

To Live Is Christ, to Die Is Gain

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life that magnifies Christ, as exemplified by the Apostle Paul, and calls believers to total surrender and selfless devotion to God.

Duration: 1:07:21

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 9:1, 2 Corinthians 5:1-6

Topics: "Martyrdom"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher talks about the unpredictability of the Holy Ghost and the power of the word of God. He mentions a church that typed out a notice for the Holy Ghost to read on Sunday morning, and the choir's attempt to sing despite challenges. The preacher emphasizes the need to not be moved by troubles and trials, referencing 2 Corinthians 6. He challenges the audience to declare themselves as living sacrifices and to magnify Christ in their bodies. The preacher also mentions the story of Madam Guillen, who endured great suffering for preaching the gospel.

Transcript

Not to the man of Galilee on the dusty roads, but the one whom Paul calls even now. Before the final coronation we remember he calls him the blessed and only potentate, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Lord we bless you tonight for your majesty.

Who are we to stand in your presence when the elders fell on their faces? Who are we to keep silent when those cherubim and holy beings have not ceased? From the very day you ascended to heaven till now they have incessantly called holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. We would say with with you tonight, Lord of all beings thrown afar, thy glory flames from sun and star, center and soul of every sphere, yet to each loving heart how dear. Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn, our noontide is thy gracious dawn, our rainbows thy rainbow's arch, our mercy sign, all save the clouds of sin are thine.

We thank you again as he says before thine ever blazing throne we have no lust of our own. We're glad Lord Jesus tonight you have no competitor in our lives. We've given them up, good, bad, indifferent.

We thank you that Satan himself has nothing to fascinate us with. Everything about his kingdom is corruption and death. We think now of the powers that be of earth meeting together in Europe and Lord they've very little power, maybe as much as the children playing in the yard here.

The power belongs to God. We believe you overrule in these things. We think of how quickly earth's proud empires pass away.

200 years ago the most feared man in the world maybe was Napoleon, he's gone. 50 years ago, 40 years ago the most dreaded man was Hitler, he's gone. But we thank you as the Hebrew writer to the Hebrews thy throne oh God is forever and ever.

Lord we're glad nobody can dethrone you. Lord Jesus you've no reason to back down, you've won every victory already. We don't have to ask you to defeat the devil, you defeated him.

Help us to enter into your majesty, help us to be joint heirs with Jesus Christ. I'm convinced Lord America is sick tonight because the church is sick. The church is sick because the preachers and deacons are sick.

We need you to come as a healer, not healing flesh but healing hearts, wounded spirits, broken minds, discouraged people. Sweep over us tonight in this house. May we be able to say it was good that we went to the house of the Lord, that we didn't see this man or hear Raven, we heard God.

We came face to face with new realities. As the old hymn says, we used to sing it beyond the sacred page, we seek thee Lord, our spirits pant for thee, thou living word. Our job is to come with a thus saith the Lord, whether they hear or whether they forbear, whether they will listen or reject, that makes no difference.

For 10 years I labored under a self-made delusion, that's a horrible thing. Oh it wasn't theologically wrong, I'm never that, you know that of course, but anyhow. It was a delusion.

I thought I found the secret of Paul's motivation. In the first book of Corinthians chapter 5, I'm going to skip through this very quickly, wait a minute, I think I got that wrong. Second book of Corinthians chapter 5, here's the first thing in his theology.

We know if our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. That's number one rung on the ladder of his theology. The second rung of the ladder is verse 10.

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. I thought the source of inspiration and power, why this man was able to out-preach everybody, out-fast everybody, out-pray everybody, out-reach everybody in missions, was due to the 14th verse, where he says, the love of Christ constraineth me. But I don't think that's right.

I think I was wrong. I believe secret of his life is given in the verse that we read in Philippians 1 and verse 20. The last part, that Christ may be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

In other words, at any cost, by any road, let Christ be magnified by my body. Paul is the best example of his own theology, and so he should be. Again, a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

I can't listen to a man who preaches one thing and lives another. If ever you think I do, you come and challenge me about that. Paul was everything that he preached.

He says here, Christ must be magnified by my body. Do you remember what Romans 12, 1 and 2 is? You should do, you should memorize it. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye

present your body a living sacrifice, not your brain, not just your eyes, not just some part.

You cannot be departmentalized sanctification. They all must go on the altar. And don't anybody fool you that the fire falls on the altar.

It doesn't. The fire falls on the sacrifice. And the reason why you didn't get consumed with God was that you wanted just a section of sanctification.

That Christ may be magnified by my body. There's an old hymn that says something like this, let my hands perform his bidding. Let my feet run in his way.

Let my eyes see Jesus only. Let my lips speak forth his praise. All for Jesus, all for Jesus.

All my being's ransom powers, all my thoughts and words and doings, all my days and all my hours. That's it. Totality.

No reservation. And once that creature is on the altar, it's lost all its rights. Just like when a man was on the cross, he had no rights.

He had no civil rights. Nobody could get a petition to get him off that cross. He had no religious rights.

His priests couldn't get him off. He had no family rights. Once he was named to that cross, he had said goodbye to the world.

He'd had a total divorce to it. The trouble today is we ask people to come to the altar, pray the sinner's prayer, and they go straight to hell after praying it. Because it doesn't save anybody.

There has to be repentance. That's a dirty word in evangelism today. And if there's a word that's more dirty, it's restitution.

