

Vine and the Branches

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon explores the profound relationship between believers and Christ as the true vine, emphasizing the necessity of holiness and spiritual fruitfulness.

Duration: 1:11:50

Scripture: John 15:1

Topics: "Abiding", "Abiding in Christ", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the profound relationship between Jesus as the true vine and believers as branches, highlighting the necessity of bearing fruit through divine pruning. He reflects on the humility of Peter and John, who, despite being labeled as uneducated, performed notable miracles through their faith. Ravenhill stresses that true fruitfulness comes from abiding in Christ, which requires a willingness to endure pruning and correction for spiritual growth. He challenges the congregation to seek holiness and joy in their lives, reminding them that the process of spiritual growth often involves trials and tribulations. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper understanding of the Christian life, which is marked by fruitfulness and a close relationship with God.

Transcript

called John the Plato of the New Testament. His thinking is so profound. Now that's giving you the verdict of a scholar, a Bible scholar.

Now there's always another side of the coin. This man, remember, is an uneducated man, a fisherman. And he was one of two men that went to a minister, at least they went up to the temple at the hour of prayer.

I don't know why they went, because nobody in the temple believed what they believed, and they didn't believe what the temple folk believed, but they still went to the prayer meeting. And you remember they saw this twisted man at the gate of the temple, and immediately they had compassion, and they stretched forth their hands. At least Peter did.

And John with him, and remember Peter said, look on us. Now it's very nice when you're walking so close to God, you can say to somebody, well look on me. You say, no, no, no, we say don't look at me, because you don't look at me.

Paul said you did. Paul says, what things you have seen and heard in me do, and the God of peace be with you. He was living so close to God, he said, if you follow me you'll be all right, because I'm following so close to the Lord anyhow.

So Peter said, look on us. Well that was all right. After the miracle, when the whole city was stirred, he said, look not on us as though by our power or holiness we had done this.

I like that. He didn't want any credit for anything that was done. We talked about Samson the other night, you know when he slew that lion.

That was wonderful. The second half of the verse is more wonderful. It says he said nothing about it.

We'd have written a book on it wouldn't we? How I slew the greatest lion on earth. No, no, no. He slew a lion and he said nothing about it.

And I'm looking for a revival, a real Holy Ghost revival, where no men steal the glory. When it's all given just to God himself. All right, Peter and John there, they see this man and Peter says, look on us.

Peter and John. And that caused them, as you remember, to get punished and go to prison. They upset the hierarchy of the church, they upset the the town, and they were in real serious trouble.

So they were, they were brought up before the celebrities. It tells you who were there. They made a kind of Roman carnival of this, and the distinguished people, the socialites and others were there.

Alexander and Caiaphas and all the rest of them. And then they brought Peter and John in, and they could not give any explanation for the miracle. You never can for anything supernatural.

You try to rationalize it, well it's a foolish thing to try to do. So finally they thought they would insult them. Like people today, preachers get insulted if you say they're ignorant, and they're all ignorant.

But anyhow, who knows all the mystery of godliness? Nobody. The book itself says, great is the mystery of godliness. And the older I get, the more I, I'm mystified by it.

I understand more than I did 30 years or 40 or 50 years back, but I'm still mystified by many things. Do you have that trouble? The pastor does. So where two agree, it says it's okay.

So we're mystified by certain things. And they, they looked on Peter and John and said, well the whole town's disturbed. A notable, not just a miracle, a notable miracle has been done.

But we want to warn you about this fellow Peter and John. Do you know what? They're unlearned and ignorant men. Now that was the view of the world.

Who were they? Peter and John, unlearned and ignorant. What did they do? Well Peter wrote to Epistle, that I find very, very refreshing. And John wrote again this version of the Gospels, which has been called, he's been called the Plato of the New Testament.

92% of what is said in the Gospel of John is his own. He does not repeat and overlap like Matthew, Mark and Luke. He's got 92% of new information.

And yet they look down their noses and they said, well these men are ignorant. They're ignorant. And yet the ignorant man wrote the most profound interpretation of the Gospel.

And then to add to his ignorance, he wrote the first Epistle, the second Epistle, the third Epistle of John. And then really to put the cherry on top of the whole icing, to prove he was ignorant, he wrote the Book of the Revelation, which still mystifies all the great men of the world. Now if that's ignorance, I put, raise hands and say, Lord give me a baptism of ignorance like that.

I'm a candidate for it. Are you with me? Two of us, thank you. So we're heading the right way.

We're concerned that we get a baptism of this ignorance, which is so amazing. Now that 15th chapter is wonderful. Before we come to it, I think the whole of the Gospel of John is telescoped in the first verse.

Can you remember it without looking at it? In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God. All right, in the beginning is eternity, the Word was with God is equality, and the Word was God is deity.

Now again this, this Gospel as we call it, it has many notable omissions in it. The other evangelists are very keen to record, for instance, the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now John was there, but he never records it.

He has no elaboration on it. Usually if you're at a great function you say, well you know I'm not only ready, I was there. I mean you want your place in the sun, you want everybody to know, I was there.

I mean that's why they had the thing. You know, I improved the atmosphere, I was there, that's why everybody was so happy, I was there. He doesn't bother there with that.

Read right through the Gospel carefully, you'll find notable omissions. I remember preaching in um, one of the strongholds of preaching. I was preaching at the church of a famous Baptist doctor there in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the man wrote a letter to me.

He said, I was in to hear you preach three times, I didn't like what he said one night. I said, well that's fine. I don't always like what I say.

I say what the Lord tells me, and I don't always like it myself. But he said the one thing I took objection to was that every night you emphasized repentance. Now you should know the Gospel of John, he said, was the last Gospel written, and there's no repentance in it.

It was already outdated. Well if you go to Luke, Luke says that John the Baptist began to preach. What did he say first? All that's in the third chapter.

In the fourth chapter Jesus began to preach. What did he say? On the day of Pentecost, Peter began to preach. What did he say? Right, I give you full marks for that afterwards.

He knew all the answers. Well that's right, because that's the foundation, that's the gateway. If you're going to, I think a lawyer would call that the argument of silence.

It isn't mentioned, repentance is not mentioned in the book. Well faith isn't mentioned in the book. I mean it isn't mentioned here in the Gospels, we call it the Gospel of John.

There's no list of the twelve disciples, he doesn't mention the virgin birth, he doesn't mention the first 30 years in the life of Jesus. He doesn't mention the Sermon on the Mount, he doesn't list the twelve disciples. There are a lot of tremendous omissions in this chapter.

