does with a text is make it a text on which he hangs his thoughts. It's a text and he colors it with a bunch of illustrations. Now Paul says you preach the word.

I like the way it's put in the, let me see, in the second letter here, chapter 3, what is it, verse 14. You must go on steadily in those things which you have learned and which you know are true, remembering from what sort of people your knowledge has come and how from your early childhood your mind has been familiar with the Holy Scriptures. Now, preach the word, be instant, in season, out of season.

This is rather archaic, isn't it? So Phillips translates it like this. I solemnly charge you, Timothy, in the presence of God and of Christ, who will judge the living and the dead. Now, look, can you think of what would happen in your church at home if your pastor, every time he preached, had an audience with God before he stepped on the platform, faced up to the eternal judge, said, Lord, I know that I'm going to stand before you one day and what I say will all be played back.

There's going to be one great, you know, visual tape played in eternity. And often I cringe at this because I spill a lot of words out usually, and one day every word that I've said, every word, whether it's good or bad,

I'm going to give an account for in that great day. I talked with a famous preacher recently.

He said to me, you know, I'm getting scared about preaching. I'm getting scared about handling God's money. I've suddenly realized every dime, every dollar that comes into my particular fellowship, I am going to give personal account before God.

Every utterance I make, everything I write, I am going to stand there before millions of eyes and give an account to God. Well, I think that's pretty tough. Jesus Christ will judge the living and the dead by his appearing and his kingdom to preach the word of God.

Never lose your sense of urgency. Do you ever do that? You see, that's a modern translation of the instant, in season, out of season. All the way through, whenever God is ministering to you, you'll hear what you have to do.

You have to reprove, you have to rebuke, you have to exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. Now, let's take that word for a minute there, that word where Paul said again in 2 Timothy 2.15, Sorry. Study.

2 Timothy, where we are? 2.15, I can't find it here, let me see. Okay, concentrate, concentrate on winning God's approval, on being a workman with nothing to be ashamed of. Study to show thyself approved unto God.

You know what the temptation is? To show yourself approved to your church. To show yourself approved to the crowd you've just ministered to. One of the most wretched things that can happen in a minister's life or a person's life is success.

There are more people who can stand adversity than can stand prosperity. You know, as soon as we get snubbed and rejected, man, we go to the Lord in prayer. But when somebody says, you know what, I never thought I'd hear Spurgeon preach to you tonight.

I didn't know Spurgeon had risen from the dead. Man, you were super. Oh, boy.

When you got to the second part there, and if you're not careful, that subtle thing which one old saint said is the last thing to leave the human heart tried, and the first thing to come back, it's the last thing that we're cleansed from, it's the first thing to come insidiously creeping back into us. You see, Paul is warning this man about purity. He talks about having a pure heart.

He talks about having pure doctrine. He talks about the people that he works with being pure. I think there's nothing more the Church of God needs tonight than a cleansing, a baptism.

Look where he says, in verse 6 of chapter 1, Now, that may seem unnecessary. You see, lots of people say, I remember when I was saved, I remember the fill of the Holy Ghost, and, oh, well, I've had my ups and downs, and ins and outs, but on the Lord's averages, I'm doing okay. But that doesn't please God.

Now, you've got to stir up that gift of God that is in you. And you have to stir it up by knowing, again, the Word of God. You have to preach the Word.

And the Word of God, the same apostle says, is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. By the same thing he says in that same text, you see, the letter killers. You know, I hear people say, well, nothing ever happens at our church without every word our preacher preaches the truth.

He does. Yeah, he preaches the truth. Well, that's not his job.

What's he going to do? Preach error? No, he's to preach truth, but he's to preach life without truth. Because he says the letter kills, but the Spirit, he's the Spirit of life. He's the one that came into Adam when he looked very handsome and charming and had lovely eyes and perfect fingernails, but he's stone dead.

And then the Spirit comes out and he stands up. He's like the army in Ezekiel's vision. There's an army, there's a stack of bones like this and the prophet speaks and bones go in every direction and then instead of a stack of bones, you have an army of skeletons.

