

Trust and Obey - Part 2

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the necessity of holiness and reliance on God's power to navigate a corrupt world while maintaining faith and purity.

Duration: 41:33

Scripture: John 16:33, Acts 1:8, Titus 2:14, Hebrews 10:31, 1 Peter 1:5, 1 Peter 4:12

Topics: "Trust And Obey"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal story about a boat crossing the Atlantic and how it triumphed despite the odds. He then talks about the power of God to keep us through faith unto salvation. The preacher also discusses the struggles of aging and encourages believers to believe and behave according to the Bible. He mentions a man who couldn't speak during a sermon and shares a story about a wealthy person who couldn't find fulfillment. The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and the trial of one's faith being more precious than material possessions. The preacher concludes by referencing a scripture in chapter 4, verse 12.

Transcript

When it got in the middle of the Atlantic, the Atlantic played a joke, it tossed it around like a rowing boat. Boy, when I saw it, I thought it would hardly get moving. There it is.

And I knew the odds were this, that it could sink, going across the Atlantic. But it didn't sink. It came through triumphant.

But I can be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Boy, do you ever look in the mirror and feel disgusted? Your old body's getting more wrinkled, you put more plaster to fill up the holes, and it goes on. I think most ladies should be rewarded.

Do you know some of them have been going to a beauty parlors for 30 years and look at them? Aren't you glad you don't have to go for repairs every weekend? We men ought to be so grateful. You see, in this verse here, it's talking, in verse 15 it says, but he which hath called you to be, as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, in all manner of conversation, or all manner of lifestyle. Well, you know the old argument, you need just a little bit of sin to keep you humble.

Well, why not have a lot and be real humble? I've never seen a humble man who's a sinner, but he's arrogant. They'll boast how much they can drink. I've heard men boast how many women they've been in with in a week.

I've heard them boast how much they stole. I worked with Dave Wilkins in New York City 26 years ago when he was first standing, starting. My dear boys did the course.

My dear Martha and I were there. Boy, those boys some days, they were nauseating. Who slept with a woman? Who was the youngest? 13 and 14 years of age, they slept with women.

She kicked me out, so I went to the other side. I went to the Bronx. I slept with a black woman there for four years.

She kicked me out. I went to... and I said one day, hey, quit. You're not glorifying God.

You're glorifying sin. Forget it. Something should not be mentioned among saints even.

We're not to compete in our corruption. Forget the damnable stuff. He has called you to be holy.

So what? I can live in a world like this, and like that fish in the sea, I can be kept by the power of God. Kept in victory. Kept in peace in a world that's trouble.

Kept in purity in a world that's corrupt. Kept in truth in a world that's full of error. Kept in victory in a world that's full of defeat.

We're kept by the power of God, not just the power of our mind. I love that. What's that word? Let me read it to you.

You know it anyhow. Titus 2 and verse 14. You remember this? Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from some iniquity.

No? From what? All iniquity. And purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Redeemed from all iniquity.

And the opposite end of the scale is purity. So he breaks, what is in the hymn we sing? He breaks the power of canceled sin and sets the prisoner free. His blood can make the vilest clean.

His blood avails for me. I went to preach in an alcatraz off the coast of South America years ago. Instead of seats, they were just stumps of trees.

They brought about 70 men. I've never seen such a band of terrifying men in my life. Every one of those men had the most awesome record you could ever think of.

Mostly murderers, rapists, every devilish thing. I looked at them and I think if I hadn't have known God I would have run out of the place. And yet some of them even there had been born again of the Spirit of God while they were in jail.

He's able to save, Hebrews 7 25 says, to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. Because he's still living. If he stops making intercession, redemption stops.

But he's living. He's the high priest. Once he entered, he canceled every other made invalid.

Every mass in every Catholic church on Sundays, total rubbish. He's there with an eternal priesthood offering eternal life because he's the eternal son with the eternal sacrifice on the eternal altar. And the devil hates us to declare that.