He doesn't mention faith, is faith outmoded? He doesn't mention lepers, he doesn't mention hell. He speaks about eight different characters, pardon me, there are eight miracles mentioned in John. There are six new characters he introduces us to.

You see he's got so much to say, he only has so much space, and so he's not going to bother with what's already being said in Matthew, Mark and Luke. He's going to get over what he has to say. And again, surely it's, it's very obvious, that I can support that argument very easily, that he's saying new things, because Matthew, Mark and Luke have never said anything like this wonderful chapter of the Vine.

If you start reading into Matthew, pardon me, into John, it reminds me of the, what is it, 46th chapter in Ezekiel, where you have a river, and it says as you go in the river there's water to the ankles, and then water to the knees, it gets deeper and deeper and deeper, water to the loins, waters to swim in. Well as you read the Gospel of John, we'll call it that anyhow, for convenience, the Gospel of John. Pardon me, when you get to the 14th chapter, which you remember begins with, let not your heart be troubled.

Well it's a good thing he said that, because they were heading for trouble. He was heading for trouble, they were heading for trouble. But you see the great fire leader, the Lord Jesus Christ, is an example in everything.

I love a hymn, and part of it that says, it is the way the master went, should not the servant tread it still. You can be sure of this, anything that comes into your life, or almost anything, was in his life first. In all points he was tempted like as we are, and yet without sin.

And so the 14th chapter is deep, the 15th gets deeper, the 16th deeper, 17th a chapter I love very much, won't have time to talk to you about it. One of the greatest chapters, the chapter you feel you want to kick your shoes off, it's holy ground. A famous broadcaster was offering in a tv series recently, a picture he said, here look here's a picture of a book, I want you all to have it, it's on the Lord's Prayer.

It's the best thing I've ever read, and it wasn't on the Lord's Prayer at all, it was on the Disciples Prayer. We say let's pray the Lord's Prayer, our Father which art in heaven. That's not the Lord's Prayer, that's the Disciples Prayer.

It's the prayer he taught them to say, the Lord's Prayer is John 17. Jesus could not pray the Lord's Prayer, the disciples could not pray John 17, this is his own property. It's a very beautiful, very profound thing, but I'm saying again that John 17 I have no comparison, there's nothing comparable in Matthew, Mark and Luke to John 17 or John 16 or John 15 or John 14.

He's breaking new territory here, he's introducing us to some very wonderful, beautiful new things. Now the figure here is a figure of the vine. Don't do it right now, but when you get home remember this is John 15.

Go back to Ezekiel 15 and when you get there read it and it says this, I'll read it to you very briefly. Son of man what is the vine more than any tree or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken from it to do any work thereof? Will men take a pin to hang a vessel thereof? You cast it into the fire for fuel and the flames devour it and it's burned. Is it meat? Is it any good for anything? How is it? You go buy furniture and somebody says well this is, this is cherry wood or this is mahogany or something.

Did you ever see furniture made of the wood of the vine? You sure didn't. What good is it? He said you can't, you know how the vine is? It comes up an inch and twists that way and twists the other. The only thing you can make out of it will be corkscrews anyhow.

It's so twisted you can't use it. They don't use it to make the handles of knives. The wood is useless.

I was in a conference a few years ago and there was a man there, an oldish man and he had been in the Middle East for more than 40 years as a missionary. And he had the most amazing collection of souvenirs. I used to gather them when I went round the world.

I quit on that but I used to like to bring things for the boys for instance. This man had an amazing collection of treasures. He had a gold scabbard to a dagger given to him by the king of Saudi Arabia.

He had a camel about this height. It was exquisite. The wood was just as though it was covered with glass.

There were veins of black and so forth in the wood. And I said well that's a marvelous thing. What is it? Oh I know it's a camel but what kind of wood is it? Well this is what he said.

He found it near the garden of Gethsemane, a stump of a tree and he gave it to a man who is one of the great carvers in the East. And he said he produced this camel out of it. So I said oh I see now that that is wood of, what is it? He said it was an olive tree.

Well that wood there is red. Is that from a redwood tree? No that's from a cedar of Lebanon. Well this over here, now this is a beautiful plate.

They were all different in shape. This is this is lovely. This is myrtle.

And he said, now I said what is it? He said it's myrtle. Do you know myrtle trees only grow in two countries I understand? Palestine or Israel as we say now, and America. Which must prove you're one of the lost tribes.

But anyhow, there you've got that beautiful wood. And I said to him well now you've got this wood and that wood and that wood. Myrtle wood.

A beautiful camel made out of olive wood. Something else has been made out of the branch of cedar. Did you ever see anything made of the wood of the vine? He said no I didn't.

And what's more he said I never thought of it in my life. I never thought that I'd never seen. But I said no it could not be because the word of God says that.

Now God uses a figure so often of Israel being a vine. Vine is a very rebellious tree. If you don't keep it in shape it'll get all over the place.

Typical of us, it was typical of Israel. God says I planted thee a noble vine. Why why art thou become a degenerate plant? In the age of psalm, the psalmist says God took a vine out of Egypt and he planted it and it spread and spread and spread.

He uses the figure so often of the vine. But notice what the apostle here says. That Jesus says I am the true vine.

In the sixth chapter he said he was the true light. If I mean the sixth chapter he said he was the true bread. And then in the uh is it the eighth chapter where he says I am the true light? No it's the first chapter where he says he is the light, the true.

He always puts that qualification there. He is the true vine. This is a rebellious vine.

He is the true bread. He is the true light. I am the true vine and my father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it. Now wouldn't you think he'd leave the branch alone that's bearing the fruit? You say sometimes well I don't know what the Lord's after me for but he he corrected me in this he did something in that and he did that. Well it's the branch that's bearing the fruit that gets the knife.

He doesn't bother with the sterile branch. And he has many ways of applying that knife. And lets me use it sometimes.

But uh teaching is corrective. Teaching hurts sometimes. You see it's so easy to get out of line.

It's so easy to assume well I'm saved my name's in heaven and everything's all right. And maybe all the time we're not bearing the fruit we should bear. Now we hear a lot today about gifts of the spirit.

We do not hear as much about fruits of the spirit. We hear far less about um roman six where it says that we are to bear our fruit unto holiness. We hear less about bringing forth fruit meets for repentance.

But the word says you have your fruit unto holiness. You see we kind of figure that holiness is an option. No it isn't.

Holiness is essential. I didn't write the bible you know that. But the word of God says without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

He says that ultimately there's going to be a time when holiness unto the Lord will be on the very bridles of the horses. Maltese had a helmet then he had a band of gold. And on that band of gold it said that the priest had to have on it holiness unto the Lord.