They must have looked very nice. And then after that, flesh comes on the skeletons. They must have looked gorgeous.

And then after that, skin comes on the flesh. Now he did that by command. Then he says, come wind of God and breathe.

We sang last Friday night, Edwin Hatch's lovely hymn, breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew. You expect to get up tomorrow morning and take one deep breath, say, it's only nine o'clock tonight, let's go somewhere. That's outrageous, it's foolish.

Isn't it the same thing to try and live on one, I remember Norman Grubb years ago, a kind of scolding, mourning devotion. You know, I scratch my head, hey wait a minute, I just bought, what did I bought, Oswald Chambers, greatest book in the world, outside of the Bible, some people think. My utmost for his highest, and here's Norman Grubb saying, you don't need a devotional period in your life.

Of course you don't. Not if you're making it a substitute for walking with God the rest of the day. It's not enough to say, well I read four passages, I even memorized a passage of script, I got a real breathless reading, I read streams in the desert, and skirts in the wilderness, one or two other books, and you know for the first hour, boy did I feel good, and then whoop, I remember preaching at a conference in Canada, and I went back to my cabin at the side of the lake, there's a brush popping the door open, and a lovely young lady came out, I won't be long, I'm just finishing, go ahead, I've time.

I said, how are you? She said, well, not too good. Oh, we had a marvelous prayer meeting this morning. Yeah, yeah.

I didn't know, I was on the top of a mountain until about 11 o'clock, and then, ooh, ooh, ooh, I started going down, I felt nervous, I felt fearful, I felt this, I felt that, I felt the other. What do you think? She said, well, of course, you're only one beat from death. Now, what did I say to her? I said, what time did you pray? Oh, this morning, six o'clock.

It's twelve o'clock, have you had a snack in the morning? No. Drink of coffee? No. I said, now you've got six hours without eating any food, and you wonder why you're beginning to lose some of your energy.

It's got nothing to do with your spirituality. A hamburger will restore you to glory. You see, the enemy always comes on this level, on the level of your nerves, or the level of something, and it's got nothing at all to do with your spiritual life.

Again, what do you think the folks are doing in concentration camps tonight, living in stinking holes? God's forgotten to be gracious, why doesn't something happen? You know, this is the time when you're in school. Look, you'll be a miser with your time. It won't come, again.

Every time you look at the clock, you say, God will forgive me, but that thing won't. Well, God can do anything. Confession.

Okay, I'll kneel here, and you all lay hands on me, and pray I'll be 25 years of age. Do you want to do it? I just love to go to my wife's shop when I went in, handsome and charming as I used to be, and say, where are you from? Are you a relative? I say, darling, aren't you? You're a rejuvenated husband. I went up there, and I couldn't get in with you for the mission, so I went to a gaffee, and they prayed, and noticed I had no gray hair, and my teeth are all beautiful, and oh, boy, is it great.

Now, there's no such thing as that. You see, the slowest thing in the world, as I said to a pretty well-known preacher the day that came to me, I said, you know, you see the object is there, you see maturity there, and you say, from here to there. Is it going to take me 10 years? May take you 15.

Is God in a hurry? Why didn't He make the whole world on one day? Wouldn't have strained Him, would it? He could have said, do this, let that be light, let that be this, let that be other. There you've got it. And coming to maturity in the Christian life is extremely difficult.

Because if you have any vision at all, you see the man, the woman you want to be, and you know there's going to be some bumps, and as Dr. Torres used to say to me, God uses the hammer, and the file, and the furnace. And He doesn't ask you which one you'd like, you know. Because you'd all be carving around the file, the furnace would be going out, none of us would want that.

And isn't it wonderful to know that God is not capricious? All that Paul is saying to this man, look, did any man ever have more bruises than the apostle? Did any man ever get beaten up more than the apostle Paul? He confesses, look, Timothy, I'm at the end of the journey, I fought a good fight, nor do you know it's been a pretty lousy trip. It really has. I've been in jails, I think, for everybody.