And our young people don't get stirred about it. And some of you don't, I guess. But as he which has called us this holy, I'll tell you this.

The Lord Jesus Christ was given by his father a virgin birth. And the father's going to give him a virgin bride. You better get rid of your spots and wrinkles on the inside.

You won't make it. You can sing all the pretty things you like. But if you're not pure, it doesn't say without tongues.

It doesn't say without miracles. It doesn't say without ministry. It says without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.

I think Shrugget does a good job, but he's overboard on some things. As though speaking in tongues is everything this side of eternity. You know, if Jesus had changed one word, he'd have killed 10 million arguments since he was on earth.

If Jesus had said, by their gifts ye shall know them. But he didn't. He said, by their fruits.

The wonderful thing about fruit, it doesn't make a noise, does it? Boy, wouldn't it be something going through an orchard if everything started barking like dogs, or howling like, trumpeting like elephants. You know, fruit doesn't have to shout. Flowers don't have to shout.

They give off fragrance. Sure, I'd tease the women about their beauty. But the psalmist says, Psalm 45, the king's daughter is all glorious within.

There's only one way to worship God, whether you have 10 instruments or no instruments. You could whistle as far as that goes. There's only one way to worship God in the scripture.

Worship the Lord in what? Beauty of holiness. That's what rejoices him. Wesley had that gorgeous hymn, Love divine, O love excelling.

And remember he says in it, Finish then thy new creation. You see, the trouble with many of us, we got saved and we've halted somewhere between the cross and the upper room. We got so excited, we don't curse anymore.

We're not lustful anymore. That's fine. But we haven't got the endowment either.

Was it Esther? What did she have to do? She had to get washed before she'd go in the presence of the king. Not only get washed, she had to put on a wedding garment. Not only a wedding garment, she had to have perfume.

How many of our lives are fragrant with a gentleness and meekness? I can roar like a bull in the pulpit. I like to yell and shout. Somebody asked my dear wife one night, I'd had a rip-snorting meeting.

How do you live with that guy? He's like a lion. She said he is in the pulpit like a lamb at home. Well, I want to be like a lamb, like the lamb, not a lamb, the lamb.

But worship God. The only way you'll satisfy the Lord is not doubling up on your offering, or doubling up on your prayer life, or doubling up on your reading. It's when you get rid of all that corruption and he sees reflected in you himself.

Do you know what they do when a man's purifying gold? He sits there with a sieve. Gold is heavier than lead, it's heavier than stone. He puts all the stuff in a crucible, presses some buttons, the stuff melts, and he sits there and he skims off the top.

He skims once, twice, three or four times, keeps going and he skims. Then he takes the skimmer and he goes and he puts it down. And he doesn't skim it.

Why? Because it's pure. Well, how do you know it's pure? He didn't test it, I sure did. Well, Lord, how do you know it's pure? I could see my reflection in it.

Did you ever sing the old hymn, let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me, all his wonderful passion and purity. O thou spirit divine, all my nature refine. Listen, if there isn't an answer to the sin question in the cross of Jesus, there isn't one in the world.

Mohammed doesn't have it. Mohammed never rose from the dead, neither did Confucius. But Lord, we're living in a terrible day today.

There's never been more false witnesses and false preaching than today, and much of it coming out of Dallas too. You remember what Jesus said, when they say, lo here, lo there, I am Christ. He didn't say when they say they are Christ, they say when I am Christ.

When you speak of the true Christ, you cover up all the heresy. The devil believes in the resurrection of Jesus, it scared him to death. The devil believes in the virgin birth.

The devil believes every word in this precious book. He doesn't tremble. Somebody sent me a scripture yesterday, was it Isaiah 64, is it two? To this man will I look, to him that trembleth of mine.