Go put right. Remember the man in the scripture who says, if I've got anything by a wrong deed, I'll pay fourfold back again, that Christ may be magnified by my body. The other day I tried to preach at our little fellowship, which has moved down to Van now, on the Apostle Paul, and I used the letter E, and I said his life, it was a very exciting life.

He wrestled with wild beasts at Ephesus. It was a very expensive life. It cost him all things.

It was a very expensive life, because it comes right down to where we are right now. Let me change the figure here, or the word, and describe his life under the letter P. That Christ may be magnified. This man says, for me to live is what? Christ.

Not for me to live is to preach. Not for me to live is to write more epistles than anybody else ever wrote, which he did. Not for me to out-pray everybody, but for me to live is Christ, while ever I'm here.

So I say that he says that Christ may be magnified under the letter P. The pattern of his life magnified Christ. It was the most selfless life ever lived after the Lord Jesus Christ himself. The pattern, he lived so closely, he says you follow in my footsteps, and when I get to the judgment seat, I'll be accountable for the way you live.

I would to God every preacher in the country did that. The pattern of his life, the preaching of his life, worries me I'm under. Every time he saw a man, it didn't matter whether it's black or white or yellow,

Greek, Hebrew, or what.

He says I'm a debtor. I told somebody, I think it was today, I thank God I have no debts. I have, I have a consuming debt.

I'm a debtor to every man in the world. I heard C.T. Stokes speak once, what a fellow he was. You know, he was consumed with a passion for teaching.

He wrote this phrase, my daddy cut it out and had it stuck up in the house. I used to carry it in my Bible until I memorized it. If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.

Very simple, very profound. He's a debtor to every man. You know, on that Damascus road, you remember that he was blinded.

You know what? I don't believe he ever got his eyesight back. Physically, yes. Spiritually, no.

He was blinded to everything that everybody else was reaching for. His social standing, his religious standing, his national standing. I'm of the tribe of Benjamin, the seed of Abraham.

Boy, he's got two good things going there. A Pharisee of the Pharisees. My father was a Pharisee.

Therefore, I inherit certain special rights because of that. And he says, yet I counted them all, but dung, he becomes almost offensive. They stink like manure, all your honors that the world has.

Forget it. You can't charm him. You can't get him to step one degree out from the straight and narrow path that God has designed for him.

He preaches and he says, woe is me if I preach not the gospel. Did any man ever preach it better? Did any man ever write more profoundly about it than writing here in Philippians, which this epistle, of course, is an epistle of joy. I don't think there's any sin mentioned in it.

Galatians is different. Romans, of course, is the backbone of his writing. So he magnified Christ by his preaching.

He magnified Christ by the pattern of his life. He magnified Christ by his poise. We used to live in the ancient city of Bath in England.

One day as I got down to the city square, I was at the side of the old cathedral. The foundation of that cathedral, Abbey, was laid in the year 444, quite a while ago. A Rolls Royce pulled up and two young ladies got out, teenagers.

Oh boy, I just stood back and watched them. Come on you boys, you're thinking wrong. They weren't sex symbols.

Do you know what they were? Two very dignified, cultured, beautiful young ladies. One about 19, I would say. The other about 16.

And the way they strode across that square, it was paved, and got to the door and someone walked in. And I suddenly realized who they were. Our present queen and their sister, Princess Margaret.

There was something royal about them. Paul talks about the Bereans. Didn't he say they were more noble than other Christians? Come on, in God's name, are there first class Christians and second class Christians? They were noble, they were dignified.

They've got the very character of Jesus Christ. I'm speaking about Paul now. But immediately those young ladies walked out.

I sense they've been trained, maybe walk with books on their head, you know the stunt they do to make them walk upright. They walked gently, they bowed courteously, and then they went into the Abbey. I've said this before, I may be wrong, but I'm going to say it again to be sure I'm right.

I really believe with all my heart, the day that the Apostle Paul was killed, that all hell had a day of. Keep the letter P in your mind, what do we say? His preaching is superb. The pattern of his life is a total immaculate example, impeccable spirituality and morality.

Well then, what are you going to say now? I'm going to say this, that he magnified Christ by his poise. He magnified Christ by his patience. He magnified Christ by his persecutions.

Poise? You can't knock him off his balance. He's the most unique man in history. This man went to heaven for a vacation.

Says so in the book, don't look so staring at me. I'm not making it up. Is that right, Matt? Third heaven.

Oh, thank you. He's the theologian of last days. He doesn't know it all yet, but he knows a good bit.

He'll know more after tonight, of course, but anyhow. He went to the third heaven. He was known in heaven.

He was known all over Asia Minor. He pulled down the devil's estate. He destroyed kingdoms.

He had dominion. He had poise. He had dominion.

He had power over what? Over demons, over death, over disease. Isn't that something? He was the despair of the devil. All hell had a vacation.

How do I know? Because one day there's a man with demons in him, and some preachers jumped on him, and the devils have a lot of self-respect, you know, and they jumped up and beat the preacher up. I think they did right, because he was a fraud. Do you remember the testimony of the demon? The demon said, Jesus we know, and Paul we know.

There's no higher honor than this. I don't care how big your head gets, and how many degrees you get, and how far you travel, and how big your church is, and how many people you talk to on TV. You can do that and still be a fraud.

Matthew 7 says that men are going to come to the very judgment seat of Jesus Christ, and say, we prophesied in that. Oh well, we cast out devils in that. Oh well, we raised them.