Why didn't the Lord let some of the others go in jail? I've been in more jails than I've been in palaces, I've been before more criminals than I've been before kings. Why, this guy turns it all around, he spits in the eye of a devil, if you like, and he says at the end of Romans 8, you know there what I've gone through, tribulation, distress, I'm in peril, nakedness, for perils of the deep, perils of mine own countrymen, and he goes on the list, and then he sticks his shoulders back and says to the devil, I want to tell you something, there's neither anything in height or depth or any other creature, so Lucifer, go scratching round hell and find something if you can, and you know what, I'll beat you every time, because I have on the whole armour of God, because God's word is riveted in my heart. You don't think a man wrote an official like the official to the Romans, and those other amazing officials, and he's going to collapse under it? I read the other day where a writer said, you know, when Jesus comes to the end of the 16th chapter, John, he's very burdened, he's very heavy, he's overcast, he's going into the 17th chapter to pray that enormous prayer, it would be a tearful prayer to, hey, hang up a minute, hang up a minute, you've got it wrong.

If a man's going to step into a garden and pray the greatest prayer ever prayed, when he's just said at the end of that chapter, fear not, I'll overcome the world, do you ever see a man in tears because he's won a fight? You're the guy that's crying that got punched around. If he prays, says, none of these things move me. There's only one thing that will keep you anchored, put your anchor there down into the rock of Christ

Jesus.

I remember years ago in the Bahamas, I went to teach at a class and there were pretty wealthy folk and they had their yachts and whatnot, and one fellow came in late, he had a gorgeous lady with him, and they said, oh, we didn't know you'd be back tonight. Yeah, we tried to make it. Oh, it was a terrible scene.

We got off Six Shillings there, you know where the Atlantic comes in, and whoo, we were almost going over. He said, never forgot this phrase, he said, I have a great respect for the sea. I have a great respect where all those currents meet at a place called Six Shillings.

And he said, I realize it's typical of life that suddenly some gust comes up. See, Paul doesn't say, look, just before I die, I want to make you an outline. I want you to be at my death, by the way.

They're going to lay me out on a beauty rest mattress and stick a syringe in me and I'm going to have a painful death. We didn't even know he had that. He's facing a man called Nero, one of the bloodiest tyrants ever.

And then he says, I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in reproaches. Can you imagine all the angels gathering around and saying, you know, this is the man that's been dying nearly every day. They've announced his death, you know, like Mark Twain says, it was a bit before time.

And he's been with wild beasts and we've been waiting, waiting, waiting, but finally he's coming. He wants this man to be steadfast and unmovable. A preacher that came in from California today to talk with me said, you know, it amazes me that so many people can sing bright with their hands up and you know, I'll follow the ear, I'll do this, and nothing shall move me and all the rest.

He said that next day somebody said, you know, boy, she's got a rotten hairstyle. Do you hear what she said about me? A saint like me, I've got a rotten hairstyle. Could be worse.

She could say, you have no hair and then you'd be in trouble. But she was offended. Isn't it easy to, have you ever found out how brave you are in prayer and now you start shaking when you get outside? You know, when there's nobody to lean on, when there's nobody watching and you suddenly feel as though, God, where are you? You're as far off too.

Paul says, in the translation of Philips, he says, now I remind you, stir up the inner fire which God gave you at your ordination through my hand. The fire. Our God is consuming fire.

Jesus says, I'm going to bring fire on earth. The other day, Martha, that cold day, you know, it's going to go down to 20, Sunday they tell us. Martha put up a log, a log in front of the fire.

And Martha said, dear, you need more coal. I said, well, no, darling, I was going through to my office so I grabbed hold of it. Not long, not long, because the far side near the fire, it was burning.

Ooh, did I let go of it. Never knew fire could be so hot. And, you know, there's only one thing that's going to move the frozen church of God to Christ and to the power of the, again, the natural fire of the Holy Ghost.