God is holy, heaven is holy. In the old testament it says that king Saul had an evil spirit. What did he do? Well he did all the only thing you can do with an evil spirit.

He has an evil spirit and uh because he had an evil spirit he did evil things. Jesus says a man has an unclean spirit therefore he does unclean things. So if a man with an evil spirit does evil things, a man with an unclean spirit does unclean things, then surely the man who is filled with the holy spirit produces fruit unto holiness.

Now again this is not, you see when you talk about having victory over sin you get smeared always with one thing. Let me step back a minute. You know it troubles me that that people get more upset when you talk about holiness than they do when you talk about sinfulness.

We accommodate ourselves to sinfulness and we get all prickly when you talk about holiness. And if you talk about living without sin somebody smears you and says that's sinless perfection. I was talking with Ben Hayden, you know who Ben Hayden is, and I said well brother do you do you tell your your young people what sins they can commit and what they can't commit? Jesus caught a woman in adultery.

What did he say? Go and sin less. What did he say? Go and sin no more. Is that a yolkish, is that an impossibility? Are you going to tell me Jesus is a tyrant? What sin can you commit that glorifies the Lord? Now you say well we'll never be faultless.

No no no we may not be faultless, that's not the point. He's going to present us faultless before his father's throne one day. But you see in between we have a lot of faults we can correct and the Lord will prune us, he'll use circumstances because he doesn't want us blemished.

He wants us pure. He wants us to be the work, he wants us to be the vessels that he puts on exhibition in a wicked, crooked, perverse, dirty, filthy world that loves the devil and will go to hell and pay all it can to get there. And he wants to put some objects on display and say look this is what I can do in the life of an individual.

I can redeem him, I can cleanse him, I can indwell him with my spirit. What's the difference between faultless and blameless? Well I think of Thomas Cook, a very wonderful man. When I, I spent a few weeks in college and from my desk there was Thomas Cook's picture shining down on me.

He had a remarkable looking face. He went to Africa to preach, to South Africa and there were no planes in those days, he went on board ships. And one night he needed something and he walked through the saloon where men were drinking and cursing and playing cards, smoking, doing everything.

And he went through the swing doors and they said as he went through men pushed their pipes away and hid their cards and sat still like this. And somebody said that by the time he got through the saloon it was as still as eternity. Smoke was going out, cigarettes had been removed, liquor had been hidden.

And somebody said well he never said a word. Why did we do it? And somebody said you couldn't do wrong when when a man had a face like that. See the ladies think they have all the beauty.

But they said a face like that. One day a little girl was in the butcher's shop and getting some meat. She was a maid at the pastor's house in town.

And she was restless and the butcher said now do you mind if I serve Mary? Mary you're so fidgety what's happened? She said sir we're having a very special guest this weekend. Do you know they've pulled all the furniture out of the room and they've cleaned it up and she said you know they're making such a fuss you'd think Jesus was coming himself. And he smiled.

The week after she went for some meat and he said well did you enjoy your guest? She said sir, she was 14, sir do you remember what I said last week that they were making such a fuss and commotion getting the best china out, fixing the house up that you'd think Jesus was coming? He said yes I remember I mentioned that to my wife after. She said well sir he came, he came. There was something about his presence.

Let me quote one other thing here. A fellow in India got a set, wanted a set of my books and he said I, I have been publishing the the books of Sadhu Sandarsingh, the the great saint there. I said well I'll exchange a set of my books for your books.

So I got this set of books of the Sadhu Sandarsingh. And the remarkable man, a man that preached in a, in a town one day and they got mad and hostile. And they opened up an old dry well and they lured him down in this well about 20 odd feet, 30 feet.

They put the lid on and the mayor of the town carried the key of the lock on, on that pit. A great big covered hole you know with a, with a door in it. And he sealed it himself and he locked it up.

And he said we'll leave him there for days and we'll dry him out. We won't feed him, we won't give him water, he'll be in misery. Next morning when the mayor was in his office a fellow came in and said well the Sadhu has a bigger crowd today than ever.

He said he has no crowd at all, he's down at the bottom of the pit. He said no sir he's preaching. He said no it's not the Sadhu, it's somebody else.

They all wear robes and beards. It's not the Sadhu. He said sir it's the Sadhu I've heard him many times.

Preaching? He said it's funny he's got a bigger crowd than ever. The mayor said look I've got the key for that lock on my belt and I kept it under my pillow in the night. Nobody ever gets the key to that prison.

Well sir he said he's there so that the mayor marched down and there was a Sadhu he kind of waved to him. Afterwards he said well how did you get out? He said well I don't know but about four o'clock this morning I heard something go like this and I looked and I could see daylight and there was a rope there and I got hold of it and I was pulled out. And when I got out there was a rope but there's nobody there.

I just got out. And more than once he said he had angels visiting. All right he came to England.

A missionary said when you get off the boat in Liverpool you just take this card of mine and a lady there has a beautiful home, all gorgeous Victorian style. Wealthy people they will give you a home. So he presented his card and the lady opened the door, oh she, you know he dressed like Jesus, one of these white robes and his long beard and she thought it was a personal rapture or something, I don't know.

She thought the Lord had come for her specifically or something and she stepped back and she looked at him and he said your friend gave me this, oh please come in. And she showed him into this Victorian room that used to be reserved in English homes there, what they call, some call it the lounge otherwise the sitting room. And she tiptoed back to her and she said children, now that's the worst thing you can do for children, you challenge them when you do that.

Don't go near the front room. There's one of the greatest men that has ever lived in that front, now don't go near that front room. And she had asked him did he drink tea and of course what Indian people do and she got her silver service out and the tea and the cookies and everything and and she polished it all and then she was coming down the corridor she said to her maid, I'll take it myself.

And she was going down there and she heard these peals of laughter and shouting, she said oh goodness, goodness, goodness. They just went round the other side of the house and they wanted to see this strange man from India. And they were howling with laughter and she thought oh goodness, he'll think I can't control my children, she was so upset.

And she put the tray down and opened the door and here was a saddu on his hands and knees, the baby on his back, the other one leading him by the beard round the floor. And she nearly collapsed, she said oh sir children please, please. He turned his big eyes up, he said don't you think Jesus would ride a little boy on his back? What's wrong with it? See we think saints live in stained glass windows or they're perched up halfway between earth and heaven.

