

Who Are God's Anointed

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance, restitution, and the role of the Holy Spirit in revival, using Psalm 51 as a model for true spiritual transformation.

Duration: 1:07:25

Scripture: Psalm 51:1-2, Psalm 51:10, Psalm 139:23

Topics: "God's Anointed"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher highlights the emptiness and lack of true spiritual presence in many religious gatherings. He shares a conversation with a famous manager of a rock band who reveals the different phases that rock music has gone through, including a focus on sex, causes, addiction to violence, and now, religious commitment. The preacher emphasizes that most Christians live by events and lack true submission to Jesus Christ. He challenges believers to make a total commitment to God, living by faith and surrendering their lives completely to Him.

Transcript

Sometime or another all of us are captivated with the idea that a chapter that we've read suddenly kind of comes to life. You wonder why you've read it so many times and haven't seen what you're seeing today. Some of you read this, oh I wouldn't say how many years ago, it wouldn't be fair.

I read it 60 years ago anyhow, maybe 70. But it's a favourite psalm. There are, you remember, 150 psalms and roughly, roughly half of them are written by David.

Out of the psalms he wrote there are 8 penitential psalms. But this is the greatest of all penitential psalms. Remember the history of David right here is that he stained on one hand with the murder blood on one hand and on the other hand the black stain of adultery.

And you remember that Shakespeare has, isn't it, Lady Macbeth looking at that spot of blood on her hand and she says in her own language, this damp spot, all the perfumes of Arabia can't take it out. And now when you think of it, it's awesome today that men have gone to gods of stone and wood crippled with guilt and burdened and anxious because they know inwardly that there's a condemnation and yet they find no relief. I'm amazed the church of Jesus Christ drags its feet as it does.

We've got the most explosive and the most expensive message the world has ever known. That Christ is able to save sinful men. One of the wonders about this psalm, I'm going to leap through it quite a bit, but one of the wonders is this, and I didn't find this till about a few years ago.

The psalm is a monologue. There's nobody in it but David. Have mercy upon me, O God.

According to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, brought out my transgressions, and wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Against thee only have I sinned. You say, no, he sinned against Bathsheba.

I don't think he did. He sinned with her, but it's his self right through the whole psalm. Brought out my transgressions.

Isn't it interesting, he comes asking for mercy. Whenever did a king do this? You know, kings used to, whether they do now or not, I don't know. They used to believe in the divine right of kings.

They could do what they wanted to do. Like King Uzziah, when he managed the government and managed industry and got his army going and raised the economy and did everything with a magic touch and then suddenly decided to go into the temple and minister holy things, and God took hold of him for that. When would this, has it happened before or since? I'll tell you what Mary Queen of Scots would have done in Scotland.

She would have said, well, this may be true of me, but I want to tell you this. I'm above the law. James II would have sworn witnesses, hired witnesses to swear away the testimony of Bathsheba.

Muhammad would have produced a revelation authorizing both his crimes. Charles II would have publicly abrogated the 7th commandment. Queen Elizabeth, not the present one, the one 300, 400 years ago.

She would have suspended Nathan. You know what's wrong with our day? As I answer before God, I believe that evangelism is being killed in America by evangelists. They're not preaching evangelism.

They're preaching forgiveness. And let's look at this, just skipping through quickly. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies.

Blot out my transgressions. Now notice the different words he has for sin. In verse 1 he calls them transgressions.

In verse 2 he talks about iniquity. In verse 2 he talks about sin. You see, the wretched evangelism of our day has changed its vocabulary.

There are no adulterers anymore. They're just having an affair. There's no iniquity.

It's just infirmity. There's no wickedness. It's just weakness.

And therefore it doesn't burn because God won't honor it. This is God's language. We should use it.

It's God's kingdom we're effecting. Last week I used an illustration. It's lived with me since, sometimes when I didn't want it, in the middle of the night.

We were dealing with Luke 16 last week, talking about the man in hell. He could see, he could hear, he could feel. And down there in the depths of hell, he can see a way there into eternity, into Abraham's

bosom.

And he could hear in hell. I believe one of the agonies of hell is they'll be able to see everything that's going on in heaven. And there's no chance of getting out.

I wrote to a brother the other day, a week ago, and I said, you know, we need some bumper stickers with hell has no exits. Mercy called me yesterday, he said, I've got the bumper stickers for you. I said, well, I don't know who'll have them.

Oh, I'll put one on mine, front and back if you like. Hell has no exits. The present church doesn't even believe that hell exists.

We talk about once saved, always saved. Why do we talk about once lost, always once? Once a man gets into that state, he can never get out. I imagine a young man, his daddy and mummy talk to him about God.

He heard his mother pray and thought it was sentimental. He's a big swashbuckling boy. He's going to live his own life, do his thing.

He wakes up in hell and sees the marriage supper of the Lamb. He sees his mother with a glorified body. He sees his father with a glorified body.

He sees that multitude which no man can number. They can hear in hell and I guarantee that when that choir of a hundred and forty thousand musicians play, they'll hear it in hell. Dear old William Bull died in 1912.

I never saw him. Yes, I did. I saw him once when he was a tiny tot.

I have a friend who has a picture of him on the refrigerator door. That's a cold place for a man who preached hellfire all his life. He was a remarkable man and one day he decided he would go to Australia because they'd had revival with the Salvation Army in Australia.

And remember the Salvation Army made in its whole existence from the time he inaugurated it under God to the time he died never had as much money as some of the gospel corporations around here. The lifeblood of modern evangelism is not the Holy Ghost or the blood of Christ, it's money. God hastened the day when America goes bankrupt, except for the fact the poor would suffer more.

That's the only thing that keeps me from praying. God smashed the banks. They're going to smash anyhow in the next five years.

A hundred banks closed in America last year. A hundred and thirty will close next year, we're told. A lady wrote to me today from the inter-first bank in town here.

She said, I suppose you know that we're laying off two thousand people across the nation. They're laying about fifty off down at the inter-first in town. The conditions are very bad and they're getting worse.

