

Witness of the Spirit - Part 2

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel as central to the Christian life.

Duration: 1:03:18

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12, John 4:14, Acts 20:24, Romans 8:1, Romans 8:31, 2 Corinthians 4:18, Hebrews 11:1

Topics: "Witness Of The Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the loss of appreciation for the beauty and majesty of the gospel among preachers today. He shares a criticism from a book review that resonated with him, emphasizing the need to regain a deep understanding of the gospel's significance. The preacher then uses biblical examples, such as the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace, and Joseph's journey from being sold into slavery to becoming a ruler in Egypt, to illustrate the transformative power of going through trials and hardships. He encourages listeners to embrace difficult situations, as they can lead to spiritual growth and maturity.

Transcript

Yeah, I went to Jimmy Swaggart's the first, first day there I felt about as free as a man trying to swim in a pool of molasses. And that's pretty sticky, isn't it? But God is merciful. I preached that message around the world.

I preached it a hundred or two hundred times. Never had a worse time. It was terrible.

And the amplifying, or what do you call it, the PA system wasn't working, this side of the church couldn't hear. When David was there, the tide rolled in. When I got there, it had gone, I was left on the beach all by myself.

But the second day, God came. And when his glory fills a temple, it's indescribable. I've ceased making altar calls while we sing.

I believe that the basis of your life and mine is in our will. I said, here's the altar, it's for two things, for sacrifice or death. If you don't want to die, don't come.

If you do come, and the whole place broke up and dozens and dozens came and stayed and prayed, we understand. So thank you for praying. We're going to look at Romans chapter 8. Until January of this year,

I got a free copy, and I liked it because it was free, a free copy of the New York Times book review.

It's a very classic kind of thing, it's supposed to be the best in the world, and it gives, obviously, reviews of books. I liked it sometimes, it saved time, other times it wasted time. There's a criticism in that paper made about three years ago that fascinated me, humbled me.

The man had been reviewing a book, a Christian book, or a book by a preacher anyhow. And he said this, he said, the trouble with the preachers today is that they've lost sight of the awesome beauty and thrilling majesty of the gospel. I feel I'd like to put that in every Bible school, in every seminary.

We've lost sight of the awesome beauty and thrilling majesty of the gospel. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in 1773, he died in 1834. He was a great literary critic too, but he said of all the readings that he had made, and he had read thousands of books in different languages, he'd read the Koran and the Vedas and the Christian books, but he said the most sublime thing that was ever written was the Epistle of Paul to the Romans.

When I first came to America, my first trip was in 1950, at that time there was a genius by the name of Wilbur Smith, he was the man who checked all the Christian books and wrote reviews on them. He was in Moody, and from Moody, when he forgot to be Moody, he went over to, what's the other school in the West there? Full of seminary, but he was a genius at analyzing books. Well, he said if Samuel Taylor Coleridge made a correct judgment of the Epistle to the Romans, it's the most sublime thing ever written.

The eighth chapter is the most sublime thing in the sublime thing. Again, it is the majesty of the Holy Spirit of God. In the Epistle to the Romans, there are 26 references to the Holy Spirit.

18 of them are in this, that's 26 in Romans, 18 of them are in this one chapter of Romans 8. I was turning over in my mind about half past two this morning doing some meditating, a bit of writing, praying, I thought of a hymn written over a hundred years ago in England by a man by the name of Thomas Binney, not Finney, Binney. It's a gorgeous hymn, I'd never seen it in a hymn book in America, I wish we could learn it. It starts with eternal light, eternal light, how pure the soul must be.

When placed within thy searching sight it shrinks not, but with calm delights can live and look on thee. The spirits that surround thy throne, as you get them in the sixth chapter again of Isaiah, the spirits that surround thy throne may bear that burning bliss, but remember with two of their wings they've filtered the glory and majesty of God, they couldn't gaze upon him, and it was Jesus Christ, it says in the twelfth chapter of John, that was on that throne. They filtered the blazing light, the immaculate glory of God through their wings, otherwise they would have been blinded.

They covered themselves with two of their wings because while they couldn't bear to look upon him, they couldn't bear him to look upon them. You know, I'm praying, almost said dreaming by the day, there'll be such a searching of God going on in the next, I was going to say year or two, as long as the Lord leaves us around, that people will come to this place with their spiritual infirmities and spiritual needs, like they go down to the Mayo Clinic. I remember being in a plane and an old man staggered in.