It was God's symbol over the tabernacle as a pillar of fire. God himself is a consuming fire. Jesus himself said, I came to baptize you with fire.

Jesus said, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus said, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. You see, this man is turning out, he doesn't want to turn a weakling out, he's turning a man that's mature and strong and grounded in the word of God and if all the gates of hell open against him, well, that's okay.

He says, you stick by the word of God, it's quick and powerful. Did you ever go half dead to pray and read the scriptures and suddenly, boy, it came to life. I did the other day, I felt washed up, I felt, oh, mercy, I need to go to bed for two or three days.

And I went and read the scripture, man, it just hit me like that and I felt as though I touched the 10,000 volts, you know, and I even felt physically quickened. The word of God is quick. You see, if you just read the letter, it doesn't mean a thing, but if the Holy Ghost gets hold of that letter and starts supplying it, brother, you're in for trouble.

I love reading biographies of preachers and I've been reading something of Jonathan Edwards, maybe the most maligned, misinterpreted man in American history of preachers. Lived back in the 1600s. He preached that amazing message, you may remember, sinners in the hands of an angry God.

The other week, I met a young lady on the TV. I like to hear TV interviews. This girl had no brains and she was hardly beautiful.

Well, she was beautiful, but it went down the sink right after the show. You know, she was saying, oh, people today wouldn't listen to Jonathan Edwards. He was cruel.

He was a tyrant. He said, God will take your head and turn it off and the blood will run down into hell. Oh, she was really going... Oh, wait a minute, sister.

You didn't read the right thing. Jonathan Edwards says that there were times when he was convulsed in prayer. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, my good old friend, died a few months ago and he said that the greatest, most colossal intellect that America has ever had was not in our scientists, but it was deposited in the body of that man that preached sinners in the hands of an angry God.

He touched his heights of spirituality. He touched his revelation of God's holiness. And he says that man admits that when I saw the terrors of hell... Oh, no.

People say he was saying wicked things. He wasn't saying wicked things. He was saying what the Bible said.

The wicked shall be turned into hell and nobody wants to hear that anymore. I quote... Oh, that's not for today. Well, only the goodies are for today, huh? But I read something else about it.

He said it was a lovely morning and so I decided to ride to a certain place. The sun was shining. I dismounted and I looked at the lilies of the field.

I looked at the stream. I heard the birds sing. And in our language he put his hands back and said Oh, my God, how great thou art.

And he says tears gushed from my eyes as I said your holiness. You feed my soul. You ravish my soul.

You touch me where no human being could ever touch me. I feel your love burning in me. And he says tears overflowed.

And I wasn't embarrassed about it. Now, I said this before and I'll say it again. I am convinced if God the Holy Ghost is in a meeting in the way that he wants to be in sovereignty that every meeting we go out of we go out of it either broken in tears for a lost world or we go hilariously happy that we're soon going to be in eternity with him and we snap our fingers the robe of flesh and the devil's persecution trials and hardship and say what? It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

Five minutes in eternity we'll all wish we'd carried bigger burdens. We'll all wish we'd been more faithful in prayer. You see, you've got your life.

It's your life. Isn't it? James says what is your life? What is your life? Can you answer it in one word? A success? Failure? A puzzle? Bewilderment? Have you found the answer? It doesn't say what is life because nobody on earth knows what life is. It says what is your life? I mean what level are you living it on? Are you living it in the spirit the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus? Oh, I say I like to read the stories of these great preachers.

I think of Chalmers when he lived in I don't know 1600 William Scullery used to go to his church up in Scotland there and for ten years he preached on the Ten Commandments. I don't know whether he took a year over each commandment. And that terrorism God got hold of people.

Oh, they got shaking. He was there there again. as they said of Jonathan Edwards somebody said he'd lived in hell all the week which wasn't true but he perceived it.

After ten years of preaching that he suddenly wakened up and said there isn't a better bunch of professing people in the whole of Canada. They're not saved true enough. But I'm preaching that they're breaking the commandments secretly they're committing adultery secretly they're cheating secretly they're lying secretly they're doing this and there wasn't one of them doing it.