But here's a boy, he can't get out. He sneered, he ridiculed his mother and father. He drank rich liquors and wines while he was living.

There isn't a spot of water in hell and his mother's there drinking wine, the wine of the kingdom. He wouldn't listen to her, now she can't listen to him. Are you going to tell me that the fundamental church of

America believes in hell? I won't believe you, try.

Do you think there'll be an empty seat here tonight if all the believers around here really believed in hell? We'd be here storming heaven to get God's glory down. It's an eternal separation. There are three different words here for sin.

Verse one again, transgressions, and verse two, iniquity, and then at the end of that verse, sin. By the same token, there are three different words for washing or cleansing. Verse one is blot out.

That's erased something like a blackboard and it's completely obliterated. You know, I think many of us, well some of us didn't have a very bad history anyhow, but some of you have a bad history. One of the things is you find it hard to forgive yourself.

And some of your neighbors find it hard to forgive. But every day you ought to send a hallelujah to heaven. He forgives and he forgets.

We used to hear chorus, when God forgives, he forgets. When God forgives, he forgets. He'll no more remember our sin.

Doesn't matter how much you may have sinned enough to damn a million people, he forgave it. And it's thrown into the sea of his forgetfulness. I told you about the man in England, a rough boy and he was always disturbing the church.

You know, he didn't know it was supposed to be quiet. Supposed to be a Methodist and it was a morgue. But he kept shouting hallelujah if anybody touched him, he ripped the air, you know.

One day he went to see his preacher, the new preacher sent for him and said, come into my office. You know you disturb people on Sunday nights. We had a man in our church like that.

He was great. I loved him. He was a funny looking guy.

But you know, when he was getting, he'd go, hallelujah. Oh, everybody jump, you know. There's old Joe, there's old Joe.

Well, glory, we need some folk like that. Some people are quiet like me and some are noisy. So this fellow went into the office of the preacher and the preacher said, I've got a friend in there, now be quiet, be quiet.

He said, read this book. So he was reading an encyclopedia and he thought, boy, he won't find a thing there to praise God for. Well, that was what he thought.

Ten minutes after the fellow shouted the biggest hallelujah he'd ever heard. The preacher said, what's wrong with you? That's not a Bible, it's not a hymn book, it's not a history of the church. What are you shouting hallelujah for? He said, it says that off the shore of the Philippines there's a hole in the sea, they've never measured the depth of it.

Some parts of the ocean have 26,000 feet of water. They can't find the bottom, they can't get a plumb line to go to the bottom. Hallelujah! What's a hallelujah for? He said, because the Lord has cast my sins beyond the depth of the sea and if the devil tries to get me, he'll get drowned anyhow.

Maybe his theology wasn't very good, but boy, I'll tell you what, it's great when you know it, isn't it? Nobody can rake them up, nobody can bring them up. They're fully paid for, Jesus paid it all in that sense for us. Anyhow, he goes on.

You see, there are three prayers in this marvellous, marvellous psalm. We could stay a week on it, we won't, I promise you. The first is a prayer of a sinner, have mercy upon me, O God.

Have mercy. I love the old hymn that says, depth of mercy, can there be mercy still reserved for me? How many times did you hear the gospel before you accepted it? I'm sure I heard it hundreds of times. And there's a patient loving God wanting to invade my life and me, stupid little me shuts an almighty God out of my life.

If I'd obeyed him the first time I heard the gospel, I'd have been a hundred miles further up the road spiritually than I am tonight. You know, every meeting is full of tragedy. I don't care whether people come to the altar or not, I'm no longer mesmerized by altars.

We've killed the church, we've killed ministry with altars. I told you what the precious men said in the, when was it, 1500s? Where that wonderful man preached that message on the sinners in the hands of an angry God. Do you know he actually preached 500 messages? They're still in print.

And there's only one of them that's full of wrath, the others are full of love and full of mercy and full of grace. But those preachers got together, Gilbert Tennant was one, his son was Gilbert, George Whitfield, Davenport, a whole host of mighty men in America. We don't pay tribute to them.

We pay tribute to film stars and sports people. But they made a covenant together, and remember they never staged a revival ever. That brother could have waited, why preach his message on the sinners in the hands of an angry God? And remember it wasn't staged, it wasn't advertised.

It was in the ordinary course of preaching when the Holy Ghost came in that phenomenal thing and shook America. But they made a covenant together. As I say, they didn't stage it.

Jonathan Edwards could have said, we're going to have a revival. But you know Mr. Whitfield is the greatest preacher since the Apostle Paul. He'll arrive, he'll arrive in about four days.

Do you know what happened? The navigation instruments were not very good in those days. And they missed the port they were after, they missed it by a hundred and fifty miles. That's a long way to swim isn't it? A hundred and fifty miles off course.

And if they'd announced that Whitfield was coming he wouldn't have been there anyhow. But the Holy Ghost came. But those men covenanted together that they would not pluck, I like fruits.

We're getting people saved who don't know they're lost. You have to sing an emotional chorus because the Holy Ghost hasn't stirred them, so we stir them emotionally. Oh we're insisting on repentance.

I made up my mind, I keep a little book in which I have a lot of notes. You should read them. You'd think they were Solomon's, I mean you'd think they were someone else's.

And when I put the other morning about two o'clock I was in my office I put this down. There is no repentance, true repentance without restitution. Remember the man in the scripture that said if I've done anything wrong I'll pay fourfold back.

But always raising that storm about abortions, and that's okay. But I'll tell you what, there are far more spiritual abortions than physical abortions in America. In natural birth you have three things, you have conception, gestation and birth, and you have the same thing in true revival.

And you can't speed it up. What I liked about the revival, I'm reading a kind of brief history of revivals in America right now, the times when men would go into meetings and they'd be stricken, tormented. You don't get that anymore.

Come the Lord loves you just as you are. Well why get changed if he loves you just as you are? If you're a prostitute you'll stay a prostitute if he still loves you. If you're a drunken, if you beat your life up, don't beat her as hard but still beat her, come on have some sense.