I've been preaching now 66 years, and I'm more nervous about it in the truest sense of the word than ever. You can't have any meeting where the Holy Ghost is, but either somebody is born or somebody dies. What does God owe you? Go to hell after this meeting, that won't worry the Lord.

You've heard the message, you've had the opportunity, you've made your vows, you've been a dozen times at some of your camp meetings and others, I'll pray more, I'll give more, I'll do more, you did nothing. God owes you nothing. What are those awful scriptures, I think, brother Bracey, in the scripture, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I used to shout that at street corners at midnight, talking to crowds that came out of movies in London and other places, until I realized it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, it's to me as much as anybody else. When you get there, what are you going to do? When the books are open, it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. And go back here a minute, to Peter a minute.

We're kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, oh now you say that's what I like, boy I like a happy meeting, the pastor really got us singing tonight, I like to get my hands clapping and my feet tapping, you do. Wait a minute, that's only half the text.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, oh now, for what, a season, if need be, ye are laughing forever, in heaviness, through manifold temptation. What about our dear Indian brothers, prayed last Friday night, moved me very deeply, he said he'd been, I don't know, despondent or depressed or something, so what? That doesn't mean your spiritual life is down, that could be nerves, could be bad cooking, got nothing to do with your spirit necessarily. So now for a season, if need be.

You know, there's an old lady in England, they talk about, she was never down, she was always happy. A young preacher came from college to see her, oh boy I'll find the answer, and he said to her, could I see your Bible? She said yes. So she handed a Bible and he was going to read it, and at the sight of a lot of text she had TP, TP, TP.

What's that? Yeah, you got ahead of me. Keep quiet please. Tried and proved.

But I mean, don't you ever get into serious? Yes, yes. Well what's your favorite scripture? It came to pass. What? It came to pass? He knew Greek and Hebrew but he didn't know that.

It came to pass, though now for a season if need be. You know what, in heaviness through what? Look, there's nowhere between here and eternity where you can take a loop and escape temptation. Temptation when you're six, temptation when you're sixty.

When I was a little boy I stole jelly. My mother made the most marvelous jams, preserves, put them in a little place. I climbed up there and reached to the back, got a jar, took the lid off, got a spoon and took it.

Oh boy, oh boy. As soon as I swallowed it I thought, boy, you know my dad believed in laying on his hands, boy you could lay them on too. When dad comes I'm in trouble.

So I thought, well I may as well get hung for a sheep as a lamb. So I took another scoopful and before long, boy, there was a hole in that, you know. I tried to smooth it out, put it back in the garden one day.

Mother said, Len, I want your Len. I said, I'm very busy. Are you so busy? Yes.

Len, a few minutes after, Len, I need you. I said, mummy, I'm busy. She said, oh it's okay, do when your daddy comes.

Oh no, no. Daddy comes with that big shovel of a hand of his, he'll break me in two. You know we were in a house recently and you know a lady showed us preserves and she was gone in the other, I never stole, isn't that great to get victory over preserves? Instead of being the victim I became a victor.

These things that are temptations to the flesh, temptations to the spirit, temptations of youth, temptation of manhood, you can't escape them. What about that lovely hymn? What does it say? We're kept by the power of God. How many times have you sung it? I need thee every hour, stay now there, stay thou nearby.

Temptations lose their power when thou art nigh. The holiest man that was ever lived was tempted. What did he do? Well, to use a modern phrase, he threw the book at the devil.

You can't beat him on your own, throw the book at him. The devil says this, you say, but it's written. The devil says, well you're losing ground.

Say, listen, I've got a home eternal in the heavens. I've got a seat reserved there. Gabriel can look at it, the devil can look at it.

As a seat reserved in heaven for me, as I'm kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Greatly rejoicing, not just rejoicing. What do you make of this strange logic of the apostle? I glory in tribulation.

You don't do. You lift the telephone, ask the pastor to get it lifted off you. You see, God puts some things on you, so he can get glorious.