And Jesus is going to say what? I never knew you. Well, doesn't he know all things? Yes. Why did he say I never knew you? He didn't say, I never knew your ministry.

I never knew you in a love relationship. You never kissed my feet. You came for power to preach.

You came for power to strut, and show your ability. You came for power to do the miraculous. You were swelling with your own ego.

I never knew you. You know, when judgment day, when rewards are given out, I expect some old washerwoman to go right up to the front, and be rewarded before all these big TV preachers. Preachers strut.

Praying people never strut. Have you heard my latest record? No, and I don't want to. Do you want to have one of my cassettes? No, thank you.

I never found a man who put his prayer. People have asked me to put my prayers on tapes, not on your life. That's my most intimate moment with God.

I'm not going to sell my prayers for sure. The demons said, Jesus we know, and Paul we know. I believe every time Paul moved, hell trembled.

They never knew what he would do is the most unpredictable. We know what happens when you go to church. They give you notice coming in at the door.

They told the secretary to type it all out for the Holy Ghost to read on Sunday morning. The choir will sing, or try to sing anyhow. Then Miss Jones will gargle to music.

Oh, of course she's got her own background music. You call that music? You could get as much music fastening a cat with its tail in the door. Is this man given to exaggeration? Do you think? Let me read here.

I'll find it in a moment. Come on, is he exaggerating? What is he saying? He says, none of these things move me. What things? I'll find it for you.

You get a lesson in patience tonight. Still can't find. My memory won't work at the moment.

It will come up in a minute, don't worry. I'm looking for that list of all these troubles and trials and tribulations. Where is it? Corinthians? Come here.

Oh, 2 Corinthians 6. That's not the one I wanted. Pardon? 11, that's right. Now it rings a bell.

11, thank you. 11, 22 with me. Thank you.

Now this is a man that says, none of these things move me. Get the rundown on it, will you? Verse 22, Hebrews 11, 2 Corinthians 11. 22.

Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a full. I am more. In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes. What's five forties? Two hundred minus five. A hundred ninety-five lashes with a whip that had about ten lashes on it.

And at the end of each lash there was a spike made of copper, which is more dreadful to tear the flesh than steel. He received a hundred and ninety-five till his back was like a plowed field. Verse 25, thrice I was beaten with rods.

Once I was stoned. Thrice I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I've been in the deep.

That must be thirty-six hours. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils of the heat, in perils of the city, in perils of the wilderness, in perils of the sea, in perils among us false brethren, in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often. Beside those things that come upon me, upon me from the outside, daily, the thing that hurts me, he says, is not ripping my flesh to bits on my back.

That's common to me. I've had that five times. Forty stripes, minus five.

Five times over. Three times I've suffered shipwreck. Three times I've been stuck in a corn.

Everybody's allowed to throw a rock. Do you think he walked tall and dark and handsome? I'm sure he dragged a leg. I'm sure his face had been slit.

I'm not sure his eyes were straight. I know nothing about him physically or psychologically, but this I do know he was never, never, never far away from his own theology. And he talks about us being rooted and grounded in God.

There wasn't a stone that hell could manufacture that could blow him off his spiritual course. Lash him until he's in anguish. Makes no difference.

You know, when I read this fellow, I preached in a certain church in, I'll just say Chicago, in 1950, 50, 50, 50, 51. After two weeks of preaching in that church, the renowned preacher, who's world famous and has written dozens of books, said to his deacons, you know, when Ravenhill finished preaching last night, after 10 nights of listening to that guy, I don't even know if I'm saved. Well, I haven't manufactured any theology.

All I've done, I put lots of pieces together regarding what the Christian can endure for Christ's sake. He isn't trying to get on the Guinness Book of Records or something. He isn't trying to impress God, because you can't impress God.

He isn't trying to impress men, because man's opinions don't care a hill of beans anyhow. He's wedded to the will of God. Beat me to death, I'll get up and go again.

Lash me, starve me. He says, I know how to be abased and how to abound. I can understand his abasement, reading this stuff.

I can't in the world, reading the scripture, find out where he abounded. You know, one of the worst days in your life will be better than the best days in his. He couldn't go in the room and turn the air conditioning on, because it's a bit too warm.

He couldn't get another sandwich. He couldn't help himself. He kept his body under.

He kept the body under control. It's right to eat. It's wrong to be a glutton.

It's right to sleep. It's wrong to be lazy. It's wrong to exercise your body and keep it fit, but it's wrong to become a competitor, as far as I'm concerned.

This man is one of few, along with Isaac Watts, who wrote the hymn, who could really say, my richest gain I count but loss. And what? Poor contempt? On all what? All my pride? What are you to be proud of? The

first time I went to Australia, somebody said, don't make a common mistake when you go there. You go to America and you say, well, who are you? Oh, my name's so and so.

Do you know the biggest ship that ever sailed? I sailed the Atlantic about 20 times on the United States boat, on the Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth. And one day, as I pondered, I realized the biggest boat that ever came across the Atlantic was the Mayflower. Everybody's grandfather came over on it anyhow.

It must have been about three city blocks long. Everybody likes to boast of the petty green America. I'm partly Scotch, I'm partly this, I'm partly that.

Wanting to become thoroughbred English. But anyhow, let's forget that right now. But when you go to Australia, don't say, well, who was your great-grandfather? Do you know what it was? It was a criminal colony.

They shipped all the criminals from England to Australia. They know they couldn't swim back anyhow. 12,000 miles.