God doesn't love you as you are, he's angry with the wicked every day. Mercy is open to them, but they rebel and they pile up their rebellion, they pile up their judgments. I like to hear the Welsh people sing, I think they're the best singers, congregational singers in the world.

And they have a great hymn, and when I read this first verse, where David is his, as a supplicant, I think of the hymn they sing, Great God of wonders, all thy ways display thine attributes divine, but countless acts of pardoning grace above all other wonders shine. Who is a pardoning God like thee? Or who has grace so rich and free? I'll say this quickly, when, what was Leonard Bernstein a few years ago was the maverick conductor of the New York Philharmonic. Somebody brought him a piece of dog-eared manuscript and said play this, he's a brilliant concert organist, a pianist and he's alright.

I can't, you can, you won't, I can't, you can, I can't, why not? You say this is 200 years old, it was written in some man in the loft of a great cathedral, if I could get behind him and catch his spirit how he played it, I don't know how he played it. I need the spirit of the man. Well how do you get the drift, if you want to say that, about this psalm? It wouldn't pulsate with life unless the Holy Ghost who wrote it inspires it.

But when you see this man, he's a king, what does he say? Have mercy upon me. I acknowledge my transgression, my sin is ever before me. Look, he looks out of the window and he sees a soldier, a handsome young man standing there with a, not with a gun, but standing there with a sword to defend his king.

And when he sees that smart young man he remembers that he sent the best captain that he had in the army to his death so he could steal his wife. He looks through the window and he sees his sin. A baby cries and he remembers the child he fathered to Bathsheba.

His sin goes in his ears, his sin goes in his eyes. We try to get people reconciled to God and they don't know they've been enemies against God. I'm not a wicked man, I'm not a vile man.

The biggest sin in the world is not adultery, as rotten as it is, and all that corruption. The biggest sin in the world is to say I run my life and not God. As I say, Jesus did not come into the world to make bad men good, that's a fringe benefit.

He came to make dead men live. There are some very admirable men. I know some men I'd rather trust, they're unsaved, I'd rather trust them in business than Christians.

But this man is having a terrible time. He didn't sit down and dictate this. I don't know how he wrote it, I'll tell you how he didn't write it.

He didn't write it in a lounge chair, drinking orange juice and eating the grapes of Eskil. This man is writhing on the floor. This paper I have is Indian paper, and it's beautiful type, but this wasn't written with his hand.

If you can take the figure of speech. Here it's written in black ink on paper. It was written in blood and in tears.

He didn't punctuate it with commas, periods, and all the rest. He punctuated it with sobs and cries and groans. This man is prostrate, he's lashed with conscience.

He's a load of guilt, he's condemnation. A baby scares him to death because he fathered when he shouldn't have fathered. He sees a soldier polishing his uniform, and he knows that he sent the best man that was in the army to his death.

You'll find people do that. They'll commit sin and then they'll tell a lie to cover up their sin. It's the way of the transgressor all the time.

But again I say this man is stricken, but I'll tell you what, when God redeemed him, he was just as marvelous for God. Remember the psalms he wrote? He wrote the 23rd psalm. It's a lovely psalm.

Where does it fit into his own history? He says he went down into the valley of the shadow of death. I haven't read this, I dug it up myself and it may be wrong, but I'm sure it's right. I believe the valley of the shadow of death is when he went down there to fight Goliath.

And Goliath says I'll break you over my knee and feed the birds with you. All Israel is looking on. The king of Israel is looking on.

Jonathan's looking on. The kings of the, the captains of the army are looking on. And here's a boy, never had a moment of military training.

Dear God I wish half the preachers in the country hadn't been to cemeteries, seminaries. They get so confident and cocky with their Greek and their Hebrew and what have you got? I know a little Hebrew. I knew one in New York.

He used to repair my pants. I know a little Greek, he keeps a station on 8th Avenue where I park my car. That's all Greek and Hebrew I know.

We used to have a man testify in the open air, he would say, I haven't been to college but I have the blessed knowledge that my sins are forgiven and I'm on my way to heaven. Oh that's as good as Shakespeare ever said. I acknowledge my transgression, my sin is ever before me.

Against thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest. Behold I was shaped in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me. I said there are three different words in the first two verses for sin.

There are three different words for cleansing in the first two verses. There are three prayers in this psalm. The first prayer is a prayer of a sinner, have mercy upon me.

The second prayer is a prayer of a backslider, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Of course there are no backsliders anymore, you know that of course. There are about 50 million people in the nation out of

fellowship but you can't find backsliders anywhere.

They buried their grandfather, he was the last backslider in their church. They haven't done any sins. Don't you think the church today as lively as it is, profess it to be, is in a big delusion? The devil's cheated us.

What do you do with a man like this? He's broken hearted because three times he mentioned brokenness. The Methodists used to sing a hymn, blessed are the men of broken heart who mourn for sin with inward smart. We don't mourn for sin.

People just come in and whisper in their ear, just tell the Lord you're sorry. They come to the altar damned and they say a prayer and go out damned. Except a little after that they get baptized and tithed and of course that fits you for the kingdom of God.

They stress works, we're not saved by works but boy if you die untithed you go straight to perdition. That's what they imply anyhow isn't it? Make me to hear joy and gladness. Verse 11, cast me not away from thy presence, take not thy holy spirit from me.

Come on now. Who's the most miserable man in the world tonight? A man begging at the street corner, a blind man? The man they showed on TV the other day or a couple of weeks ago, they dragged him out of the debris there in Mexico City. They had to amputate his legs, he left his legs behind in the debris, they sawed his legs off and one of his arms is broken and now he's no legs and there he's handicapped for life.

The most miserable man in the church is a man, in the world is a man that God has walked out on. Oh I don't believe he ever will, well then you don't believe the scripture. Why does David cry here, take not thy holy spirit from me? Because he'd seen a king by the name of Saul and he was anointed and he was filled with the Holy Ghost and he prophesied but he died a suicide.