You'd never choose it. As we were driving up, I thought of a great man in America a hundred years ago. No, no, no, 60 years ago by the name of John Smith.

That was his real name, a holiness preacher. He went to a big holiness rally to preach, and he had a star message. Every preacher has one of those.

He preaches every time. He's a candidate. They must have his best.

They never preach the one when they're candidating, you know. They'll preach a bit of Spurgeon, a bit of somebody else, and get away with it. So here the place is crowded.

Dr. John Smith is going to speak. He gave out his text, Acts 1.8. You shall receive power, the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me. And he stood there about five minutes.

He couldn't get a word out. So he slipped off the platform. It was a camp meeting, and they had a guy there, you know, with a small buggy.

He said, please drive me to the railroad station. So he drove him about a couple of miles to the railroad station. He knew there was a train coming through at night, so he got on it, and off he went.

But what he said just before he went, I remember now, to punchline, he said, you know, you need a sanctified heart, a heart that has no pride, that has no jealousy, that has no bitterness, that has no grudges. The cry of Wesley, give me anew a perfect heart from doubt and fear and sorrow free, the mind which was in Christ in part and perfect wholeness in me. Purge me from every sinful blot, my idols all be cast aside.

Cleanse me from every sinful thought, from all the filth of self and pride. Oh, that I now from sin released, thy love me to the utmost prove. It's like he says in that other hymn I quote it part of, love divine all love excelling.

Finish then thy new creation. So the pastor said, listen, he said, I want to tell you this, you need to get rid of pride and enmity and everything else. And you know, if you really get a sanctified life, you'll have to change your address.

You'll have to put it behind mine in Psalm 119 verse 165, nothing shall offend them. You can tell when you're maturing, when you get to a place where nothing offends you. Great peace are they which love thy Lord, nothing shall offend them.

You can tell when you have no confidence in the flesh. You can tell because you can rejoice evermore and pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks. God desires one thing for us all, that's a

sanctifying heart.

Anyhow, this man said, he said, you need an experience like that, that if you get up at night with a baby, the baby's crying, you can get up. Of course, they didn't have houses like us. They didn't have wall to wall carpeting.

They had that cold linoleum on the floor, you know, freeze your feet off. He said, you can get up and walk around the bedroom with a baby in your arms and your feet are frozen. And after an hour, you can just put the baby down and rejoice that you weren't bitter about it or angry or anything.

Well, it sounded good. A couple of years after that, he was invited to the same church, the same conference and he didn't want to go. And the preacher met him at the station and old John said, you know, I'm sure I'll tremble.

I'm embarrassed to go back. That's the worst meeting ever had in my life. I preached that sermon more than a hundred times, but the text went out of my mind.

I felt terrible. When I got on the train, I hardly slept. I thought that crowd of people drove and they drove in their buggies, you know, and horseback for miles and I let them down.

The pastor said, brother, that was the greatest meeting in the history of holiness camp meetings. When you went out, the Holy Spirit of God came and some people said, look, I thought I was sanctified, but I'm not really sanctified. I get so irritable.

I get so impatient. I get this, that and the other. They marked out their defects.

He said, I went home to my wife and said, darling, that was a fantastic sermon tonight. It was past midnight we got home. And he said, for seven years we've been married and we had no children.

And he said, about six or a few months after that, anyhow, his wife said, you know what, I've got good news. What is it? We're going to have a baby. We are? Sure.

Well, he happened to be away when the time the woman went to hospital, a baby was born. When he got home, they said, well, your wife had a baby, died at the hospital and the nurse knew him and he knew the nurse. He said, my baby.

She said, just a minute. You can't see your wife at the moment. Is she all right? She didn't die.

I know it was complicated. No, no, no. Well, I want to see my baby.

Well, you can't see the baby. You have to see the doctor first. So he knew the doctor.

The George, this baby that your wife has given you is the most malformed baby I've ever seen in my life. His eyes are slanting one way and it can't make it. It's not going to make it.