And then I suddenly realized that God's argument with them was not that they were bad You remember the elder brother when his prodigal brother came on he said to his dad so this is the kid, huh? Huh? You want me to come and have some supper with him? Not on your life. You see I've been keeping tabs on him he's been to the worst nightclubs he's lived with harlots he's spent all his money his name stinks he's dragged our family name through the gutter you want me to come and show... Not on your life. He's bad, bad, bad.

Have you ever noticed the father never once said he was bad? The father said this my son was dead. That's the offence to people who are outside of Jesus Christ. He may have a colossal intellect he may be one of the top figures in IBM or something else and you say to that man you know actually you're alive emotionally you're alive intellectually you're alive socially you're alive in other areas you have your club life your sports life and this life and yet there's an air in you which is dead.

And Jonathan Edwards says I see that black spot in a man and I see him as he goes out of church so neatly dressed and I say listen you've got something that's gonna sink you into the lowest hell forever and ever and ever. I don't find any TV preachers weeping over people going to hell I find them weeping because we didn't get our money last week and it's really bad you know a million dollar organ won't be here unless some of you sell your homes or something. Boy I wouldn't give him a dog biscuit.

Oh look do you know what came to me so simple supposing you were fishing in the Gulf you go fishing fishing and blech you don't get anything. Somebody says you've got a very good boat and you've got the best gear do you know why you aren't catching fish? You want to get all those little mobs there that used to be brass and now they're something else and all those joints on your on your necks where they where they swivel if you had them made of pure gold you'd get a lot more fish. You say well that's stupid.

Well a man told me today my home a certain church I go to not always but I go down in Houston I've got a ten million dollar church expansion they're going to have a bowling alley in the church they're going to have a restaurant in the church oh mercy mercy time to put gold fittings on. And maybe thirty four one of the students that came in from the college in Dallas said to me you know Mr. Irving or some of our guys they say you're too severe one of our sweetest teachers is always saying remember brethren you catch a lot more fish with honey than with vinegar yet pardon me you catch a lot more flies with honey than with vinegar. I said hey hold it a minute are you going to a seminary for three years to learn how to catch flies? What's catching flies got to do with catching men.

The great revivals have been gone Jonathan Edwards was the key actually in that revival when God swept through that area when you had to make cross and for hours pray I may be right something I've done King Campbell do I used to get up at five in the morning and pray with that old guy great old fella I said to him one day what about the night you came home and your daughter came to you she was at University of Edinburgh and she sat down and said ah Debbie you preach at the big conferences but you never see revival why?

Well that's not the best thing to hear just before you go to bed is it?

I mean you know when you've had the seeding revivals when you've seen whole cities rock with the power of God and he said I'd just say good night and I went to my office I think he said at ten o'clock at night and five in the morning you're still prostrate on the rug beating it and saying God bring back that anointing I don't want to be number one speaker in the greatest conferences I don't want people reading my books merely I want that something which cannot be bought with money that which is the prerogative of God that endowment which will shatter every other petty idea I have in my life and he said I was still praying at five o'clock in the morning and I heard a pip going across the room and he said he put a hand on my head and said oh God don't let my daddy go insane and she waited

about five minutes and said oh God don't let my daddy go insane and a third time she said the same thing and he said after she said it suddenly that stream came from heaven unimaginable power woken and contrite not hanging on to a reputation not thinking I'm a somebody study the lives of some of the great preachers we actually have a book Walking with the Giants it's very good anyone listening to the Giants it's amazing to find out how these men were well they were moved by reading church history they were moved by reading Bible histories of revivals we poor unfortunate things the worst thing we can say is we've never seen revivals sure we've had blessings sure we've had some meetings better than others sure your church hasn't been open 24 hours a day for six months have it and people