What did he see him do? He saw him go here, he go there, he tries to find deliverance, he can't. The last thing he does, he's cringing at the feet of a dirty, filthy, spiritist medium and says bring up Samuel and Samuel came up, the only genuine appearance I think ever in history. And what did the king say to him? He said I've sinned.

And he said yes you have sinned. He thought oh no, no, no, kings have a special permit. But the spirit said, Samuel said you have sinned.

But here he is wandering around, God has taken his spirit from him, it says clearly. Do I believe that happened? Yes I do believe it does, not often but I believe it does. I used to take teams of young men round England, college fellows and they were all much smarter than me, I happened to help them if they weren't.

We had one young fellow who had been saved from a spiritist medium's home. He had been a spiritist medium. God miraculously saved him.

I've seen that fellow when we used to preach middays and midnights, catching people coming out of the legitimate theatres or movie houses. I've seen that young fellow hold a crowd spellbound for an hour while he just told his testimony of deliverance. He was marvellous.

I sat at the feet, as we say so very often as a figure of speech, I sat at the feet of Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, maybe one of the greatest expositors ever. And yet this young fellow when he had the anointing could

out-preach Campbell Morgan. But he got slack.

He back-slid, do you know why? Where everybody starts. Yes, a deacon's run away with a woman, he's back-slidden. No, that's the fruit of his back-sliding.

He back-slid months ago in his prayer life, in his devotional life, every back-slider starts there. So if you're chilling off in your experience of prayer, if Jesus isn't as real and as wonderful, if the word isn't sweeter than the honey in the honeycomb, get on your belly and groan. I saw that young man, as I say, move audiences.

There were six of us, we would pray, preach. I preached one night, the others would preach. Finally he quit, he had a church.

And then he got into some company that was rich, and he got into a high state of living. The last thing I heard about him was, he took off his clerical collar and banged it on the table after a Sunday night service. And he walked out, and he became a terrible drunkard.

Smoking, drinking, sinning, women, sure. I would almost cringe when he preached about holiness and the majesty of God. And yet that guy goes and sells out.

Did he go to hell? That's not my business. I'm telling you, you can lose the anointing of God. In fact, I guarantee ninety percent of the preachers in the country have lost it, if they ever had it.

The anointing of God is the hardest thing to get, this side of eternity, and it's the most difficult thing to keep. We begin to develop our own personality, our own eloquence, our own style. And instead of having the thundering anointing of God that makes people tremble, as I read about these men, tenants and others that preached.

And people would go home and weep the whole night through, and fast the next day, and weep the next day. And they couldn't be consoled, you couldn't whisper a scripture into their ears, until God put the fire of condemnation out through the blood of Jesus Christ. They were the most miserable men on earth.

Now God help us. We've got homosexuals in pulpits, we're ordaining homosexuals. Sin doesn't appear sin to the church, never mind to the one outside.

The word says there's no fear of God before there are. There's no fear of men in the world, there's no fear of God in the church. How many people tiptoe into the sanctuary expecting to meet God? Did you come here to meet God tonight? I preached a good-sized congregation last Sunday night.

I went there in Irving, Texas, the other side of Dallas. I asked them, did you come here to hear a sermon about God or did you come to meet God? He says, restore unto me the, oh come on, haven't you just read the charts? You know King Saul was up here and he's lost his job. Number one is David, he's selling all the records.

People in the streets are clapping their hands and singing Saul has slain his thousands, but David is tens of thousands. Come on, you're number one up on the chart. You're the greatest king, you've subdued the Philistines, you've subdued all your other enemies.

Don't get too worried just about a little trivial break in your devotional life, a bit of coldness. But once a man has tasted the fire of God he'll never be content until he gets back there. There's an old preacher in

England who used to say, if you had the fire you won't be content with the smoke.

Restore unto me the joy. The Methodists, again I have to quote them because I was raised a Methodist, went to a Methodist college. But they used to sing a lovely song, The Joyful News of Sins Forgiven.

One of the preachers every Sunday morning gives you a little bit of scripture there. What we have seen and heard with confidence we tell. The old Methodist hymn says, What we have seen and heard with confidence we tell and published to the sons of men the signs infallible.

With joyful news of sins forgiven, of hell subdued. And you can't get a squeak out of anybody. You say I didn't live a very bad life.

I mean, I wasn't lifted out of a horrible pit. I've got news for you. You were going to a horrible pit, worse than all the pits in the world put together.

You're going to an eternal hole, a place called hell. There's no way out. I'd love to be in a crusade, I'd love to be in a town where there came a deluge of Holy Ghost conviction, where people can't sleep at night, they don't want to buy, they don't want to sell, they don't want to go to a restaurant, they don't want to buy new clothes.

They suddenly realize that they are bound for eternity, either eternal life or eternal death. But that isn't ours anymore. It would be if we preached properly, it would be if we prayed properly.

It would be if we fasted properly. We're trying to become millionaires by paying a dime, and God says no. Again, revival will only work one way, and that's God's way.

He says, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. I guess I've told you before, the place where I met my precious wife. I preached on this psalm in 1937, and a woman came to the altar.

The tent was almost empty, she crawled practically up to the front. She was the ugliest woman I've seen, and I've seen some ugly women in my time, but anyhow, she was ugly. She was dressed in black, she was wrinkled as a prune, and she had all the signs of death about her.

She knelt, and I said, can I help you? She said, my name's Mrs. Shepherd. I said, so what Mrs. Shepherd? This has been a wonderful night. I said, well I didn't think it was super, the tent was nowhere near filled.

You don't realize, no I don't, forty years ago I was one of the outstanding officers in the Salvation Army, and I went home after a meeting and I had an argument with my partner. We'd quarreled over the hymns, and finally I said, well I'll have my way, and she wanted her way. I went home after the meeting so angry, I took off my uniform, and I just cut it to pieces.

I took off my skirt, and I cut it in strips. I took my straw Salvation Army bonnet, and I put it on the fire, and then I took my Bible, I ripped all the pages out. Then those big eyes began to weep.