Well he was very down to earth anyhow and the children sure enjoyed it. You see there's a simplicity, there's a beauty. All right Thomas Cook said this, that one day one of his friends, in his church actually, was due at a church meeting.

He came home, he wasn't very uh well off, he had just one, two pairs of shoes, one was being repaired. He came in, his shoes were soaking, his clothes were soaking, and uh in a hurry he shouted to his wife, I have to be in church in about 40 minutes. She said all right darling you go bathe and shave and I'll have uh your supper ready and um and you can go.

And he thought my shoes, my other shoes are being repaired, what will I do? So he slipped these off and he put them by the open fire and he went upstairs and he uh shaved and he came down and he said uh Mary? Yeah. Did you move my shoes? No dear I've never been out of the kitchen. I put them by the fire.

Well they're not there. Well what happened? Well Mary jr came along and she said daddy you put your shoes there, they were very wet, they wouldn't dry for you to go to church. Well darling what did you do? Well mummy's been baking, I just slipped them in the oven so they'd really dry.

And he opened the door and they were dry. Just a case of who they fit, the toe was turning that way, the heel was turning that way, and he couldn't get his feet in the thing. So Thomas Cook said now was that girl faultless? No she wasn't, but she was blameless, she had no motive in doing it.

Now whether people accuse you or the devil accuses you about a certain thing, don't sit down and cry, because every time you sit down and cry the devil laughs anyhow. Just say wait a minute what was my motive in that thing? That girl didn't intentionally say I'm going to keep daddy at home, he's been working all day, he's not going to church, he's going to stay and play with me. She did not say that.

And in doing something she thought was very kind, she did something he thought was very cruel, but again her motive was pure. You see, now we're not faultless but we may be blameless. We're told to be that, we're told to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God.

The thing we do should be pure, the pure in heart see God, they want to work like him, be like him. All right every branch that beareth fruit he taketh away, beareth not fruit he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit.

Now there are three things in this chapter, verse 2 there is the promise of fruit, verse 8 plenty of fruit, twice 8 16, and verse 16 permanence in fruit bearing. The normal condition of the Christian life is to bear fruit. Now some people say well this means soul winning.

Well it could be included, I'm not sure it's the total thing. You remember the Presbyterians had a fantastic revival in 1905 in where? Korea? Wasn't it where they swept the country? A condition of membership was a very strong condition. I was preaching once in New Zealand and in the course of talking with a man I said to him, well sir you've been a shepherd for 50 years, tell me this, do the shepherds out here bring lambs to birth? And he said what? I said does the shepherd produce lambs? Well no.

Well I said who does? Well are you stupid? He said the sheep bears a lamb. That's exactly right. Now I could go to a church where the pastor never, never asked anybody to come down the aisle and I'd be perfectly content if he preached the truth and fed me, if I never saw a soul converted.

Because that's not his job. He's the shepherd, you're the sheep, you should produce your kind. And a condition of membership I'm told in the early Presbyterian church in Korea, was not that you believe in every point of doctrine, but you have to say this person is somebody I personally brought to Jesus Christ.

Not somebody I prayed with at the altar when they came forward. But I personally got a burden for a neighbor or a relative and I prayed them through and I personally call this the fruit of my effort. I have brought forth.

Now supposing everybody did that. Then do you know what they did? When a church got so large they selected so many people out of the church and they started another church. Just before we left Baton Rouge an old man, well he wasn't too old, less than 70, but he came to see me and somebody said I want you to meet this man in Baton Rouge.

He's a unique man. Man as he talked I knew that man knew God. Now it's a lot better if you have the first church or there's something.

You know I often say I'd never join the first church anywhere, because the book says the first should be last. But by the same token this man knew very well that if you build a church up to 2,000 members. I started with 10 members and now we have 2,000, 3,000.

Oh boy that makes you look big and swell. You know he said, this is his argument, he said I don't believe any man can manage more than 200 people. To really understand them and know them and feel the pulse of their lives and bear the burden with them.

So as soon as his church got to 200 he asked about 10 couples to split off and go to another area. Now around Baton Rouge that man has brought to birth or his church, just as the individual produced the sheep, the church produces another church. There are 10 churches around Baton Rouge with 200 members that all stemmed out of his one church.

So that's their fruit. All right every branch that beareth not fruit he take it away and every branch that beareth fruit he purges it. Now look if you have a vine, here's the stem of the vine.

It will start sending out its tendrils, it will send out little branches. And if you leave it alone it will just send out leaves and leaves and leaves and then it will produce tiny little grapes. Now maybe my logic, I never was trained in logic, but I would imagine that Jesus should have said here I am the vine and you're the grapes.

Isn't that the logic of it? But he doesn't say that, why not? Well his figure is very different. He says ye are the salt of the earth. Now salt's very good in some areas, it's very bad if you get it in an open cut, it makes you dance a bit.

Not everybody's going to receive you because you're a saved and sanctified person. You'll be a savor of life to some people, you'll be a savor of death to other people. Some will say I like that brother, some will say boy I, when I see him I get out of the way, or when I see her I get out of the way.

Jesus says ye are the salt. He does not say I am the vine and ye are the grapes. Why not? Well I don't know except my own argument is this, that if you let a vine run wild it will produce grapes just tiny like that.

Or have they been having trouble out west, there hasn't been enough water and therefore lots of the grapes are tiny. But you can still use them when they're mature, you can make vinegar out of them anyhow. And then when they get nice and ripe, oh I like grapes, they're good for you.

Do you know how to get healthy? Have one day a week when you don't eat anything except grapes. Have grapes for three meals a day, they do you a world of good. There's no charge for that but they'll charge you enough for the grapes so you better go ahead and get them.

And and so if the grapes are immature they'll make vinegar, if they're mature they're good, and if they get over ripe and dry they make raisins. So you can't lose. And I figure Jesus doesn't say well you're the grapes because you were some old sour grouch.

You'd still say well anyhow I'm a child of God, I may be one of the bitter ones, but I'm bitter but there it is. And folks that are bitter you don't usually get better, isn't that nice. But let me tell you this that every pressure, every circumstance of life you come in will leave you in one of two categories, and it's very simple.

They leave you better or bitter. And he applies the knife. He's not capricious, God is never moody.

He applies the knife. I remember one day going into the what we call the greenhouse, glass house in Cliffs College. There it was a beautiful beautiful place and a man was up there on a on a on a high ladder.

And I had to take a letter from the president. And I called his name, I forgot what it was, Stiles or something. And he looked down and as I came in at the door I was up to my ankles in leaves, just leaves and cuttings.