And there were no boats. Somebody said, well, I'm in Australia. Well, your granddad came over from where? Ireland.

Did he get shot? No. He said he died of throat trouble. He did? They hung him.

But it's a nice way to disguise it. He died of throat trouble. You don't ask a man his pedigree when you go to Australia, if you ever go.

This man takes his colossal, staggering pedigree that everybody envied. The tribe of Benjamin again, the seed of Abraham, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He had the most colossal intellect of any man that ever lived.

You have Socrates and Plato and all the other Greeks that you like. Apart from Jesus, he was the greatest, wisest, most wonderful man that ever lived. But he says, this brain of mine, I want it to glorify God.

So again, he goes up on Mars Hill and he talks with the Epicureans and the poets and the philosophers. And they were amazed. What will this, what did they say? What was the scripture? What will this little idle babbler say? Tradition said he was five feet two, so was Wesley.

In case you're five feet two, take courage. They looked at him, these athletes. Oh, look at this little Jew.

And you know what? He's smart. Oh boy, he knows religion. Boy, he can, he has recited the whole of the Old Testament.

There are lots of Jews in New York today that still do that. And you lazy guys looking at sports magazines and sports results. No wonder you're dumb.

Make up your mind that between now and when you leave here, you'll learn so many verses of the scripture before you leave. They'll be in there until you die. Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.

Oh, he's a wise man. He can recite all the Kings of Israel. Oh, he's fantastic.

He's fabulous. And he got that admiration. And then one day he said, well, I noticed you have many altars to strange and unknown gods.

I've come to tell you about an unknown God. He not only made the universe, but one day you're going to stand in the judgment before him. And you know what he did? He's the God of all gods, the King of all kings, the Lord of all lords.

And every knee is going to bow to him one day. But wait a minute, let me tell you something. I've told you about the Hebrew system of sacrifice, he says.

I've told you about the high priest. He's a superior edition of every high priest. He's greater than Melchizedek.

And he runs through the whole thing. And he said, you know what he did? He did what Moses could never do. He did what all the blood of bulls and goats could never do.

As the poet says, not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain could give one guilty conscience peace or wash away one stain. But Christ, the heavenly Lamb, he abolished the old system. The Lamb of God did more than the hundreds of thousands of lambs that were slain before.

And he said, I'll tell you, he went with a cross. He died on that cross. And they buried him.

And three days after he rose up, oh, what? Boy, that's a new one. We never heard any religion like, well, I'm telling you that Jesus Christ is superb and superior to every being that ever lived. He died.

And he rose again on the third day. What did they do? They showed him the gate. Get out of here.

You fascinated us with some of your teaching. But when you expect us to read it, that's incredulous. That's impossible.

We're not idiots. We're scholars. We're philosophers.

Well, isn't that the trouble with lots of our scholars today? Lots of our theologians. I read you that horrible record there. And yet he kept his poise.

Oh, this is way out. Well, I'm way out, as you know. You don't want anything way out, don't come.

I'm not trying to make you incredulous. I wonder if I spring, as it were, any surprises on Jesus Christ today with my life. The early church was a very wonderful church.

It had the first martyr, a young man by the name of Stephen, who we consider was less than 20 years of age. And Jesus looks down from heaven and he sees this little fellow here being tortured. He goes through all the shame and humiliation and degradation of being an outcast in a very, very religious, prim and proper religious society.

And finally, they take him and they stone him, put him in a corner. And what happened? They thought they'd knock his eyes out. What happened? He saw more than anybody else.

He said, I see heaven opened. Isn't that great? Don't nod your head, because the Lord may let somebody stone you this week so you can see heaven opened. Oh, his theology must have been wrong.

I see heaven opened and the Son of God is standing. No, he isn't. He's sitting at the right hand of the Father.

I suggest to you, if I could use a word, I don't like to talk about excitement. I'll use it with a holy connotation here. I believe that when Jesus Christ saw in that young man the trouble of his soul, that Jesus jumped up in excitement from his throne and said, there he is.

This is the pattern. The only way to live is to die. And no problem, we won't die.

I was turning over in my mind again today, the sixth chapter there of Isaiah. When Isaiah saw the Lord, what did he say? Oh, my prayer life needs a bit tightening up. Lord, I need a little bit more zeal.

Lord, I need a fresh Bible study. He is a man of God who had had a total revelation in the first chapter. He has another revelation here.

But the revelation was not out, it was in. It was up and in. It was a vision of height he saw God.

It was a vision of depth he saw in himself. It was a vision of breadth he saw the world. It was a vision of deity he saw the holy being.

It was a vision of depravity he saw in himself. It was a vision of duty he saw the world outside. It was a vision of holiness he saw holy God.

It was a vision of helplessness he saw inside himself. It was a vision of a lost world he saw hopelessness. I quoted that Quaker hymn tonight.

Greenleaf Ritchie wrote that gorgeous hymn, Lord of all being, thorned afar. Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn. Our noontide is thy gracious dawn.

Thy rainbows arch, our mercies sign, all but save the clouds of sin are thine. Lord of all life, below, above, whose light is truth, whose warmth is love, before thine ever blazing throne, we have no lust about it. What happens? The nearer you get to God you'll see your own corruption until he removes that corruption.

Read the story of Job and then finally he says, woe is me, woe is me, woe is me, I'm unclean. Peter had known Jesus. He comes near to Jesus and he says, depart from me, I'm a sinful man.