Tears were bouncing off her craggy cheeks. She said, Mr. Raymond, tonight God spoke to me, the first time in forty years. When I walked out on God, I went to hear William Booth, and he cut thunder, hell, fire, but he never moved me.

I heard the holy man, Colonel Brangham, he never moved me. I heard Commissioner Lawley, outstandingly powerful in the Holy Ghost, he never moved me. I've been to meetings, I've heard the

world's great preachers, no one's ever moved me.

But she said, when you read the psalm tonight, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, I said, God that's it. I've never really smiled in forty years, I've never had any joy in forty years. I'm sour, I'm bitter, I'm antagonistic against God, I love nobody, I have opposition against everyone.

I said, well, let's pray, and we prayed. And she surely cried. That was about nine o'clock Saturday night.

I said, well, remember we have a prayer meeting in the morning at seven. I stayed on after that crusade to try and put that church together as it were. And you know that woman was the first at the prayer meeting, I've gone to the church at seven o'clock Sunday morning, and she'd be ankle deep in snow.

She was never late for a meeting. And she would say over and over again, oh, that verse became so real, with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation. The joy of since forgiven, the joy of being reconciled to God, the joy of having an eternal home in heaven.

I noticed the other week they announced on radio, J.B. Priestley, an English playwright, writer of popular books, he made a statement once when I was in England about, well, it was round about the 1930s. And he said, I drove my car up to a great church of England, a monolith, beautiful, like a miniature Westminster Abbey, and I drew my car to the side of the road and watched people go in. There was one man and ten women.

And he said when they went in they looked as though they were going to the dentist. He said, I waited till they finished and when they came out they looked as though they'd been. I don't think every meeting should be exciting in the sense that we mean, use a common word.

I think it should be inspiring. We can be broken with joy as well as with sorrow. What do you sing? Visions of rapture now burst on my sight.

What do you mean? When your eyes are closed? You mean when you get a revelation of the glory that's yet to be? As I've said before, if I could push the door of heaven open just an inch and you could look in and see, you'd never backslide? Your prayer life would never go cold? You'd never say, Lord, it's getting hard? Brother, one side inside eternity, we'll be embarrassed how little we really, really, really suffered and prayed and worshipped God. Let me leap over here a minute. He prayed the prayer of a sinner, he prayed the prayer of a backslider.

He's trying to get back to God, but look at verse 16, it says, Thou desirest not sacrifice. Why not? There's another way to God but sacrifice. You have to bring different sacrifices for different sins.

You have to bring them to but he says you don't desire sacrifice and he's still under the old economy of blood sacrifice. What's he saying? Thou desirest not sacrifice. God desires more than sacrifice.

What does he do? He desires a broken and a contrite heart. Three times he mentions brokenness here. In verse 8, Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

I've told you and I'll say it in less than a minute. I jumped out of a burning hotel in 1951 in Chicago and broke my back in three places, my left leg was broken in three places, my feet were broken. I lay there at two o'clock in the morning in the street, there was no place for a preacher to be.

But I couldn't move, my back was broken, my legs wouldn't function. A man came round the corner, he said, What are you doing here? I was tempted to say, Playing tennis, what do you think I'm doing? He said, You can't stay here. I said, I don't want to.

He said, Get up, I can't, I can't walk. Well then he said, You can't stay here. A car may come round the corner and you'll get hurt.

Oh brother. Hurt and I'm aching in every limb and my mind is going a thousand ways. My wife's four thousand miles away with three boys.

I had no insurance. I'm lying in a Chicago street in snow at nearly three o'clock in the morning, between two and three. Oh the man says, I've got to move you.

He put his hands under my legs and my back and lifted me and everything in me screamed. The bones which thou hast broken, is anything more painful than a broken bone? And he hasn't a broken bone in his body, he has a broken relationship with God. The trouble is that many people break their relationship with God.

They leave the sacred page for the sports page. A meeting is too long, particularly if the cowboys kick off at twelve o'clock. Apparently they got kicked off the field last Sunday.

That's because there's so many Christians watching and not praying. Dear, dear, dear. I'd love to have enough energy and strength and touch with God to pray that something would happen in Tyler where people just felt, again, that their relationship with God was broken and it's as painful.

There's nothing can heal it. But he says you have to have a broken and a contrite heart. You have to break with everything.

Break with your habits, break with your friends. But the inner man has to be broken. Thou desirest sacrifice, not sacrifice as I would give it.

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. He prayed the prayer of a sinner, he prayed the prayer of a backslider. Look at his prayer in verse ten.

He prays the ultimate for a human being to pray. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. I can never think of that.

Oh, if I go back into that some a minute. What does it say? It says, hide thy face from my sins. The most miserable man in the world is a man whose God has turned his face away from him.

I'm not sure God hasn't turned his face away from America. We don't even know it. That wonderful eightieth psalm, don't look at it now, but three times in that eightieth psalm, David said, he knows that the nation's in trouble.

He says, cause thy face to shine upon us. And that's all America needs, is God to smile upon us in his benevolence, in his mercy. Visit us just one more time.

Often when I pray, and then I bite my lip when I've prayed it, I say, Lord, spare America one more year. Like the man whose tree was going to be cut down, he says, don't cut it down, just let me fertilize it one year. And if it doesn't bear fruit, cut the thing down and burn it.

Do you think we love America enough to say that? Give us just twelve more months of mercy, twelve more months of grace, and after that, send us to hell if need be. So verse ten he says, what? Create in me a clean heart. Skip over to verse, pardon me, to Psalm 139.

When he's laden with guilt, when he's broken down with condemnation, when he knows his guilty past is catching up with him, what does he say? He says, hide thy face from my sins. Now look what he says here, at the end of the Psalm 139. Well, let me go to verse one a minute.

I think you take verses one to six, you'll see the omniscience of God. Verses seven to twelve, you'll see the omnipresence of God. Verses thirteen to eighteen, you'll see the omnipotence of God.