Now where he had cut that vine it looked like a man whose hair had been just about cut to the scalp here and it was full at this height. Here there were leaves going all over the place. And I said to him, well sir you've you've really treated that haven't you? He said yes, do it every year.

He didn't do it once for a lifetime, he did every year. He had a fresh crop, a full crop of crop of grapes. And he said you see these little things here, these little white knobs? I said yes, he said they'll soon be flowers and then they'll become grapes.

Now this this vine does not have enough energy to keep supplying leaves to cover this. I have to cut that off and drive the energy down into the fruit, otherwise there'll be no fruit. Now if God cuts something off in your life, he doesn't do it to be capricious, he wants to get something better out of your life.

And if you're wasting your energy in that, or wasting your money in that, or wasting your time in that, he's going to cut it off. Because he's looking for fruit. And he promises your fruit, and not only a promise of fruit, but plenty of fruit.

And then in verse 16, permanence in fruit bearing. Now what is the secret? There are some charming words in this chapter here. Read it carefully, you'll find that fruit is mentioned eight times, and abiding is mentioned nine times.

And I think ten times he speaks about his father. He speaks about the father a hundred and twenty times in this gospel. You see Matthew shows the Lord Jesus Christ as a king.

Mark shows the Lord Jesus Christ as a servant. Luke shows the Lord Jesus Christ as the son of man. John shows him as very God of very God.

Step back to Luke a minute. Luke shows Jesus as totally, as a man dependent upon the father. And so here is the emphasis.

If you want to discover the prayer life of the Lord Jesus, you read the gospel according to Luke. Because he says in every crisis in the life of Jesus, Jesus prayed. Now the other evangelist will tell you that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan, and the spirit like a dove descended upon him.

But Luke says it was while he was praying that the spirit descended on him. The other evangelist will tell you Jesus was crucified. But Luke says even while he was being crucified, he prayed.

The other evangelist will tell you, with the exception again of, of, of, well, the other evangelist let's say, will tell you that Jesus was on the mount of transfiguration. He was transfigured. But Luke says it was while he was praying he was transfigured.

The other evangelist will tell you that Jesus chose twelve disciples. Luke says it was after he spent a night in prayer he chose twelve disciples. And I push that home.

I say look, if Jesus needed a whole night in prayer before he chose twelve disciples, wouldn't it be good if the church had a whole night of prayer before it chose deacons? You see in every situation in the life of the Lord Jesus he, Luke, precedes it with prayer. He's showing the human side of Jesus. He's not ready to do anything unless he gets the mind of his father upon it.

And so in every crisis Jesus is shown as a praying man. Matthew shows him as a king. Mark shows him as a servant doing service to others.

Luke shows him as a son of man dependent upon his father. John shows the other side. And therefore again he keeps talking about his father.

He's here showing his sonship. Again he's declaring I was with him. And he says in John 17, I want to get back to heaven.

I want to have the glory I had with thee before the world was. We mentioned the other night in the sixth of Isaiah. Where Isaiah says he saw him high and lifted up in his train fill the temple.

The twelfth chapter of John says it was Jesus that Isaiah saw. No man has seen God at any time. Jowit says we'll never see God in eternity.

He is a spirit. You can't see spirit. He manifested himself in the flesh.

Everything is given into the hands of the Son. The Father will be away there in eternity. He has given the disposal of everything in eternity to the Son.

And Jesus says I'm pining for that glory that I had with thee. Well look if he couldn't live without that glory, why are we so content to live without it? What was the script you read this morning? Something about the at the end of second Peter where he says he'll share with us his eternal glory. Oh we're very keen on eternal life.

What about eternal glory? How much do you share of his eternal glory? When are you, when are you, when are you almost not senseless with some revelation of his majesty and beauty? When you, when you're praying for instance. Or in the secret place. You see the Lord Jesus is going to cut away all the surplus things in your life.

I don't know why I thought of this this morning. I was in a very famous church. Two people asked me this week out, why did you come here? I don't know what they meant, you should have stayed away.

But they said why did you come here? I said I don't know. I got an invitation but that doesn't mean I can't. I passed up a church of 1800 members to come here.

They give me sun, moon and star. I don't go where they offer me money, I go where the Lord tells me to go. So I came here.

Got one amen, thank you. But uh so I came here. But we were in this very fashionable church.

The pastor said to me uh you see the man on the right in the yeah. He's worth 750 million dollars. His, his name is Benson.

You know him, he's uh well senator for for Texas anyhow. The son is. And his father was there.

We were in this marvelous church. A lady came up to me, she said you're having bible classes every morning. I said yes.

Oh she was a lovely lady. Well I mean you know she's painted up to look lovely. She reminded me of the lady that said I've gone to the same beauty parlor for 25 years.

I said lady I couldn't even tell. I couldn't tell she'd been once. I, I wondered what she was like before they started working on her.

I mean she was a sight even when I looked at her. They'd been repairing her for 25 years. So what was she like when she started? So this, this lady came up and she said uh oh Mr. Ravenhill uh will it be all right if I come to your bible class in uh in my pantsuit.

So I said uh yes. She said thank you. I said there's a condition.

What's the condition? I said as long as your husband comes in a skirt with a handbag. She said my husband is the most famous surgeon uh in the south. As a matter of fact right now he's on a job, some special job somewhere, somewhere.

I said well that's all right. She said well I'll have to go because it's nearly time for me to take some tablets and something else. So the physician wasn't doing too well.

But anyhow that was that. He came home on the Thursday and he said darling how are you? She said fine. Man he said you look different.

You look so bright. You've lost that heavy look and weary look. You're almost like another woman.

What happened? You know what it is. I told you if you stayed with those tablets and did so many in the morning and did this at night and that and something else you'll be great. She said well dearie I have not taken a tablet since Monday.

You're crazy. No. Oh well well what happened? She said well I'll tell you we've got an English preacher and he's a bit different from other folk and he's a bit blunt.

And I asked him could I go to church in my pantsuit. And you know I've argued about this. People say they're not ladylike and they're not this that and the other.

And uh and he said I could go as long as you came in a skirt and a handbag. He said what do you mean me in a skirt and a handbag? Well I said that's what the preacher said. But she said as soon as he said that I knew that I had a quarrel with God about wearing pantsuits.

The Lord had spoken before about it. Now I'm not saying you ladies are wrong for doing this. I'm telling you this actually happened.

And she said I went and had it out with the Lord and I said Lord I've been rebelling on this issue and I'll never wear pantsuits again. I'm just going to do the dresses I think I should be dressed properly and so forth. And she said immediately heal me.