stopping from the night shift to pray in the morning or people praying before they went from the night shift such a burden you see we don't need to find the philosophy we don't need to find a system God isn't going to honor it that's why Paul is nailing this man all the time yet you're going out to a task come on let me remind you what's against you Nero's against you the world is against you the Jews are against you the Roman Empire is against you but you may stand in awe of it but don't let it paralyze you isn't it much

easier to sing sweetly in a meeting the greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world and when you get in a jam tomorrow morning you say yes it meant everybody else in the class but me and you're going through the jam you're going through the tight spot you

see you need to go down into the word of God put some tags on certain scriptures there and every time you come into a certain situation you know that that scripture is there you've proved it they used to tell about a lady I don't know if she actually lived in our town because preachers don't always tell the truth but this preacher used to say this old lady had the Bible and all over it she had T and P not A and P T and P but one day he said I'd like to read this scripture before I leave you and he picked up the Bible he said I see on this page T and P twice on this page three times on this page I don't quite understand what it means he said oh it means pride and truth pride and truth you see either God is above the Bible in the sky away there in eternity or else he's living in

me by his spirit and his word is quickened the letter killeth yah I remember hearing the same Duncan Campbell saying that he had a dream one night there were hundreds of people standing and a man was preaching with a Bible in his hand and the devil was at the back of the crowd with a big smile on his face and he said I went up to him and said Satan aren't you afraid of this preacher he said no he said why not he said he's causing scripture yah he's causing the cataclysm yes he is he's really fundamental yes he is why aren't you afraid because he said there's no anointing on what he said ooh the word of God is quick you get it something like that in the Welsh revival when God came I went through that village years after old grey haired Pentecostal preacher said brother I remember the night

the Holy Ghost came on this community and the church normally was locked up and the janitor had beaten open the gate and people put on the Sunday belt and they went to snapping church from 7 o'clock till 9 and nobody moved nobody sang a hymn nobody read a scripture they just ha went home and they did the same the next night and they did the same I don't know how many nights people said why do we count I don't why do you count I found a a strange drawing like a magnet pulling me into into the church that's what I said then one night a girl 11 years of age stood up in the gallery and you know what she did she preached the most astounding sermon you ever heard on your life on Daniel's image no she didn't what did she do she stood up and sang with a sweet little voice of an 11 year old gentle

Jesus we can now look upon a little child keeping my simplicity so for me to come today and of course she was full of understanding the whole congregation involved and that whole community was ready to give a revival see the mystery of revival is you can't import somebody to bring it you can't denominationalize it you can't advertise it you can't nationalize it you can't personalize it say send this out to me there's a mystery the mystery of God working and suddenly he comes like that usually I'm the most unlikely person how Paul was working with a group down there in tell me in Argentina and they'd been waiting on God for a while and for three nights for a meeting just went like a rock just went as tight as could be and the priest pastor said this God doesn't want another night wasted

we've sat here two nights and something happened will you obey God and a little lady got up and she went to the communion table and tapped on it three times and as soon as she finished the third tap God came back and the city was still in the mood that they had their meeting in the ball park which happens to be 300,000 and it was at night afternoon and they didn't say come round here let's lay hands on you and squirt some oil on you they just said be healed if you've got this and when they went out at night they sent a truck round the ball park picking up crutches and braces people have been wearing and all kinds of things just that mysterious breathing of the spirit of God you see our strength our strength your strength

and mine in combating Satan is not my intellectual it's all of your

knowledge it's knowing God sure, but I know God through His word and I rest on His word and feelings are no feelings God has said it Jesus said it is written that's all there is to it that's it that's it God has said it He did it He doesn't work by my timetable He works by His table now Paul says I'm going to finish I'm getting out of here I'm going to my eternal home you're going to carry the Lord and you'll be amazed what love there is you're going to have to meet demons principalities powers rulers of the darkness of this world and the only way you'll get through is to buckle on the whole armour of God and all these great exceeding precious promises and when Satan comes is what Jesus did to them at the temple cough cough it's wonderful you know that we have every one of us a lady said

I'm sure Dr.

S.B.