And what's more, one of the nurses showed the baby to your wife a few hours ago. We told her not to and she did. And your wife's mind just snapped like that.

She's raving in that room, crying for a baby. So he went in. They allowed him to go in.

He saw this misshapen little bunch of flesh here. Went to his wife, held her hand and talked with her a little while, got her calmed down. She said, what about the baby? And he told her the story.

It's not going to live a year. He said, well, you know, in that holiness meeting last year, what that guy said, you can have the most irritable child that will wake at the wrong time and you can walk until your feet are like blocks of ice. He said, sweetheart, you look after the baby during the day and I'll do the night shift.

I've got a minister to my people. And he said, we did that. And he said, you know what? He said, I discovered after we took that baby home, that baby would wake almost like the clock striking at one in the morning.

There was no heating in the houses. He said, I walked around that bedroom until my feet were like two blocks of ice. And he said, I could lay it down.

Sometimes we would sleep in an hour, sometimes two hours, sometimes nearly three. And I laid that baby down in that cot. I never got bitter against God.

I never once got annoyed. I did everything for that child. I discovered that you can have a heart that's pure, rid of all self-interest and self-seeking.

I couldn't have done that except God sanctified me. And he said, you know what? It's been the biggest testimony in our church that we had the most misshapen baby that was ever born. And yet we've carried it for months until it died a few weeks ago.

And he said, except for that bad night you had preaching, that would never have happened. You'd have preached all your eloquent stuff and given all your illustrations. But he said, that thing stopped us dead in our tracks.

You know, God does that in our lives sometimes. I get so many phone calls from all over the nation, I can't answer a fraction of them very often. Particularly when it comes to things like that, you don't know.

There's a mystery in godliness. I noticed when we were in New York, the prostitutes had the finest babies. Some of the girls that came had terribly deformed children.

These prostitutes had gorgeous children. And they'd have two or three or four in a row over four or five years. And it doesn't seem fair.

But one day it's all going to be made plain. Okay, let's say this and wind it up. Rejoice, it's now for a season, year in heaviness, through manifold temptations.

Then what? That the trial of your faith being much more, you see, it switches from temptations. You can get over temptation in 30 minutes, maybe 30 seconds. What about the trial of your faith? I don't want to live one day without remembering there's a fellow called Ravnilo, Ravnilo or something, in prison in Russia.

He'd been there 20 years. The trial of his faith. I can't get over Solzhenitsyn.

Do you remember what he says? It was in a prison camp where urine was running down the side of him on a bed of rotting straw. The man across the other side in the prison would reach down in his ragged clothes and take out strips of paper and uncurl them and read them and roll them up and put them back

again. And he said he was the most wonderful man in prison.

But the guards beat him more than anybody else. They gave him the hardest jobs. They gave him the least food.

They made him suffer. He was a Christian. And Solzhenitsyn said, I saw there in a man a living Christ.

And when that man year after year never complained, he took those little scribble notes out night after night and his face would light up and he'd fall back and sleep. And he said, when I saw a man living the Christian life, that made me realize that Jesus Christ is alive. The trial of your faith.

We have a friend who's quite wealthy. They had a baby. The poor little thing was born with Down syndrome.

He's plenty of money, has a ranch, has everything. And his wife's a lovely lady. This baby came and they thought, oh, he's an athletic fellow.

She's fine. They'll have a doll of a baby instead. It's terrible to look at.

About four years later, they went all over the country, asked specialists. It can't happen again. It's not possible.

This is one in 10 million cases. Go ahead, have a child. They had one.

The same thing happened, except it was a girl, a boy instead of a girl. And there he is with all his money. He can't spend it.

And they have to take two children. They don't like to take them out. Well, that's something, again, money can't buy.

And it's a trial of their faith. Other people say, well, you go to a little Pentecostal church in town. How in the world, why didn't you all get together and fast and pray and eat? Well, they laid hands on it and did all kinds of things.