Why? Because she was rebelling on a certain point that's why. And she got delivered. To me that was God's pruning in her life.

You see there are so many ways that there is no blueprint to Christian perfection. As I say we balk at that word perfection. Well balk at it you'll have to argue with Jesus about it.

I didn't say it. It says be ye perfect even as your father in heaven is perfect. We can't be mentally perfect.

We can't have atomic perfection. We can't have angelic perfection. We can't have mental perfection, physical perfection.

But we can have spiritual perfection in this area at least. That we love him in with perfect obedience. There's no disobedience and we shall love him with perfect love.

That's what it says. Perfect love casteth out fear. You don't look too happy.

Let's get on here a bit and uh what does it say? Well I tell you what it says. It mentions fruit eight times in this chapter and abiding nine times. Now what is the secret of abounding in the Christian life? The secret of abounding in the Christian life is abiding.

Does the man that's growing the fruit pull the branch out and put? No no it stays there like my fingers abide here. And while they abide there I've got life. I can control them and so forth.

And if we are abiding we'll be abounding. The secret of abounding is abiding. The secret of communion is union.

This man a glass of water. This lady a glass of milk. This lady a glass of oil.

This man a glass of something else. This man and I said now look I want you to all walk down this aisle. We'll put the lights out.

It's dark but you walk and see who gets to the end without spilling. And somewhere they're all going to spill. They're all going to be shaky and maybe trip over something.

Now what will come out of the glass of milk? Oil. What will come out of the glass of water? All that will come out of you if you get upset is what's in you. And if there's nothing in it won't come out.

Isn't that profound? Now what did Jesus say? Jesus says the prince of this world cometh and he findeth nothing in me. Well you say that's wonderful. But he says as he was so are we in this world.

Now when we become angelic and beautiful up there. You see if the Lord takes anger and pride and all the other things out of your life. If somebody knocks you, you won't spill any more than if there's nothing in a cup.

And you knock a man he's not going to spill it. If you have a glass a cup full of water and somebody jolts you, water will come out. If there's milk in it, milk will come out.

If there's oil, oil will come out. But if there's nothing in comes out. And Jesus says the prince of this world cometh and he findeth nothing in me.

He never rebelled against his father. You think you have it rough sometimes? Will you remember this? That one of the most profound scriptures as far as I'm concerned is Isaiah 53. And it says it pleased the Lord to bruise him.

He not only let him be bruised, it pleased the Lord to bruise him. And then later in the scripture you may remember that it says there concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. That just as it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he spared not his own son.

Now if he didn't spare his only begotten son, why should he spare you and I? You see a lot of us want salvation to escape hellfire. That's a fringe benefit. There was a very fine, I never heard him, I once got a daughter.

He filled John Wesley's historic pulpit in City Road, London for some years. He was a marvellous man. Marvellous appearance, a lot of white hair, tall, in about the most elastic vocabulary I think of any man I've ever read after.

And he said one day, he said the man that only wants forgiveness for his sins is toying with Christianity. If that's all you want, forgiveness for a lot of lousy sins you've committed, brother you don't know a thing about it. You see he wants to create in us the Christ-like nature.

It's not only forgiveness of sins, it's Christ in you, the hope of glory. Now if he's going to do that, again remember it's the branch that's bearing the fruit that gets the knife. Outside of reading the Word of God, there's nothing I like to read more than reading biographies and autobiographies.

And sometimes not even of Christian men. You read the hardship and the trial and everything else. The neighbours were looking at some silly stuff, they were dropping loads of pitchblende at the end of somebody's garden and wondered what it was all about and said well that's Madame Curie and she's an oddball anyhow.

But remember what she did? I don't know whether she completed it, but she started exploration on x-rays and whatnot. And she went through travail. Almost every man who's pioneered scientifically has put up with as much as a Christian puts up with nearly.

And Peter says don't, don't get disturbed because the world abuses you. The man in the world gets abused too. The man in the world has an accident, the man in the world gets bereavement, the man in the world may go bankrupt, the man in the world has trials, but he's no resources to go to.

And if you live in him there's a constant inflow, so that there is an overflow and then there is an outflow. Because he came not merely that we might have life, but that we might have life more abundantly. The law of life is reproduction.

Read the book of Genesis, everything that had life brought forth its kind. If I have life I'm going to bring forth my kind. I'm going to reproduce my kind because his life is in me.

The old life is gone, I have a new life in Christ Jesus. Every branch that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. All right.

One of the fruits is what? Just to take one of them. He says in verse 11, these things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full. Now will you remember this? He's moving right now from this 15th chapter into the shadow of Gethsemane.

And his concern is not for himself, it's for his disciples. And he knows they're going to have the roughest time ever. He says, once I go you'll be like sheep and the wolves are going to come in.

But I want you to have one thing. Now he doesn't pray they'll be healthy, he doesn't pray they'll be wealthy, he doesn't pray that they won't have any smarts. He says above all that comes, I want your joy, not just joy, but joy to be full.

Now skip over a minute into the 16th chapter. And in the 16th chapter he says in verse 20, verily verily I say unto you that ye shall weep and lament but the world shall rejoice and ye shall be sorrowful but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Go into verse 22 at the end of it.

Your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh it from you. And then into verse 24. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name.

Ask and ye shall receive it that your joy may be full. Now he says the pruning will cause joy in your life. There may be some sorrow before you get to the joy.

But this is what he says, I want you to have joy and it's permanent joy, no man can take it from you. And not only permanent joy but your joy shall be full. Now he's saying to them because they did not want Jesus, they could not believe that somebody better would come than Jesus.

Are you telling us that? We can't believe the Holy Spirit will be, will be, will be more wonderful than you are. Now that's alright, that's alright saying it, you're trying to cheer us up. Reminds me of the pastor that went to, he had announced to his church that he was going to move to another church and they were all sorry but one lady wasn't there so he went to see the old lady and he said well you were not in church yesterday so I thought I'd come and tell you personally that I've resigned from the church.

Oh no, no, no, no, no my dear he said Dr. so-and-so is coming and he's a, he's a better man than I am, he's a far greater preacher than I am and she still cried. He said don't you believe me? She said well the last pastor said that when he resigned. The disciples could not believe that somebody would come who was better than Jesus.

And Jesus said look I am with you. Yeah you're with us and we love that. But he said there's something better than that, he will be in you.

In his flesh Jesus couldn't be in two places at once. But by the divine spirit he can be in a million hearts at the same time. Now he says look I want you to have joy.