His son sat next to me and he said, there's my dad, I'm sorry they held the plane up. We're going to the Mayo Clinic, it's the only place in the world where my daddy can get deliverance. We're wealthy, we're Jewish, we've everything we need except health for my daddy, and we've come, I don't know how many thousands of miles.

The Mayo Clinic is a magnet, it draws us, it's our only hope. Here is deliverance or there's no deliverance. I pray, I'm not conceited, I pray for the glory of God that people who are spiritually incurable anywhere else will find deliverance here.

People that are being cast away spiritually, broken-hearted, maybe broken-minded ministers, will know that there's something which seems to be exclusively the work of God here. Otherwise, why are we here? I was rude enough to say in Jimmy Swaggart's place, and I think he was sitting in the gallery then, I said, if you're a carbon copy of every other, what's the other place, Springfield, if you're a carbon copy of Springfield, or if you're a carbon copy of Christ for the nations, you shouldn't exist. Over the dinner table, he said, you're right, Brother Ravenhill, if we don't have a distinct mark, we shouldn't exist.

I said, you shouldn't. I didn't know whether he wanted sympathy, if he did, he didn't get it anyhow. I believe God wants, I'm not just selfish for here, I told Brother Crum up there, well, he came to my house, and I said, if the fire falls up there, we will rejoice as much as if it falls here.

I doubt if there's any other small community in Texas, if not America, which is as much soaked in prayer, and tears, and travel as this community. From here to Lindale, and just around, maybe about a 10 or 20 mile circle, the glory of God is laid up for us. And all he's waiting is for us to open up.

And when we open up, the Word will open up, and the heavens will open up. This again is a glorious chapter. The great Augustine said, if I could have three phases of history replayed, if I could witness three phases of history, here's my choice.

Number one, I would like to have seen Jesus Christ in the flesh. Number two, I would like to have seen one of the Caesars sweeping down the Appian Way with his fiery chariot, with the crowds on either side yelling for Caesar, and he had all his captives chained to the wheels of his chariot. Number one, Jesus Christ.

Number two, see a Caesar sweeping down into Rome with all his captives chained up behind him. And number three, he said, I would like to have heard the Apostle Paul preach. Well, so would I. Would you, David? What an amazing man he is.

He was born in the ancient capital of the world, Tarsus. He finished up in the military capital of the world, Rome. In between, he went to the intellectual capital of the world, Athens, in the 17th of the Acts of the Apostles.

He went to the religious capital of the world, Jerusalem, and he went to the corrupt capital of the world, Corinth. He's an amazing man. He has an unblemished record.

As Kipling would say, Kipling speaks of a character who once put on his seven-league boots. He had a marvelous introduction. Peter said to me, don't tell young people they have to take up their cross, but it's God's condition.

Paul says to Ananias, go to that man in that situation, on that place, on the road to Damascus, and tell him not what he must suffer, but what great things he must suffer for my name. That's bad psychology. Why do you start him off? Tell him he's heading for tribulation and distress and prisons and all the rest of it.

I say he's an amazing man. He put on his seven-league boots and he strode over Asia Minor. Look at his three outstanding missionary journeys.

Not only that, he did what no one else has done except a friend of mine. I don't believe him. He went to heaven for his vacation.

Now, don't look so incredulous. It says it in the book. He was caught up into the third heaven.

He was known on earth. He was known on heaven. He was known in hell.

David, I hope your name and mine. If the devil has ten most wanted men in America, I hope Dave Wilkinson and I are on the list. I think it's the greatest thing in the world.

The devil has to take recognition. It's not the easiest. It's the greatest.

We've no right to exist if we're going to be a mediocre church, if we're going to be a sample or a copy of somebody else. Not that we're seeking originality. We're seeking an answer to the situation.

And the answer for America is N.O.T. Not in the White House. It's in God's house. If you take all the hellish things you can think of, humanism, Romanism, the Adventisms, Moonism and Humanism, and put them all in one big ball, all together they cannot stop the progress of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The hindrance to the Church is in the Church. An unsanctified Church, an impure Church. I'd better tell you what this chapter says.

Remember how it begins? You must do. I only got one applause. David gets lots of them.

I got one applause from those students. That's when I said, I'm going to read from the Living Bible, the King James Version and the other part. I've got to get one somehow.