Now I don't believe you have to live there permanently. I read part of a new book today that made me sick. You can just as well be a Mohammedan.

Or you can, he can deal with your sins of the past. He can take them all and throw them in the sea of his forgetfulness. But you're gonna have incorruption.

You're gonna have corruption inside till you die. That's a lie from hell. You say, well many of the things inside of me don't die.

For the simple reason you won't let God crucify you. That's right. The key of this man's life again is, I am crucified with Christ.

That's why he has a passion. He's been so liberated, so emancipated, so educated by the Spirit. He stands before kings and kings tremble.

Isn't that something? The guy hasn't got a penny to his name and then he stands before a king who is a vassal king of the Roman Empire, a gripper and a gripper says, you almost make me want to be a Christian. He stands before Felix, another wart. He had a war test as a wife.

What did Felix do? Felix can put men to death. He can dip them in kerosene and put them on the walls of his castle and light them up at night to illuminate the sports that go on at night. But he trembles before a penniless man.

God pity us. I wonder how many people will leave church this Sunday and go home not to sleep for two or three nights. We do that when the Holy Ghost starts an earthquake in your life and he shows you a cell in your body of corruption where there's deception, where there's lust, where there's greed, where there's anger, where there's pride and you feel you're just a pile of manure walking around.

What did this blessed man do? He didn't say, Lord, help me, I need to be better. He says, woe is me, number one, I'm undone, I'm unclean. You cannot minimize depravity.

It's more than of the earth earthy, it's of hell hellish. People say, well, you can't, you need a little bit of sin to keep you humble. I'm not facetious, but I've heard people say this.

You need a little bit of sin to keep you humble. The logic is wind it up a lot and be real humble. Tell me one sin that will do you good.

Tell me one sin that will glorify Jesus in your life. We're not preaching against sin anymore. Preachers don't talk about iniquity, they call it infirmity.

I don't watch TV very much, hardly ever, but the other day I listened to the news and right on came an advertisement for beer and it said, buy your beer here and do this, that and the other. Wait a minute. It was saying about the quality of beer.

Right after that, they said, well, of course, we recognize that some of you are very bad drinkers. Of course, alcoholism now is a disease. Dear Lord, am I that dumb? You tell me that men go behind the bar and ask for a bottle of disease? Do they sit in the bar and say, hey buddy, how many quarts of disease have you drunk tonight? We're excusing sin on every level.

There are no adulterers anymore, they're just having affairs. There's no iniquity, it's just infirmity. There's no wickedness, it's just weakness.

But listen, when you change the name of it, it's the same damnable thing anyhow. My sister and I didn't get on too well together often. We would quarrel.

My sister would go to her mother and say, mommy, Len told a fib. You know what a fib is? It's a lie. But to children, it's a fib.

Or she'd be more kind some days. She'd say, well, Len told a story. And then when you go to school, you learn that you're a liar.

When you go to college, you learn you're a prevaricator. When you go to university, you're guilty of terminological inexactitudes. So watch out, Ronnie, don't get new words.

A lie is a lie. There are no white lies, they're as black as hell. Sin is not weakness, it's wickedness.

It's not infirmity, it's iniquity. Adultery is adultery, not an affair. The Church of Jesus Christ is cursed with adultery right now.

The little boy on PTL, he should know. He said adultery is as bad in the pulpit now as in the pew. That's something.

I would like to have heard this man, Paul, preach. Oh boy, I'm not sure I could have stood up to it very much, but it must have been awesome. It's consuming passion.

It's to live for Jesus Christ. I don't care if you skin me. I don't care if you put me in prison.

I don't care if you stone me. I don't care if you throw me in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. And I stay there 36 hours without food.

And ships almost tear me up at night as they come. I don't care. So long as Jesus Christ is magnified in my body, Lord, experiment on me.

Dare you say that? Dare I say that? Experiment on me. Not for your sake, for my sake. I don't have to prove myself to God.

He knows me better than I know myself. What he has to do is to prove me to myself. I'll tell you what I found out.

You can't live wrong and pray right. Prayer is the most demanding exercise in the Christian life. Paul magnified Jesus by the pattern of his life.

Fastings and wilderness. Travel and as much traveling as traveling. He magnifies Jesus by the pattern of his life.

He magnifies Jesus by his preaching. He magnifies Jesus by his purpose. This one thing I do.

And you know what? He magnified Jesus. God gave me this. Just come in the building tonight.

He magnified Jesus by his pain. Why? Because he had a thorn in the flesh. And great prayer warrior that he was.

Only heaven will reveal how this man traveled. Only heaven. The psalmist says, store my tears in thy bottle.

Notice how many times Paul says, I pray with tears. There is no other way to pray. Not for the lost.

At one time I was ashamed. I would break down in preaching in the biggest church in our city at that time. But I got over that.

Store my tears in thy bottle. He glorified Jesus with a pattern life. He glorified Jesus with the purpose in his life.

This one thing I do. He glorified Jesus with the pain in his life. I had a thorn in the flesh.

And he identifies it. It's a messenger of Satan to buffet me. And I prayed three times.

Come on. You pray once and expect God to enter heaven of all the archangels just to answer your prayer. Some people think if they have a hangnail there ought to be a healing meeting in the church.

Come on. Here is the greatest man. The man that made demons to tremble.

And God does not answer his prayer. Why? Because he's trying to develop his character. That's why.

Why didn't he answer your prayer? He's trying to develop your character. That's why. He may wait.