Now if you go back into the 14th chapter do you remember what he said there? He says peace I leave with you. No, no, no he qualifies it. He says peace I leave with you, my peace.

This is the peace I've tested. You know when he wanted to push me over the hill and kill me, I had peace I didn't panic. I've often thought, I've often wondered what Jesus thought when he was in that boat and it was nearly going over and the ship was rocking and the storm broke on them and those disciples woke him and said master don't you care that we perish? I'd at least have thought they'd have had decency Lord we're waking you up we thought you might get drowned.

But he said don't you care that we perish? Well Jesus didn't panic he had peace. So he doesn't say peace I leave with you he says my peace I give unto you. He doesn't say joy I leave you he says that you may have my joy and that your joy may be full.

Now skip a little further down in that 16th chapter and it says in the 32nd verse the hour cometh yea it is now come that ye be scattered every one of you to his own and ye shall leave me alone but I'm not alone because the father is with me. Do you get the point? He says look if I can be deserted by all you folk they didn't think of it that way if you can be deserted if I can be deserted by all these people and my father's going to desert me a bit later in one sense but he says until I get to that situation my strength is that you can take everything from me except the presence of my father. Now if I can go through this tribulation with the presence of my father you can go through the world with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Because you remember it says of the Lord Jesus Christ that the supreme desire of his life was what? What was his joy? Who for the joy that was set before him and is there any was there any joy in the cross? Usually for decency's sake when you see a crucifixion the the person the Lord Jesus the thieves within there they have at least a loincloth on they didn't have that when they were crucified it was part of their humiliation and shame to hang there on a cross. And yet the word says who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross. When we say his joy was number one he was going to defeat the devil number two he was going to bear our sins number three he was going to have resurrection.

I don't believe that's the order I believe the supreme joy of Jesus was this is the will of my father and I'm going to do my father's will. My supreme delight on earth is to make God happy. Now I don't paint pictures like the good doctor I do paint sometimes and I draw and my favorite subject is eagles.

I like to draw eagles. They're very fascinating birds I think. Somebody came in my office one day and saw a sketch I'd just about finished and they said did you do this? I said yes.

I said yeah can I have it? That's what you're going to say can I have it? I said sure you can have it. I can oh I'll treasure this I'll frame it I'll put it up oh by the way would you just get your pencil and autograph it? I said no. You won't autograph it? No no that's the worst eagle I ever drew.

I don't want anybody to know I drew that eagle. I'm not autographing that thing I'd have been embarrassed if somebody said oh I saw a drawing of yours in so-and-so's house an eagle and I'd say um the weather's going to change isn't it? Don't you think it's you know I'd switch him off I didn't want to talk about that it's a

mess. Now let me ask you this when you finish living a day on earth do you think the Lord can autograph your life? You know why? Because the word of God says we you and I we are his workmanship.

Now at the end of the day either you've lived in the flesh or in the spirit. Either at the end of the day I'm an embarrassment for the Lord to sign my life and say that's his workmanship my workmanship. Can he autograph your life at the end of the day and say that's my workmanship? I'm glad that child of mine lives in Marshall or lives in Jefferson or wherever you live.

Nugget Doches is it somewhere like that a fancy name why don't you call it it will be easy to remember. If you lived out wherever you live can the Lord say look I put that man there in that factory in that bank in that hospital in that office he's my workmanship and at the end of every day I'm glad to sign my name at the bottom and say that's the kind of saint I can produce. In a rotten materialistic selfish world full of sensuality everything that's vain and vulgar and vicious is promoted and the good book says that you and I are to think on whatsoever things of pure and lovely heavens where will you find them outside of the sanctuary the saints of God and the word of God everything's contaminated and rotten it's got the devil's mark on it everywhere and God sets us up.

I reminded you the other day it says that there were saints in Caesar's household. All right I'm gonna have to let you go I'm not too willing but I will but anyhow let me say this. You see grapes are lovely but most folk don't like grapes that way they like it liquid they like wine.

There's only one way you can get wine. I remember we were out on the west coast and I said to Martha let's stop at this vineyard and we stopped there's a fella there smoking a big stogy there smoking away and he's talking about football or something he's swearing and carrying on and he reaches for a bunch of grapes literally this size like this and he takes a knife and slashes it like that and bangs it down into a big basket then he picks the basket up and threw them in a dump truck. Well is there anything more tender than a vine? When you see a vine and you see the grapes with the blush on them those blue grapes with the blush on them and oh they're so lovely and this big husky guy doesn't know a thing about that he gets them up and he slammed them there in the basket and he slams them in a truck and then they take them into a factory and oh well they do it different now.

They used to have a rock about the size of this desk and hollow it out and he'd have a little hole at the front and the man would come with his grapes and stack them up and then he'd roll his trousers up and jump on top. Did he wash his feet? Sure he did while he was doing the grapes and he stamps the grapes through like this he stamps away and the juice comes out at the front and he bottles it very very carefully. Oh isn't that a terrible business? You look after a vine and you prune it and the sun shines on it the flowers come first and the bees come and insects come and then the grapes come and when you get the precious things you pulverize them and knock the shape out of them and look what you get out of them.

Now that's a law of life. It says in the old testament bread corn must be bruised. You don't think of that.

You dear ladies that work so hard at the end of a Monday the ladies are so tired they've been pushing buttons all day and uh i'm a washer and the dryer and uh and the toaster and bread comes already sliced and soon they'll have it buttered for you you won't have anything to do. But what about when they put that corn in the ground? I mean wheat and you put it in the dirty ground and you cover it over with dirt and it stays in the wet and the rain and the snow comes and then it comes up a little and a bit more and a bit more and then it it gets ripe and then you cut the head off it with a threshing machine then you put it in a machine and toss the thing around till you get all the chaff off and then you put it in something else and

you scrub the the hard husk off it and then that's not enough you put it in the mill and grind it into flour and my dear mother used to buy we used to buy it by what we call a stone in England 14 pounds at the time and she used to put it in a big old pot there and and put water in and yeast and punch it and punch it and punch it and and then put it by the fire and it would rise up like this it's ready to go in the oven and then she'd bake it.

Oh the poor thing's gone through enough tribulation why roast it to death?