I think I can say that in my judgment, that Psalm 139 begins what is the grandest contemplation of divine omniscience that was ever put into words. Look at the majesty of God he's talking about. This is the God he's inviting to search him.

He says, O Lord, thou hast searched me, verse, pardon me, Psalm 139 verse one. O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou know'st.

And yet though he says God has searched him, though he says God knows, thou know'st my down-sitting and my upright. He not only knows, he says at the end of verse two, and you understand. And verse three, thou compass'st me about.

Verse four, there is not a word in my tongue, but thou know'st it altogether. He knows he's in an inescapable situation. For what reason? Because he says here in this verse, seven, Whither shall I go from thy presence? Here's omnipresent.

Whither shall I go from thy presence? Whither shall I go from thy spirit? If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea.

He says darkness cannot cover me. There's nothing can cover me. God has an all-seeing eye.

God's an omnipotent arm. And he's crying to this God to have mercy upon him. He says search me, O God.

The Hebrew word there is very emphatic. It says dig deep, Lord. He isn't saying search Israel.

He isn't saying search the high priest. He says search me, O God, and know my heart. Do you know there are about 120 references in the Psalms to the heart? There are about 19 references to the heart in this Psalm 139.

Remember what the scripture says? Search thy heart. In Proverbs it says the man that trusteth in his own heart is a fool. Why does it say create in me a clean heart? Because Jesus said out of the heart are the issues of life.

As a man thinketh in his heart, as I said last week, you can show me my brain on an x-ray, you can't show me my mind. You can show me my physical heart, you can't show me my emotions, you can't show you my will. And they're not just in a little ball of flesh there, otherwise when a man gets a heart transplant all his sins go with it.

I think it must be horrid for a woman to go in and her husband says, you know, darling, I've had a heart transplant. I've got a plastic heart. She says, well, dear, they'll have to be going.

He says, well, honey, I love you with all my heart. What, a plastic heart? Praise over and over and over again. One hymn he says, O for a heart to praise my God, a heart from sin set free, a heart that always feels the blood so freely shed for me, a heart in every thought renewed and full of love divine, perfect and right and pure and good, a copy Lord of mine.

Another hymn he says, refining fire go through my heart, illuminate my soul, scatter thy life through every part and sanctify the whole. In another hymn he says, 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. I think it was a Methodist, well, I remember the first time I was at Cliff College and they began to sing a hymn and if I remember right it was written by a Methodist.

I can't forget how it begins now. But I know Stanza says, I want, dear Lord, a soul on fire for thee, a soul baptized with heavenly energy. Okay, let's put it a bit down in the scriptures.

The scripture says we are to have the mind of Christ and the scripture says that a man thinketh in his heart. I don't think with my intellect, I think with my heart. If I have an impure heart, I have impure thinking, I have impure loving, I have impure desires.

If I have the mind of Christ, it's all this junk that goes through the mind of the average Christian, does he have the mind of Christ? There's only another mind you can have, the carnal mind which is enmity against God. And yet this man is reaching out, search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, know my thought, forget Israel, it's me, it's not my brother, not my sister, it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer. See if there be any wicked way in me.

And this is what he wants, and lead me in the way of everlasting. About two o'clock last Sunday morning I was preparing to go to that meeting, and I came across something which awed me, just a scrap of secular history. You know there are lots of Caesars, Julius Caesar, and how many other Caesars were there? Caligula, a whole bunch of them.

But Julius Caesar had a very, very beautiful daughter, and she married a man by the name of Pompey, a brilliant general. There was rivalry between her husband and her father, and she managed to be a peacemaker for years. Then suddenly she died, and Pompey became vicious, he became a great problem for Julius Caesar.

But somebody told Pompey, you don't need to stay in little Italy like this. There's a country over there, a very wonderful country. It's not only wonderful for gods like we have, but the God who made heaven and earth lives there.

They have a great temple built for him. And so he made the perilous journey all that way from Italy, and he went away there to Jerusalem. Well he went with a pomp and splendor that Romans went with, trumpets to herald him, and all the rest of it.

And after he'd been a day or two and got rested, he said, well where's the place where God lives? And they said, it's there, that great big temple. Well you remember in 740 years about, before Jesus was born, Uzziah went into the temple. And four school priests, plus Azariah, which makes eighty-one of them, tried to refrain him from going in.

But he fought them off. After all he'd changed the country, he'd subdued all his enemies, he'd changed the economy, he'd invented war machines, he was the idol of the crowd. I'll do as I want, I'll go into the temple.

So he went into the temple. You remember immediately he went into the temple he was smitten with leprosy. Isaiah 6 says, In the year that King Uzziah died.

You see it's no fun preaching. I don't care whether anybody, if there's somebody here lost tonight, they may get saved where they're sitting. Some of you, God is speaking to you for the last time.

What does he owe you? Nothing. He's prayed with you, people have prayed for you, they've given you tracts, you've heard sermons. If God cuts you off, you go to hell fire after this meeting, God owes you nothing.

And he won't blush when you see him. See, we say don't put off till tomorrow. The scripture says today if ye will harden your voice, harden not your hearts.

See how many times today is mentioned in the epistle to the Hebrews. We preach the gospels of God to Nevenboi. Well if you don't get saved tonight, oh maybe you have a date tomorrow and you go into some nightclub and you can have your fun and get drunk and have some women, have something else.

Don't put it off till Sunday. I was suggesting almighty God can come, you say you come and save me now, he says no, you had your chance. It's worth going through the New Testament to see how often it mentions today, today, today.

Well this man anyhow, he saw the splendors of the Jews, he saw their sacrifices, he went through the Gentile court, he went through the court of Israel, he came to the holy place, and he saw the showbread and the other things that were there. And in his arrogance he marched from there, there was a curtain dividing the holy place from the holy of holies. That curtain was six inches thick.

So when it's, the scripture says we rent from top to bottom, only God could do that, nobody else could do it. But when he saw that curtain and they said don't go in there, that's where God dwells. He dwells in thick darkness.