He'll hear. Remember, delays are not denials. God is on hold in something in your life.

So what? You should be honored that he has you on hold. I got such a lift as we were driving up, I think, in the car with our dear friends from Minnesota. And it suddenly flashed in my mind.

I'd been thinking of these peas here, you know. He glorified God in his preaching. He glorified God with a pattern of his life.

He glorified God by his poise. He was never disturbed. He was never unmoved.

But notice he says none of these things moved me. He did not say none of these things hurt me. Oh, if you get filled with the Holy Ghost, oh, you'll never feel anything.

We'll tell your folk to bury you. You'll rot. The place will stink if you stay around much longer.

He talks about being steadfast and unmovable and always abounding in a stinking place where it's running with urine and human excrement and rats and filth. It's from that hell hole that he writes rejoice. And again, I say rejoice to people who are living in comfort.

And he's living like a slave. He's living in terrible, rotten, filthy, lousy conditions. He's ridiculous.

Is it in the fourth chapter there of Corinthians? I won't look back there, but oh, don't look because I might disturb you too much. What did he say? He said, I glory. I glory in what? Answers to prayer.

I glory in raising the dead. I glory in doing miracles. I glory in going before kings.

Boy, have I a record. No, he says, I glory in tribulations, in necessities, in reproaches. Shall I ask all of you who like to be scorned and rejected to raise your hand? If I take anything here, I'm reading the King James Version.

Romans 9 verse 1, I say the truth in Christ, I lie not. My conscience bear me witness in the Holy Ghost. Come on, when you finish praying, when I finish praying, can I say, God, I prayed in the Holy Ghost? Oh, that's praying in tongues, not necessarily, maybe.

John Wesley and his team used to pray from 12 till 4 in the morning when there was no heating in the room. And he said, we got up rather tired at 4 a.m. And we stood together. I stood with John Newton and John Fletcher and William Cowper, all the hymn writers were there.

And he said, at 4 in the morning we sang, Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. After a night of prayer. A massive theologian, a distinguished scholar even before he was saved.

And yet his life is hid with Christ in God. And he pours that life out in intercession. I lie not.

My conscience bear me witness also in the Holy Ghost that I have great heaviness and continuous of heart. I could wish myself a curse. Someone else has translated that.

I wish I could be the scapegoat. Remember the scapegoat in the Old Testament? They put all blood on it. Then they put all the sins of the nation on it and drove it to the wilderness so it wouldn't come back anymore.

And he said, if need be, put the sin of my generation on me and drive me away from everybody. Drive me out of my church. Drive me out of my fellowship.

Drive me out of my nation. But let me live in that union with you. I don't mind being accursed.

Why should I be ashamed and afraid of being accursed? I'm going to live and reign with him forever and ever. And when I look back, I'll see all those places where I nearly gave in, where the devil nearly got me bamboozled. And I struggle through in prayer and I travel.

And it's going to open up just like a great big diamond shines in the sun. You see, this man had learned to keep his feet on earth, but his heart in heaven. He saw Christ crucified every day, but he saw a lost world.

He never lost his balance. That's why I say again, he had his point. I could wish myself a curse.

I'm going to write on this sometime. Listen to this. The people of Gromny against the children of Israel.

Pardon me, children of Israel are grumbling against God. In Numbers 11, they cried for manna, he gave them manna, and they're grumbling. Numbers 11, verse 6, now our soul is dried away.

There is nothing at all. There's nothing but manna before us. And they're crying to go back to Egypt, the leeks and onions.

And they complain, verse 12, complaining, have I conceived all these people? Have I gotten them? Verse 13, when shall they have flesh to give to these people? For they weep unto me, saying, give me flesh, yes, for it will be. I'm not able to bear all these people alone. It is too heavy for me.

If thou deal with them, thus kill me. Come on. Are you prepared to be killed? God to kill the plan of your life? God to kill your social life? God to cut you off? Kill me, I'm willing to die.

Before my church, before my relatives, before demons, before angels, before, I'm willing to die if I can do the mean and channel of bringing salvation to these people. Turn back to the other prayer, which is a strong, for a minute, in Exodus 32. Exodus 32 and 31.

Exodus 32, verse 31, And Moses returned unto the Lord and said, O this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now if thou will forgive their sin, dash, he's choked up with tears, he can't finish it. If you will forgive their sin, if not, blot me out of thy presence and out of thy book.

I've said, I'll say again to the risk of being misunderstood even, God does not answer prayer. He answers desperate prayer. Are you suggesting there are no tears on the face of Moses? He said, if need be, cut me off for eternity, out of thy book, blot me out.

Or in the other verse, if need be, kill me, if I'm a stumbling block, if I'm holding up blessing, if I'm holding up revival, cut me off. Paul says, Here I am, I lay everything on the altar. I'm prepared to be cursed.

Literally, I'm prepared to be damned if need be. Some of you may have read Madame Guion, if you haven't, you should. Dear Madame Guion, that lived in a prison with walls 30 feet thick, that's about the width of this room, in the Bastille in France, I think it was bombed during World War II.

They took away her priest, wouldn't let her confess, they took away her Bible, they took away everything. And there she is in a place with walls 30 feet thick, precious little dainty petite French lady, with an intimacy of God that few people have had even since the Garden of Eden. She wrote a poem that said, A little bird am I, shut off from fields of air, content within this cage to lie, for God has placed me here, well pleased a prisoner to be, because my God it pleases Thee.