A few weeks ago it was freezing and then you put it in the machine and tear it apart and then you put it in the oven and bake the thing then you bring a knife and slice it then you give it to the cannibals around the table they tear it with the teeth I mean your relatives sorry and and and and they they tear it with their teeth it's not a painful business but we don't think of it you just pass the bread please the white the brown bread you don't eat white bread the whiter the bread the sooner you're dead and so you you you take this nice brown bread but look at all the processes it went through it's taken months for that bread to get to your table you don't think that much about it but everything God uses he breaks he took bread and break it a woman bought an alabaster box of ointment and

she break it and jesus said this is my body which is broken for you the old hebrew scholar in scotland if you ever look to see his book anywhere buy it the sayings of rabbi duncan he was a little fellow he wasn't a rabbi but he was so profound in hebrew they named him the rabbis in the university of edinburgh new college and whenever he taught hebrew grammar he used the scripture he used the hebrew bible and he was teaching one morning on hebrew on isaiah 53 and he came to that verse where it says he was wounded for our transgressions and he was bruised for our iniquity his soul was made an offering for sin you see we get sentimental about jesus hanging on a cross with nails well the thieves suffered the same didn't they but it was soul that was made an offering for sin he says all

billows of god the blackest most inexplicable thing in history that jesus not only took sin he became sin i don't know how deity you the heaven of heavens cannot contain him and yet you compress him into the matrix of the virgin mary how do you put a holy god that fills eternity into the matrix of a woman how does how does god become man our god contracted to a span incomprehensibly made man he became a babe it's a mystery but then he became sin and the old rabbi stood there they said that morning with his old hebrew bible the tears rolling down his face ah he says gentlemen his soul was made an offering for sin ah he said closing his eyes and the tears spilling down his little beard he said gentlemen ah he said it was damnation and he took it joyfully for us it pleased the lord to bruise

him to break him you can't take corn out of the ground and put it on the table it goes through a dozen processes it gets burned it gets cut and you tear it and then you get your bread you can't make wine without crushing the life and shape out of grapes and if you read oswald chambers you remember more than once he uses a phrase he wants to be broken bread and poured out wine one simple thing we were out in idaho some years ago and you know what idaho is famous for those enormous potatoes but you know they're the biggest apples i've ever seen anywhere in the world and as we came back from lunch at a farm a pastor said could i drive you down this way and it won't take long and i said yeah and as we turned in the lane he stopped and he said look at those trees do you know those those apples

seemed as red as those red stained windows up there the road was just red with apples as though somebody sprayed them with a with a powerful spray of red paint and i said well that's a wonderful crop i'm glad you brought me i've never seen such fruitfulness oh i didn't bring you for that oh he said let's go

and we went down the road and when we got there you know what a tree is trees like this with its branches up all right then you've got little sprays coming off little twigs and on those twigs you get blossoms they look beautiful and when the blossom blows off the little seed box becomes an apple now if you've got five apples on a tender twig like that it doesn't strain the the trig to hold blossoms and it doesn't strain the trig to hold little apples but as they get bigger they go down

and down and down and the weight begins to pull on the tree like that and the weight was so great that this man had got props like this and put them under the branches and these looked all like red umbrellas the whole of his orchard was propped up he had a super abundance of fruit and he said this man knows how to prune trees better than that he's some good fruit but look at the fruit here and i went i got out of the car and i went i have never seen it was amazing you couldn't see leaves you couldn't see anything but those massive beautiful apples all together and they were bending over so you could just pick them as easily as you like instead of climbing up on a ladder well i said thank you i'm glad i saw that i think that's wonderful but he said i didn't bring you to see that oh come on

what did you bring wait a minute we got in the car and he stopped he said look and i looked and the whole ground was as red as these beautiful red velvet things were sitting on well i said how come i never seen that well look again he said because it wasn't clear at first but you see he ran out of props and so this branch has been working all the year maybe many years to get a super abundant you know what it did that branch pulled itself out of the stem of the tree and that branch was so loaded that rather than yield its fruit it pulled itself out of the stem of the tree just as though you cut it with a knife like that and the trees were all lying on the floor they looked like cartwheels loaded loaded loaded with fruit and i turned and i looked across the the road and there was a tree it

had some fungus on it nobody bothered with it for years he said oh that's he doesn't bother with his orchard anymore he's ranching he doesn't bother with fruit trees but there at the top were two apples in the breeze like this shaking like mad hey look at us look at us look at us look at us i learned a few lessons from that i learned that the tree that bears the most fruit is the humblest it's the lowest i learned something else from john 12 but the law of reproduction is on and in life it's death it's death except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone but if it die and i remember norman grubb oh my gives my age away uh let me see he came to a meeting i was in in 1932 that's a few years back ct studdard just died the founder of their mission and people were

saying you know no movement ever survives its founder methodism went down after wesley died salvation army went down after booth died and the wick will go down now the founder's dead and i remember he stood there and he said well if it does that's fine the sooner it dies the better but he said the law that we have had in this fellowship and he was he was a son-in-law ct studd and ct studd wrote that little epigrammatic thing if jesus christ be god and died for me no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him now remember norman standing there was young fine looking man there and he said if it dies fine but he said the law of reproduction is death except a cone of wheat fall into the ground and die and he said this is where our society dies right now we're just caught in a bind our

leader has died we don't have much prestige they've been a split away from their group because they thought ct was too too severe and he says this is either death or resurrection life i don't know how many missionaries they had then i guess they've about 1500 around the world right now and they never asked for a penny and if they came here and spoke they wouldn't ask you for a penny they've lived by faith all the time god meets all their bills the law of life the law pardon me the law of pruning and the law of life are the

secret of success but if we'll abide we'll abound if we have union we know the secret of communion and if we abide in him and his word abide in us because this is what it really comes down to while this chapter is on fruit bearing it's on prayer too that when he's

pruned away all the superfluous things in our lives and got us down where he wants then we shall ask what we will my daddy was talking to a man one day in a hospital and the man said well don't talk to me about god he doesn't answer my prayers i've prayed with problems and he's never answered me and my father just said this supposing the prince of wales walked in this room and king george was standing here he was our king at the time supposing you said to the king uh king i'm a subject of of your kingdom uh would you give me a hundred dollars please do you think he'd give it to you he said no he said well supposing the prince of wales said father i need a hundred dollars do you think he'd get it oh well sure immediately he said why well he said because he's his son and he pleases his

father and father said that's exactly the thing because we're children because we're the sons because we know those things are the pleasing to the father he hears us and whatsoever we ask in his name according to his will he gives to us so if he's doing some pruning that's all right the fruit will be better when you get further up the road he only takes away what's unnecessary he's only seeking my dross to consume to change the figure and my gold to refine father we thank you for your word thank you for all it means to us and we pray that we may discover more and more that you bring things new and old out of your treasury dismiss us with your blessing we ask in the name of the father son and holy spirit amen did we announce a meeting

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