It begins with what? There is therefore now no condemnation. And it ends with what? There is no separation. No condemnation at the beginning, no separation at the end.

But it doesn't say there's no tribulation. In fact, it lays it all up. It stacks it up in between.

There is therefore now no condemnation. Jump down over to verse 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again.

You know, the supreme operation of the Holy Ghost in these closing minutes, not closing days or closing hours, closing minutes of this dispensation, the operation of the Holy Ghost today is not to make me an eloquent preacher or give me gifts of the Spirit as such. The supreme office of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus. Just glorify him.

To focus the eyes of the Church of the Living God on the resurrected Jesus, the enthroned Jesus. There remains no more sacrifice for sin. Every other sacrifice is false.

I remind you of the students again that while I tried to preach and pray and practice and promote prayer for 60 years, I realized a couple of years ago there's one supreme thing greater than prayer and that is worship. My sweet little, I was going to say granddaughter, she's not my granddaughter. Paul's wife when she was here said there's no prayer in heaven and she's right.

I've said that often. There is, there's one prayer being going on for 2,000 years in heaven. Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Worship is so awesome the devil said if you'll kneel down here, just one second, immediately you yield, you acknowledge your inferiority. Acknowledge the superiority of the person to who you kneel. You fall down.

I give you all the kingdoms of this world. He didn't mean the real estate because Jesus made them. He wanted to give him the religious system of the world which was the mightiest with the Jews.

He offered him the military majesty of the world which at that time was awesome because 50 years before Jesus was born, the Romans had come all the way from Rome and established cities like Bath in England where we used to live. It was established in 55 BC. Fall down and worship me.

It's so awesome that it's the occupation in heaven. It says in Hebrews 1, let the angels of God worship him. I said this week in the message, you know, right now is your time and mine to mature.

There'll be no maturity after we get to heaven. I don't believe at all. There'll be revelation.

All that's going to be done is being done now. God is forming my character now. I'm forming my character now.

Every day by my obedience I'm threading my garment to be worn there at the marriage supper of the Lamb. We sing Calpas hymn, the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day. And there have I, I don't like to sing there may I, I sing, there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away.

The dying thief rejoiced to see the fountain in his day. There have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away. There's a fountain open now for sin and for uncleanness.

Okay, let's look again here at this 8th chapter. There's no condemnation. One of the favorite verses of John Wesley, I must quote Wesley of course, is a 16th verse.

The spirit itself, now that's a very bad translation. The spirit is not in itself. He's not neuter.

He's a person. I think we could change that verse we sang now David. Let it breathe.

No, it, let him breathe on me. Let him breathe on me. Let the love of God now breathe.

The spirit itself, the spirit himself, beareth witness with our spirit that we're the children of God. How does he bear witness? Well, if we're unsaved, he bears witness with guilt, condemnation, fear of death, fear of man, fear of being exposed to my past record. He's faithful.

I think at this moment, I could be wrong. I'm not usually wrong, but anyhow, I could be wrong. I think right now the least emphasized ministry of the Holy Spirit of God is that he brings conviction.

We're asking people to come to the altar who have no conviction. They don't realize that while they may not be bad, they're dead. The first argument with God, of God with a man, is not that he's bad.

It's that he's dead in trespasses and in sin. He doesn't have to do any violent sins. Why did Adam get thrown out of the Garden of Eden? He didn't commit adultery.

He didn't steal something. His wife did and shared it, but anyhow, they were in trouble. But, what did he do? He said, I run my life and not God.

And the greatest sin in the world is to be of self enthroned on the heart. Skipping over to that verse again. In verse 34, verse 1 says, there is no condemnation.

Verse 34 says, who is he that condemneth? Now notice the who's there. In verse 34, who shall anything to the charge of God's elect? That's 33. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.

Go back to verse 31. Well then, shall we say to these things, if God be for us, who can be against us? It is Christ that died. Can his substitutionary death be contested? It is Christ that liveth make intercession for us.

Can we contest that? Who sitteth at the right hand of God, can his sovereign to be contested? The verse I want to latch on to actually, in the time I have, we're a bit late, it's not altogether our fault. Verse 37, nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. In all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loves us.

The seventh chapter of Romans is the chapter of gloom. The eighth chapter is the chapter of glory. The man in Romans 7 is a victim.