Could I be cast where Thou art not, that were indeed a dreadful spot. She's in a hell hole, and God is there. Could I be cast where Thou art not, that were indeed a dreadful spot, but with Thee my God to guide the way, it is equal joy to go or stay.

She had ecstasy, she had rapture, she had visions. Maybe we'll have to learn it. They can wall a sin.

Some of you young people may go to prison yet, it won't be a surprise in America. Just for preaching the gospel. They can wall a sin, they can't roof a sin.

What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sorrow, in all these things. And read how many times he mentions things in that 8th chapter. In all these things we are more than conquerors.

Near Madam Gein said, Lord, I've enjoyed your presence in this cell. It was food they give to dogs. She'd no bed on which to lie.

She'd nobody with which to speak, it was solitary. I've so enjoyed your presence here, she said. I'll paraphrase her saying, that if there's no, if heaven is overcrowded, if there's standing room only, give somebody my place in heaven, and I'll go to hell.

I've enjoyed you so much on earth, I believe I could go through an eternity in hell, because I've enjoyed all the riches in Jesus Christ. You're not going to pray a prayer like this, Lord, kill me if need be for the village in which I live, because you've been here for 10 days, or 10 weeks, or 10 years. You're not going to pray because your head gets overloaded with theology.

It's the intimacy. You see, every time I see a lost man, I say, that man is robbing, he's not only going to hell, he's robbing Jesus Christ of a useful intellect, and a useful mind, and a useful heart, and a useful spirit. I give my body, he said, I present my body a living sacrifice.

I want Christ to be magnified in my body, through my brain, which is manifest again on the mountain. Through my brain, through my heart, which he did by writing all the epistles. Through my zeal, he had more zeal than a hundred other men.

Through my poise, that I keep upright in every hellish storm. Through my poverty, I don't own a thing. Through my pain, I won't squeal, though at times I feel I'm torn up with hell inside, and God doesn't answer.

He said, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you grace sufficient to get over it, and that's better than taking it away. That's how you develop character.

Stay with it. Oh, if you're such a spiritual man, why do you have it? Boy, I was gasping for breath yesterday. I didn't think I'd make it.

I said, Martha, darling, pray. I could hardly breathe. Last year, I had some terrible attacks.

In fact, a year ago this week, I was in hospital with a heart problem, and I don't know what else I didn't have. You know, I get more and more to value life. Every day I live, there's a miracle to me.

Anyhow, at my age, I'm not the oldest. But you see, one of the things that you folk are prodigal with is time. Oh, I'm only 21.

Walk up the road, there's a guy been in the grave for 10 years, he's 21 on his tombstone. I'm 42. Well, you're halfway up the hill.

Anyhow, you'd better watch out. We take for granted we're going to live tomorrow, don't we? Have you thought once today that maybe this is your last day on earth? There's going to be one. If God calls me home tonight and doesn't give me an hour of revision, or an hour to put something wrong, or an hour to confess bitterness that I've had today, I haven't manifested it.

It's been there. It's going to be tomorrow at the judgment seat. Live with eternity's values in view.

It's the only way to live. We're so cheated by materialism. We're so cheated.

Oh, I've plenty of time. I had a grandfather. Yeah, my grandmother died at 99.

And boy, she hadn't got a grey head in her hair. I got her a share, it must be. 99, and she wasn't toddling around, she was very active.

I think Brother Dale's dad is what, 91? 91, still going strong with his wonderful wife. The only way to live without regrets is to live on your knees. To say, Lord, I thank you for this new day.

It's unblemished. I can remember at school, I don't know, Brother Dale, did you ever write on slates? Oh, mercy, you're not old enough. We used to have a big piece of slate.

Did you write on slates, Martha? You did. You must be getting up in years, dear. We had a piece of slate like this, and they gave us a piece of slate that looked like a pencil, and you wrote something, and boy, it squeaked like nice, all the time.

You'd think it was an orchestra in our school when kids were doing that. I can remember when the teacher said, now tomorrow you're going to have books. Books! I went home, I said, mummy, do you know what? They took all the slates away today.

They did. What did you get? A book. A book? Yeah, and an inkwell.

An inkwell here, and the girl in front of me had plaits, so I stuck them in the inkwell. Of course, I got whack for it later, but you know, every time I turned a new page, oh boy, was I gifted. I'd get ink out of there, and it would blob, you know, and shake it back.

I almost swore allegiance, I'm going to go right down this page next without making a blob, and I'd go like that. Oh, right on the very end of the thing. Oh boy.

I was almost afraid to turn a page when I went to school the next day. It's a clean page. Yeah, but wait till you go home tonight.

Well, is it wonderful to realize every day is a new day? Great is thy faithfulness, new every morning are thy mercies, and great is thy faithfulness? I can start tomorrow as though I'd never been born, as though I was born tomorrow morning when I get up. It's a new stretch of sand, there's no footprint in it, and there won't be anywhere I'd tread except the Lord's and mine. If any man ever lived to the total capacity of his possibility, surely it was the Apostle Paul.

He had more tribulation than a hundred church members or a thousand, but he gloried in them. He had a form, he didn't send a letter round, a petition. He went on journeys, but he didn't say, I want you all to promise me five dollars a month for the next six months.

Isn't it amazing how John the Baptist got on without a newsletter? Oh, I hope some of you young folk rewrite the record books, God knows I do. We older folk missed it. You've got a new world in front of you, you've got the most hellish world to live in that ever has been.