But there it is. And sometimes you can't explain it. The trial of your faith is much more precious than the gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire.

Let me look at one scripture and read it and finish. I think it's chapter 4, verse 12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which will try you as though some strange thing happened to you.

Come on. What, is it the end of the 16th chapter of John where Jesus says what? In the world ye shall have tribulation. That's a promise, as much as law I'll be with you always.

Again, why isn't he relieving people in other countries? Dear God, we're overstuffed. Again, the sin of Sodom wasn't merely sodomy, the sin of Sodom was pride and fullness of bread. They're strangling us.

From the very moment that Nixon put his finger up and said, America's planted an eagle on the moon. From that very time, we've gone downhill. Is it Habakkuk, who is it? Which of the minor prophets says it? Though you set your nest among the stars? Obadiah, Obadiah.

Though you set your nest among the stars. You see, what we need in this country is not a new government. We need a new rulership, a holy rulership, a new church.

It's too late for a denomination to be born. You know what I'm craving? I crave it. I have met before God.

I'm craving to see a move of God that nobody will dare stick a label on it. It's not Pentecostal, it's not Methodist, it's not somebody, it's the work of the Holy Ghost. You can't describe it any more than you can describe the color of God's face or some other attribute of God.

Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, rejoicing as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding great joy. Now, in the next chapter, 5 and verse 8, be solemnly vigilant for thee, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walking around, seeking whom he devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your breath and that are in the world. You see, people in the world get tempted and tried as much as we do.

They get the heartaches, they get the headaches, they bury their dead, but they've no hope. We have a glorious hope, a resurrection, indescribable glory forever and ever and ever. Not only do we sing he shall reign forever and ever, but we sing that we shall reign with him.

All flesh shall seem together. I read it today in Isaiah, all flesh. Again, this ridiculous man, I glory in tribulation, in necessities.

Boy, I run away from necessities, don't we? This isn't really necessary. It's God is shaping your character. Here you go to Italy, they'll show you what they call it, paetta, that marvelous carving of who? Was it Michelangelo? Leonardo da Vinci, I would imagine.

Anyhow, they'll show you the great artwork. They'll show you Michelangelo's most amazing works. Do you know what I think the most amazing thing was? One day he ate a peach.

When he ate it, he took the stone out and he carved the stone. It's one of the rarest things he ever did. You can't see it a mile away.

It isn't exhibited in all the books of the world. And yet he took that very, very little stone and carved it. And it's priceless.

Our son, Dr. Phil, is working at the Smithsonian Museum. There's a little bit of a girl's pinafore. You know the old-fashioned pinafores girls used to wear? Modern girls don't wear them.

And it's got little holes all around the bottom, all that kind of stuff. And it looks like a chocolate stain on it. The Rockefellers couldn't buy it.

Nobody else could buy it. Do you know why? Because when they took, what was it, Abram Lincoln, as they carried him out of that theater, they passed a little girl. If you like, and I hope you are, and have all the gifts, and that's wonderful, you'll still get temptation.

You'll still get fiery trial. You'll find a Judas in your life. I remember the first time in a Christian Mystery Alliance meeting, they were singing, Oh, to be like thee, blessed Redeemer.

Boy, were they having a time. And I thought, do I really want to be like him? Do I want forty days in the wilderness? Do I want Gethsemane? Do I? Or do I want a gentle Jesus, meek and mild, in a storybook? Do I want God to refine my character? Oh, thou spirit divine, all my nature refined. What does it say? It says, God spared not his own son.

Well, if he didn't, if I claim to be a son, is he going to spare me because I whimper? I'm spoiling my own character. He's working something in me that will be marked out in eternity, if I can take it, if I find sustaining grace. You know, as I say to my class often, five minutes inside of heaven, we'll all be ashamed.