The man in Romans 8 is a victor. The man in Romans 7 is self-centered. The man in Romans 8 is Christ-centered.

Is there a bigger sweep in all our theology than Romans 7, where he says, it is Christ that dwelleth in me. Pardon me, it is sin that dwelleth in me. And in the next verse, he says, it is Christ that dwelleth in me.

Who worked the revolution? How is it this man is happy, consoled, that there is therefore now no condemnation. If the Lord isn't condemning us, bringing condemnation by fear, condemnation by guilt, condemnation by a conscience that feels as though he's got a burning cinder inside of there. He doesn't always witness with joy bells.

He witnesses with his peace. Peace, peace, it's the most needed thing in the world. In the last hundred years, there have been more than 8,000 peace treaties made in amongst all the nations of the world.

And we've less peace now than we ever had. We have the answer in the Prince of Peace. We have the answer in the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest man that ever lived, and that, of course, is the Sermon on the Mount.

It contains all the answers to those things David talked about this morning, which are disrupting families. Basically, what's the problem? In America or any other country? Basically, the problem is we can't live with each other. It's the problem of human relationships.

They're all answered in the fifth chapter of Matthew there, in the marvelous Sermon on the Mount. There's no more sacrifice for sins. There's no other program that will work.

The other week, I mentioned this amazing man, Paul. He's my favorite after Jesus. I said, remember his life.

It was an expensive life, because he said, he had to forfeit everything. I laid all down that I had, he said. It was an expensive life.

It cost him everything. It was an extensive life, because we're reading his epistles today. It was an explicit life, because he said, this one thing I do.

He never deviated. He never had a second string to his fiddle. We had a man in our church.

We had an orchestra in the church in Bolton, England. A number of wonderful instruments. One man had an old one-string fiddle.

He could get more out of that thing than the other's guy could out of four strings or anything else. He was a genius with it. Paul says this one thing.

He was... I believe, again, that Paul is the consummate example of a sanctified man. He has peace that passeth understanding. I like his peace.

I like his power. He could raise the dead. I'm not so sure I'd like the prisons that he lived in, but it's all in the deal.

I like his poise. None of these things move me. I think that's an awesome thing for him to say.

Where did he say that? I think in the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. I think it's in that chapter. I can't just mark it.

But remember, he had got some information, not by a vision, not by a dream, not by another prophet. He said, the Holy Ghost tells me that ahead of me there's tribulation and distress, but none of these things move me. Why is he so positive? He not only has peace, he not only has power, he's positive.

He's prophetic. None of these things are going to move me. Now, notice what he said.

People say, if you get filled with the Spirit, you know, oh, your feelings will never get hurt, everything. But he doesn't say, none of these things hurt me. He says, none of these things move me.

They may have been carving him up on the inside. Do you think it's wonderful to get a group of Spirit-filled men and every one of them quits? He says, all men forsook me, nevertheless the Lord stood by me. You know, we pray and ask God to do this, and God is wanting to pull the props away, and we won't let him do it.

And therefore, he can't reveal himself further to us, because we're leaning on so much flesh, so much human ability, so much human organization. This was totally void in the life of the Apostle Paul. The Acts 20, 24.

The Holy Spirit says that bonds and afflictions are ahead of me. Now, what do you do with this verse, here in Romans 8, 37? It goes beyond the bound of logic, doesn't it? I think it does. I don't know too much about logic.

But I know what he says here. In all these things, we are more than conquerors. Isn't that beyond the bounds of logic? How can you be more than a conqueror? Well, you can triumph and still have a margin of strength left.

But we're no more than conquerors on the basis of a strong theology or a strong history. I was so blessed, I mean, I spoke twice during the Easter period on the road to Emmaus. That was the most marvelous

Bible school in the world.

And yet, Jesus never touched prophecy. Why didn't he take the veil off and say to these disciples, this is going to happen, this is going to happen? He didn't do that. He went to history.

And beginning with Moses, he traced everything concerning himself. This book is supremely about Jesus Christ. The church exists to glorify the Lord Jesus.

The Holy Ghost exists to energize the church. But here, then, he says, in all these things. You know, he's got a lot to say about things in this chapter.

He said in verse 31, what do we say, then, to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Come on. If I have the resources of the eternal God, I should not be intimidated by the devil or circumstances or criticism or anything. God is for me.