Meyer has been preaching in a big church in England and he preached on Jesus he said this little old lady came up and as he came down the pulpit she came to him and he was going to turn to somebody else and she pulled her sleeve and she said isn't it wonderful you have a whole Jesus and I have a whole Jesus I don't have to share him with you there's an awful lot of wisdom in that he's made unto me wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption I mean if you don't know where the key is how can you open the door if you don't know where the scripture is how can you shoot or fire it out to the enemy for not to be short comers but to be over comers through him we're living in the toughest age I almost dread going into this year the forecast is well it's right around the end of

February we're going to march it will be the roughest march in a hundred years storms are going to blow the country is going to be ripped up unemployment still I think it all comes down somebody said the other day that already up in Michigan fellows are going into the fields at night and killing cows and cutting legs off and taking them home because they can't get meat they can't afford to buy unless there's a turmoil we'll see the biggest riot we've ever seen this summer the premise of our day is mediocrity who any of us are there too much to like oh no we're not to be fanatics we couldn't be the fanatics anyhow what is it about that well you know there's nothing more precious in the whole world than knowing what the world has done a man came to see me hundreds of miles away he said

we've got it clear from the law you ought to come to our conference you can do this and that together I said well somebody had it clear from the law I had to go to India and preach to 50,000 people in that summery week and somebody in the Caribbean says you're to come down here and have a talk with the Virgin Islands and the English people said we need you here in the summer and then we need you to go to Switzerland and then we need you to go to Germany what do you do you live in fear oh yes I'll come please give me the dates I'll be there if I die on the spot what has gone on for you something entirely different from anything you've thought before maybe I have one thing I'll be back I'll have to do it to leave home this year I'll have a good stay I may have a mistake I'm afraid I might I

have to go to Montgomery this weekend I don't know it's not a good place but I promise you don't like it what used to be glittering fly-through do you know where I'm going do you know where I'm going actually they're coming in to preach with Billy Graham in New York isn't that wonderful if you're talking about that 25 years I haven't slept from tonight till I preach you know Tom every night I'll be walking in the bedroom saying this is the Lord I don't want to make a grammatical mistake an exegetical mistake an exegetical mistake I've been in Memphis and I don't think it's one of them you just have to give me a little portion of

spirit even if it's seven give me a little portion of spirit isn't it nice to be a writ of opinion isn't it nice to walk up in the little chapel how do I heal

this soul Paul big shot he preaches to so many he's got a big chapter he's got a big chapter what about that little lady in St.

Louis today And yet people go in and say, we want to minister to her and every time we go in she ministers to us. She radiates Christ, she radiates love, she radiates sweetness. You can't get to her.

Is God only going to reward us all with His love? He's going to reward us for having a nature like His. Having a heart like His. Having a love.

As with Wesley, thy nature, greatest Lord, in part, come quickly from above, write thy new name upon my heart, thy new best name of love. Timothy, hold fast to that which thou hast. Timothy, remember your background, your parents.

Timothy, remember He's coming soon. He's not going to be whipped and kicked down the street. He's coming in unimaginable glory and majesty.

He's coming with that thousand of His saints. You're going to hear the greatest gala music band you've ever heard in your life. And oh, mustn't it be wonderful? Oh, you don't think so? It's there, it's laid up for us.

You talk about investment, it's like investing a dime and getting a thousand million dollars back for it, isn't it? Just one little life you have, that's all. And it will soon be past. And only what's done for God will last.

Don't forget the fact that. And when I am dying, how glad I shall be if the last of my life has been served out for me. Father, we thank you for the privilege of being vessel.

Gold or silver or clay, or whatever it is, we thank you for it. It's a great master's house, and that's what matters. One day the last shall be first and the least shall be greatest.

Oh God, we pray that we'll be so active in your word that nothing will shift us from tribulation or distress or opinions or criticism or slander or adversity or sour opinions or being pushed around. Let's be wedded to Jesus who never fails. Jesus who is always pure, always holy.

Oh God, help us to live in holiness by the Holy Spirit in Christ. We will pray to you. Amen.

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