We'll all wish we'd prayed more earnestly, fasted more earnestly, witnessed more, been more zealous in preaching. Five minutes inside, but it's all over. Therefore, we better read this word.

Dear Mrs. Wesley used to say to her children, there's two things to do with the Bible, believe it and behave it. Very simple, but very difficult. But he's able to keep you, kept by the power of God, through faith and to salvation.

I can be kept as pure in a world like this as that fish can be kept without salt getting in. God can sustain me like he hangs the moon on nothing and hangs the world on nothing. And all he's looking is for us to be exhibitions of his grace.

He wants us to be living epistles, that when people don't read the book, they read your life and say, how did that fella get over that difficulty? How did he get over that betrayal? And sometimes God doesn't take the pressure off. If I can steal, as I usually do, another 30 seconds. The first time I came to America, I was out in Pennsylvania.

And we'd been in a meeting and it was just after nine o'clock. And as we came out, the pastor said in a stage whisper, there's a man coming up behind you, take a look at his face. Don't turn around, don't turn around.

So as the man came, I turned and said, do you know what, he had the most gorgeous face ever. His face, it looked like a little schoolgirl, those Irish schoolgirls with rosy cheeks. And boy, he looked marvelous.

He said that man was courting a girl, I don't know, 30 odd years ago or something. And he'd been courting that girl a while. And then he went to a meeting and they asked for total surrender.

They sang a hymn, here I give my all to thee, friends and time and earthly store, soul and body thine to be, only thine forevermore. And he said, when he came out with the girl, he said, you know, darling, I'm not going to Bible school. Pardon me, I'm not going to get married.

We're not getting married in six months. I'm going to Bible school, I'm going to be a priest. He said, no, no, no, you can't.

I've told my friends, you've got to, you've got to go through with it, go to Bible school. No, no, no. The Lord says, suspend the wedding, go to Bible school and get married after.

She was so bitter. Well, everybody in the small town knew they'd split up. They didn't go to church together.

And here's this guy, she spread the rumor. The reason he threw her over, she was pregnant to him. And sure enough, she was pregnant.

And she had a baby. And he would know it. Well, this is 50 years back, no blood tests and whatnot.

So everybody believed her story naturally. Even in the church, they believed her, though he said he was innocent. For years, he was the outcast in that small town.

Then one day she was driving in her car and she had a crash and she was mangled. They had to cut the car up to get her out. She asked, sent for pastor so-and-so, they sent for the pastor.

And she said, you know, you know so-and-so, Jim so-and-so, yes, he wasn't the father of my child. But I was so determined, I thought he'd be embarrassed and he'd say yes. But she said, he never touched me at all.

It was somebody else that fathered that child. But she smeared his life for about 25 years. And he suffered that.

But the man had the face of an angel. They said he has a glorious disposition. He's never angry.

He's the most tolerant, loving man in the whole assembly. But look what he went through. And sometimes that's the only reason God, there's something God does with the rod, he can't do with the blood.

Now I believe in instant purity. I do not believe in instant maturity. It takes you years and years and years.

He applies the rod, he loves me, correct me, whom the Lord loveth, he chastens. I talked with a woman on the phone yesterday, my dear Martha and I. Last year at this time she was worth millions. Lived in a huge mansion of a house, had beautiful cars, had BMW and Fleetwood cars, I don't know what else, there were about four or five cars in the yard, everything beautiful.

She hasn't got a penny today. Do you know, she called a certain pastor in town and he said, I'm so sorry about your calamity. She said, pastor, this is the most beautiful thing that's come into my life.

He said, what? What are you talking about? You've lost your home, you can't have a servant, you can't have, what do you mean? You're just trying to say three cheers to Jesus, you know, I don't understand it, I'm mystified now. She said, listen, I want to tell you, I would not take everything back if I had to yield all that's happened in this year. Friends have criticized, ridiculed, scorned.