Nobody goes in but the high priest, not even a priest, a high priest only can go. A man who's been sanctified, a man who's been purified, a man who has a clean heart, a man who's been washed, a man who has a place across his forehead with holiness unto the Lord. You know lots of people don't like holiness.

Well go to hell if you don't. I'll tell you what's going to happen before long. The scripture says holiness is going to be on the bridles of the horses.

Holiness you'll go buying pots and pans in Sears and they give you some, you say I don't want those, I want holiness written on them. That's what the word of God says. And the scripture says holiness becometh thy house forever.

I know nothing more thrilling and more humiliating than the scripture 12 of Hebrews where it says about in verse 12 that we, we, we in this life now, we can be partakers of his holiness. That shakes me to my toes. Because two verses after that it says without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

It doesn't say without the gift of tongues they may be precious. It doesn't say without ministry, it doesn't say without miracles. It says without holiness you've no chance of getting into heaven.

It's a holy place prepared for holy people. Well this man goes in in all his arrogance. Thousands of Jews are watching outside to see what will happen.

He's gone into the, to the Gentile court, the Jewish court, he's gone into the holy place. He's going into the holy of holies and he has them rip that curtain open. And it was pitch black.

And he screamed out in, in unholy anger, God isn't here. They said God lived in here where no man could go. Then he comes with glory blinding more than the sun.

And he was angry. He'd made the journey so far. He'd gone through the different operations.

And he went there to the holy of holies and there was no God there. You hear his people say, Lord I wish you'd come in and see God in a glory. I'll tell you when he'd come when we're holy.

Without holiness no one shall see the Lord. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. We don't become beautiful by worshipping him.

We worship him because we are beautiful. He loves beauty. Over and over the psalmist talks about let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.

Is there anything more beautiful than a sanctified life? A life that bears the fruits of the Spirit? A life with love, joy, peace, long-suffering? The very character of God. And to be saved from hell is a fringe benefit. Jesus came more than to save us.

He came to cleanse us. More than to cleanse us he came to indwell us. I go back to the figure.

This man's come all the way from, and I don't know whether he came by land or over the land which he could do. Or whether he came by sea which was perilous. But he saw this great temple.

This is the temple where the great men of God walked. Jeremiah walked here. Hesychiah walked here.

Isaiah walked here. The most stupendous men that ever lived walked here. And he wanted to walk.

And he wanted to go in and see the glory of God. And it was as black as night. He screamed there.

There's no God here. Come on, what do you think? How many of our young people go to church? They go through a performance. Stand up and sing hymn 12.

Sit down. Stand up and sit down. Stand up and sit down.

Now the choir will sing. We go through the ritual and the kids come out saying, but God isn't there. We cheat them.

We explain them some little magic words of a preacher which he says so carefully. And he's very correct in his theology. But there's no living presence of the living God.

And they go away disgusted. Let me read this quickly to you before I close. Here's a man sitting on a plane, one of the most famous managers of the biggest rock and roll band in the world.

He says he relates it to me. In the conversation I had, in that conversation I was shaken to the core. My friend told me first of all that he was shocked at the intelligence of the man who was a musical genius.

He asked him what he thought was the future of rock and roll. Listen to it now, I didn't write this. If you study rock music, says this man who's the head of the biggest rock band in the world, if you study rock music you'll see it has gone through four phases, each one appealing to one side of human personality.

In the late 1950s and early 60s we appealed almost entirely to sex. In the late 1960s and 70s we moved young people into a new area of consciousness in the terms of their spirit. We involved them with causes.

It was then that drugs became a primary association with the rock culture. In the late 1970s we moved them into an addictive form of rock and roll called punk or new wave. Music was not really predicated on talent but mainly we were trying to create an addiction to violence.

And then he explained the fourth phase. We have just discovered, listen this is an ungodly man heading up one of the most satanic bands in the world. We have discovered the best motivation that there is to buy a product in the world, the best motivation in the world is religious commitment.

No human being ever makes a deeper commitment than a religious commitment. So we have decided in the 80s, in the 1980s we're going to have religious services in our concerts. We're going to pronounce ourselves as messiahs.

We're going to make intimate acquaintances and covenants with Satan to pray for the sick and pull people out of their wheelchairs. See the sarcasm there? You see on tea they yank somebody out and say you're healed and it's psychosomatic. To pray for the sick and pull them out of their wheelchairs.

We will be worshipped. Two years ago in Canada, in Toronto, a rock group that I will not name held a concert and it was attended by more than a hundred thousand people. At the end of the concert the group gave an altar call for young people to make covenants with the devil and hundreds and hundreds responsible.

We are moving into the fourth phase that the man on the plane predicted. The devil can psychosomatically create healing because of his power. What will happen when young people go to concerts, rock concerts and see miracles and come to church and see nothing? Do you think the devil isn't one up on us? Do you think we're going to dazzle people into the kingdom? You see again I say this and I'll finish here.

The trouble with most of us is we've never been in a revival. In revival the lights don't go out in the sanctuary for weeks. There's brokenness, there's contrition, humiliation.

Days of Jonathan Edwards, men screamed audibly as well as women, strong men screamed. Doctors, lawyers, teachers suddenly realized there's one common ground. We're all sinners, we're all lost.

There must be a door of mercy open and the only door that's open is through the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, creating me a clean heart. I've got to be broken, my pride has to be broken, my self-sufficiency has to be broken, leaning on my intellectual power has to be broken, my oratory, whatever it is. If you go to France, I've got one thing to say.

There's a village in France, there's an unusual monument. It's erected to a man called Palissy, a Palissy. He was a pioneer in making enamel.

The only other man keeping pace with him was a man who lived in Italy. And Palissy, or Palissy if you like, he made all kinds of beautiful, beautiful ornaments. He made them in blue, he made them in peacock blue, he made them in all the colors of the rainbow.

But never once could he make a vessel in white that wasn't marred. He used all his family's money. He did the work in his own room, he had a crucible there.