Does it matter if principalities and powers are against me, as Paul says there? God is for me. Sure, I run into roadblocks sometimes. In fact, when I left Jimmy Swagger's that first day, oh, I should have stayed at home.

I was miserable. But the next day, young men met me in the foyer of the place and said, you know, that was so moving. God so spoke to me.

I thought, well, I said, thank you, thank you, thank you. And you know, everyone that came was a man, no women. Not that there's anything wrong with them.

I told them if I ran that school, I wouldn't let men and women sit together, and I wouldn't. I'd get so distracted, squeezing hands and nudging and trying to peck the girl's cheek. One guy did it till he got me to the edge.

I nearly, but I exercised my patience. I said, I went to a Bible school with 35 students and no girls. They're too distracting.

Of course, some of you got your wives there, so now you'll discredit me, but anyhow. You know, it's not easy, really. In one sense it is.

If you're totally in love, you've no eyes for anybody else. No woman in the world could allow me for my darling wife, she'd been a wonderful wife for 46 years. She has no rival.

Jesus Christ has no rival in my life. Isn't that true, David, in your life? I'm consumed with Him, with His love, with His will, with His purpose. Time is running out on us.

If we don't have a Holy Ghost revival, America will be dead in 10 years. Some of the most dreadful things, unimaginable things are going to happen. So, verse 31 says that, what should we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? In the next verse, who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies.

Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died. You know, if you were to vote me, the greatest Christian in the world, the Lord wouldn't say, I hadn't noticed that I had ravaged away down there, about 350 millions down on the list, but everybody votes Jesus. I've changed my mind about Him.

The only person who can change God's mind about me is me. If you're criticized and slandered and ridiculed, God will not take any notice of gossip except to criticize it. He won't change His value of David because when His new book comes out, He's going to get blasted north, south, east and west, and tribulations coming and trials and everything.

So what? God motivated. It is God who is for us. And if He's for us, how many, was it two-thirds of the heavenly host that fell? One-third, one-third.

So, I've got two-thirds on my side. I've got the Father on my side. I've got the Son on my side.

I've got the Holy Ghost on my side, and two-thirds of the heavenly host, and the saints of God, and all the promises of God. What do you think I'm going to do? Sit down and cry? Come on, you may never be a billionaire. I've struggled to get my first million, and the first billion.

How are you getting on, Dave? Okay, but I want to be a billionaire spiritually. It says here that we're heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus. Was Jesus ever defeated? Never.

Again, why does this man say this? In all these things, who says it? Is it an exaggeration? Is it an overstatement? Or is it some reckless young evangelist saying, you know, in all these things, a man with no experience, a man with no trials? When you go home again, read through the chapter and find how many times he emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit. This is not the voice of a rookie. There's a poem.

I don't know where it is. If you do, will you tell me afterwards? There's a poem that has a phrase in it, My head is bloodied but unbowed. Remember that? Anybody? No? You're as ignorant as me.

My head is bloody but unbowed. My head's dry, but there's no water. It's all right.

It doesn't matter. I'll get through it. Thank you.

The man who writes this epistle could truly say, My head is bloodied but unbowed. He's the most beaten, persecuted, opposed, none in the world. Why? Because he's ravaging the devil's kingdom.

Wherever he went, he had a revival or he had a revolution. We have neither, it seems. His head is bloodied, but he's writing out of wrong experience.

He says, Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors. What things? Well, a text is supposed to be interpreted from the context, which is the words that go before it and after it. In all these things, what things? I'll tell you what things.

Verse 35, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, wretchedness, peril, or sword. For thy sake, for thy sake, we are increasing in prosperity every day. Oh, I'm sorry.

It's the wrong version there. For thy sake, we are killed all the day long. It's not one flashing thing.

Persecution is his nearest companion. Persecution is his birthright in Jesus Christ. He recognizes that he's going the narrow way.

Everybody on the broad way is going to persecute him, find every reason to try and turn his feet out of the way. Listen to what he says. In all these things, what things? Let me read something to you here.

In 2 Corinthians 10, 24. In all these things, what things, Paul? Of the Jews, five times received thy forty stripes, save one. Five forties are two hundred, minus five is a hundred ninety-five, with a licked as life.

If he pulled his toga down, his back was like a plowed field. It was raw. It was ragged.