You know, sometimes you discover the finger of adversity, the finger of scorn can do more than the fist of adversity, but make no difference. Do you want, the only person in the world, you might think I'm corrupt, I'm this, that, the other. Put it on the front of the New York Times, Ray Mill runs around with women, he steals money, he's this, that, put it on the New York Times, but please send me a copy because I like to laugh too.

You see, nobody can change God's opinion of me except me. Let me tell you again, this is one of my words of wisdom, reputation is what men think I am, character is what God knows I am. Don't spend your time defending yourself, go to Romans 8, it is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth.

If God smiles on me, does it matter who frowns on me? If God kisses me, does it matter who curses me? This is only the first chapter, we're all in a primary, we're all on probation here, graduation day is there, not

for being a famous preacher or write wonderful books, but our Christ-like we are. You see, the option is this, either we're humble or humiliated. If you're sitting on the floor, you don't have to fear you'll fall, that's Luther's idea, there's no need to fear no fall.

And if you're humble walking with God, and lowliness and holiness are twins, you can't separate them. You can't be arrogant and be holy. You can't be holy and be bad-tempered.

There's purity through and through by the blood. I don't care whatever came into human personality through the first Adam, the last Adam took it out. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun, Isaac Watts wrote, didn't he? Blessings abound where'er he reigns, the prisoner leaps to lose his chains.

Then he goes on, in him, in Christ, the tribes of Adam boast more blessings than their fathers lost. The command is be perfect. You say, I can't be perfect, better read Philippians.

You say, well Paul says there, uh, not as though I had attained or were already perfect, but read three verses further on, let us who are perfect. Now what do you do? We can't have Adam and Christ, we can't have angelic perfection, we can't have mental perfection, we can have moral and spiritual perfection, we can live in the lousiest world. When God takes the veil off some of those camps in Russia, we stand there in eternity.

I think sometimes even the Apostle Paul and others will be staggered when they see what saints have been made in prisons, where they haven't had a decent meal for years, they haven't had a bath, they're crawling, their hair's crawling with lice, urine runs down the side of the prison, what inside the prisoner said, and yet on all that many of them have triumphed gloriously. The last thing, here it is, what does Paul say? There are saints in Caesar's household, that was next door to hell, and yet in Caesar's household there were saints, holy people, sanctified people, spirit-controlled people, reflecting the beauty of Jesus day by day. No standard lesson holiness will satisfy the Lord.

People say, well, I understand you like the holiness people, no I don't, lots of them I don't like. I like holy people, there's a big difference. Would you believe I know some holy Baptists, and some holy Pentecostals, and some holy Methodists? You see, the Roman Catholic got it wrong, they think holy water is a substitute for the Holy Spirit.

But when the Spirit comes in, how wonderful, when he has control. Our blessed Redeemer, ere he breathed his tender last farewell, a guide, a comforter bequeathed with us to dwell. He came sweet influence to impart, a gracious willing guest, where he can find one humble heart, wherein to rest.

And his that gentle voice we hear, soft as the breath of even, that checks each thought, it calms each fear, that checks each thought, and leads, is it Martha? And speaks of heaven. What more do you want? When everybody else is mad and angry, mad and angry and gently, that voice is whispering in their. God is a Spirit, and I'm a Spirit.

Spirit to Spirit thou dost speak. And sometimes when the preacher's preaching, if you're in the Spirit, the Spirit will be saying stuff to you that the preacher never thought of. The Lord's talking to you, so it doesn't have to wait till a dumb guy like me, or a brilliant guy like him comes.

The Spirit just does his job. What a wonderful thing. Born of his Spirit, washed in his blood, let's sing a verse of blessed assurance, and then the pastor can preach another hour.

I don't think he will. Can you play blessed assurance for us? 44 if you need it. I don't think you need it, do you? If you need the book, it's 44.

Blessed assurance. We'll sing blessed assurance first, and then we'll sing perfect submission, then we're through.

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