He had no money left, so what did he do? He took priceless antique furniture and he broke it and he fed it into that crucible. He kept making mixtures, he would make a vessel, hold it up, oh it's a slightest float in. People climbed on the windowsills and pointed, he's crazy.

He just wants to make a vessel like that, pure white. Just because his rival in Italy has made one. When he brought the new, he was mad.

He said if he can do it, I can do it. As I say, he sent his family bankrupt. He used all their priceless antiques to feed the crucible.

He got to the last mixture and he made his vessel. And he picked it up very cautiously, he held it up, he looked all around it, there wasn't a flaw in it. He screamed with delight, I've found it, I've found it.

It cost me everything but it's worth it. I wouldn't have those things back. I've done what that man's done and I'm told it's a better quality and it's a purer thing that I've made.

But it cost me every penny I had. It cost me my friends, they ridiculed me. My relatives ran away and said I was insane.

I took all the priceless furniture but I've got what I wanted. I wanted purity, I wanted purity and I've got it. Do you know when we get revival? When we long for purity more than anything else in the world.

I want, dear Lord, a heart that's true and clean, a sunlit heart with not a cloud between. Or where we can say, search me. You say the same as this man said, to an omnipotent God, an omniscient God, an omnipresent God.

He knows my thoughts are far off, he knows my down sitting, my uprighting. I can't hide in the dark, I can't hide in the light. Whither shall I go from thy presence? Whither shall I flee from thy spirit? If I make my bed in hell, thou art there.

And then he says, search me, O God. Paraphrase, it says, search me, O God, my actions try. And let my life appear as seen by thine all searching eye to mine, my ways make clear.

Search all my thoughts, is what he says. The secret springs, the motives that control. The chambers where polluted things hold empire of the soul.

Search till thy fiery glance hath cast its holy light through all. And I by grace am brought at last before thy face to fall. We've got to get to the place where there's nothing on God's earth I want, except purity.

Precious little petite French lady lived a century before Wesley. And she sums it up so beautifully for me anyhow. She says, nothing.

Here she is elite, favoured, mixing with royalty. But then she says, nothing on earth do I desire but thy pure love within my breast. This, only this will I require and freely give up all the rest.

Wealth, honour, pleasure, and what else this short enduring world can give. If you see the brevity of life and the length of eternity, you'll sneer at people almost who refuse to be totally committed to Jesus Christ. I got a letter today from a young man I haven't seen since, for 50 years.

Almost 50, nearly 40. He travelled with us a while. Tall, handsome, blonde fellow.

You had to look up to him, he was so tall. All the girls looked at him, he was so handsome. And he left us and he went to Timbuktu in the heart of the Sahara Desert.

And he's still there. He said, Len, I'm 73 years of age now. I've got a wonderful son.

And he hasn't had a furlough for 10 years. He said, our salvation down here physically is having a Land Rover, made in England of course. We have a Land Rover.

But he said, the nearest gas station is 100 miles away. I suppose by the time you fill up and get home it's time to go back for gas. But he said, my son, I admire him so much.

He said, who will come down here? There's one bunch of Muslims not too far from us, he said, and never once has a white man set his foot amongst them. Who will come? He said, who has made such a total commitment that they say, God Almighty, here it is, the past is the past. I live by faith.

I'll follow you. You can't give me a challenge too big. You can't give me a mountain too high to climb.

You can't give me a burden too great to carry. He said, Brother Len, can you do something for us? Here we are in this burning Sahara desert. It's a hell in itself really.

But he said, who will come? Do you think those easygoing young men in America will come with a sloppy lifestyle and wanting to eat and drink at every blessed place they pass? They want a Coke or a sandwich or something. Do you think any of those young men have the guts to lay everything on one side? Will those young American men come, he said, with their easy lifestyle? Or will the young Englishmen with their lack of discipline, he said? When you think of all that's put into training in America, those cowboys, how many months they train. The other athletes, how long they train? They're training now for the next Olympics.

Getting up at four o'clock, there's nobody there but a misty rotten morning. And they're looking at the gold all the way as they go pumping themselves through the air. We don't see eternity like that.

Most of us don't live in eternity. We live from meeting to meeting. And if it's a bigger meeting, we'll go to the bigger meeting.

If it's a bigger concert, we'll go to the bigger concert. Most Christians live by events. They don't live on sacrifice.

They don't live in total submission to Jesus Christ. But if I see the cancer in my breast and say there's no way that it can be removed except by merciful fingers that are operated by a hand with a nail print in it. And he can come and pluck out the root of sin from me, and he can fill me with love.

Nothing on earth do I desire. Wesley said that and it changed his life. It changed history.

Nothing on earth do I desire, but thy pure love within my breast. This only, this will I require. And freely give up all the rest.

And he did it. Converted at thirty-five, turn it round makes fifty-three. At fifty-three and thirty-five together makes eighty-eight, when he died.

And he left six English pound notes worth five dollars each. Six silver spoons, a faded minister's gown, a handful of books, and something else. What was that? Oh, I know.

The Methodist Church. I thought there was something else. Oh, well, holiness is old fashioned.

So it is. Truth is as far as that goes. Are you going to be a liar because everybody else is a liar? What does holiness mean? It means soul health.

The word holy comes from an Anglo-Saxon word halig, which means to be entire, to be whole. You know, the devil fears holiness. That's why people, they give up smoking and drinking, some other lousy thing that will kill them anyhow.

It's when you give up your rights to yourself, your rights to your future, the rights to your lifestyle, the rights to the dead, to lay in a mourning. And you make one joyful, glorious commitment that makes angels rejoice and demons mad. And from there God takes over completely and revolutionizes your life.

Your prayer life, your living, your giving, your talking, your walking, takes care of the whole lot. He gave his all for me, can I give less to him? Well, oh, I thought the pittance had gone, she hasn't. Let's sing a stanza as we go to prayer.

And I'm not going to dismiss you as I usually do, we're going to sing a stanza. When we come to the last line, we're going to get on our knees.

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