You wait till five years from now, see what it's like. A decade from now, see what it's like. Bible knowledge won't take you through in itself.

Reading your Bible won't make you a saint, it's got to get into your bloodstream. God has to put you on the gridiron and test you and try you, and see your strength and your weaknesses, and weaken you where you're too strong, and strengthen you where you're too weak. And if you've any sense, you'll pray that every day.

I do almost every day. Lord, weaken me where I'm too strong, strengthen me where I'm too weak. Don't give me burdens equal to my strength.

God, no, don't have. Oh, please have pity. But give me strength equal to the challenges.

You know, we're infants. If all you need is a bit of grace to get through today, and you don't like the roommate that you have or something, heaven help you. She doesn't like you anyhow.

But it's a case of getting down to the issue and saying, God, this is a new day. I don't want to leave it soiled. I want to walk in white.

I want to walk in purity. I want to walk with purpose. I want to walk with power.

I want to walk with poise. I want to walk with purpose. If need be, I'll walk in pain because you give me grace anyhow.

I read somewhere this, thank you, I read somewhere this past week, thank you, where there's a revival in Romania, that's behind the Iron Curtain. And they say that the power is equal to the power of the present current of revival in China. Someone has estimated that there are about one, what is it now, maybe 10 million young people, young people in Russia, that are meeting in forests and meeting elsewhere to pray and worship God.

You know, some of our creature comforts have become an anaesthetic to us. I used to pray with men, there was no rug on the floor. In fact, for years, that calluses on my knees, they've gone now because I pray where it's soft.

Don't be easy on yourself and hard on others, be hard on yourself and easy on others. Don't give them the benefit, don't give yourself the benefit of the doubt, give yourself, give them the benefit of the doubt. Don't be amazed how retarded they are spiritually, be amazed how retarded you are.

I'm amazed still, I mean this, I'm not fooling, not playing with words. This big shock preacher that came to me yesterday said, you know, I'm surprised how little I really know of God. I've just wakened up in about the last five or six years.

Well, to some degree that's true with me. You know, there's so much to be discovered in this book and God will reveal it to you if you'll pay the price. Somebody will think you're a fool, they're going to play ball, let them go.

There'll be no rewards for playing ball. I'm trying to think, was it David Brainerd? No, it's Robert Mary McShane says, I will not hand, no, it wasn't him either. It was, it was Brainerd who was going to be the son-in-law of, what do you call him? Thank you, Jonathan Edwards.

I will not handle anything that doesn't have eternal value in it. If I handle it, I'll turn it around to an eternal value. I don't care what it is.

If it has no eternal value, I back off from it as though it were a disease. Dear God, we're mesmerized by materialism in the church today. Majority's homes have become a curse instead of a blessing.

I try and sleep as little as I can these days. I'm not gratified that anything I possess, my possession is in friends, in wealth, in friends. Money? Keep it.

Position? Keep it. Honours? Keep them. Last year a man wanted me to go on national television three times from coast to coast.

I don't want to go. He said, think of the exposure you'll have. I said, well, I'm trying to hide.

What was the exposure when I'm trying to hide? What are the praises of men that are about as valuable as the breath that comes from the nostril, that's all. So, we're through. I'm going to challenge you, not in a soulish way.

I don't count hands, I don't count prayers. I'm going to challenge you to say to God, as you've listened to this word, which is very simple, I challenge you to say tonight, Lord, I go on record that I want Jesus Christ to be magnified in my body. Now, wait.

You sang that lovely hymn of H. G. Spafford's tonight, It Is Well With My Soul. He challenged God once. You know what happened? He lost his great factory in the great fire of Chicago, a few weeks after he lost his four daughters on a ship called the Le Havre, just off the coast of England.

From the time he made a total commitment, everything went wrong, according to people. Lost a vast fortune, maybe millions, lost his property, lost his daughters, lost everything. Do you wonder, he wrote in the second stanza, if Satan should buffet.

Boy, he'd been through the mill. But he said the thing that's the greatest thing this side of eternity. It may not be well with your banking account.

I guess it isn't if you're at last days. You'll be worse off still if you're at Y1. Don't report me.

Yes, go ahead. It isn't well with your bank balance tonight. It isn't well with your emotions.

Maybe you're torn up. Maybe you're breaking company with a friend. It's not well with your bank balance.

It isn't well with your emotions. It isn't well with your theology. Maybe you've got not got it together.

It isn't well with your family, maybe. But listen, if you can say it's well with my soul, boy, you can rub all the others under your feet. My sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more.

It is well. It's nice to have a healthy body. It's nice to have a healthy intellect.

But the supreme thing is to have a healthy soul. We're going to pray a little. Let's pray for... Do you want us to pray about this court case that's going on? It's well settled? Well, if you want to borrow money, come to last days, Monday.

They're getting the court settlement, so you'll be all right. Let's pray for these countries where they don't have the privilege you and I have. Romania, particularly, Russia, China.

And go on record. This meeting's on record. You say, everything you say goes down that... No, you're wrong.

It goes up there. Everything I've uttered, God will put it on the plate and tell me to eat it. That's what He does.

Otherwise, I'm just a parrot. I challenge you to go on record before devils which are looking onto this meeting, demons, and angels, and the world around you. I challenge you to go on record and say, Lord tonight, here I am, a living sacrifice.

And all I want from here to the end of the trip is that Christ may be magnified in my body. Let's pray for a little while.

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