They had at the end of those five or ten lashes, sometimes there were ten, they had a spike of copper, and that's more painful even than steel, and they ripped his back a hundred and ninety-five times. What's wrong with the man? He says, I glory in what? Success. I glory in the fact I've written more epistles than anybody else.

I've traveled more miles than anybody else. No, no, he doesn't say that at all. That's all of God.

He says, I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in reproaches. Is there a philosophy in the world, a religion in the world that does that? We run away from those things. The very things that would make us, that give us character, pruned, and take all the surplus fat off us spiritually.

Of the Jews received I forty stripes, say one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I've been in a deep, thirty-six hours in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils of mine own countrymen, perils of the heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Boy, he just about exhausted the whole list, doesn't he? Then you go back into chapter four and read something else about this incredibly indestructible man. Chapter four, verse seventeen. What does he say? He's ridiculous.

This man is associated with tears and travail. I've read his list of sufferings, weariness, fastings, painfulness, three days, thirty-six hours in the deep, thrice I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, and under ninety-five is the bottom line, as we say these days. I think the angels must rejoice over this.

Our light affliction, which is but for... What? You must have miscalculated, Paul. Light affliction? You've gone through enough to wipe out a whole church congregation, never mind yourself. He says, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

We look not at the things which are seen. See, that's the whole trouble. Our present generation of Christians, we're mesmerized by materialism.

We're earthbound. We value like everybody else, almost. Value property, value everything as they do.

In God's name, what are we doing? We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. You don't stay hanging on a piece of wood in the Mediterranean forever.

You're there thirty-six hours, it feels like forever, but it's going to pass. Like somebody asking an old lady, what's your favorite scripture? She said, it came to pass. And the pastor said it what? It came to pass.

I didn't get that at college. What do you mean it came to pass? When trouble comes, you say, it came to pass. That's good.

Better than the Greek. For the trouble is we settle down. Why do we get heavy? Because we brood over our difficulties.

We brood over our... If we brooded, as David said this morning, if we brooded over our joys, if I brooded over the fact that the hill of Zion, as Isaac Watts says, even now, the hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets before we reach the heavenly field. Who has a companion that never needs them? I say Romans chapter seven, the man in Romans seven says he's suffering from the indwelling sin. I sometimes think that the best agents the devil has in this world are preachers.

They say, you know, Romans seven was where the apostles stopped. It's not. It happens to be there's a chapter called Romans eight.

Well, while you're in the flesh, you cannot please God. Where did it say that? Well, it says that in Romans, Romans eight one, there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not out of the flesh, but out of the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Previously, he says that we're in the flesh in chapter seven. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. And he follows it here by saying, but you're not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

And the Holy Ghost is given in the fourth verse that the righteousness of the law, people say the righteousness of the law is past. It isn't. We've got to keep the law.

The best thing you can tell young people is the Ten Commandments don't matter for today. God says they do. The ceremonial law of the Jewish past, we don't have to keep it.

The moral law, we have to keep. God sending what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh. God sending his son, so Jesus Christ has been sent.

In the likeness of sinful flesh, so Jesus Christ has been seen. That the righteousness of the law of God might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh.

They that are after the flesh, the spirit, the things of the spirit. Let me emphasize another verse here. Verse 13 says, if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit, I can do it by myself, but if by the spirit I mortify the deeds of the flesh, he'll keep things under control.

I have a right to eat, I've no right to be a glutton. I have a right to sleep, I've no right to be lazy. I have a right to expect adversity, I have no right to buckle underneath them.

If ye mortify the deeds of the of the body ye shall live. And then as many as are led by the spirit of God. The spirit bears witness.

The dear Quakers, I have to look at the day when I talk about Quakers. The Quakers used to talk about an authentic stop in the spirit. You're going to do something and suddenly the Lord says no.

He doesn't owe me any explanations. All he has for me is obedience. Not that I understand what he's doing.

I get an authentic stop in the spirit. I can't do it for no philosophical reason, for no moral reason. It's just that God says no.

And if he says no, who am I to say yes? If he says stop, who am I to go? You might have seen Paul going down the road. You say, Paul, I hear you had a great revival. I'm going to Bithynia now.

Oh, it's a rotten, corrupt, evil place. Somebody says six months after, you know what? I wonder if Paul got killed on that trip to Bithynia. He didn't go to Bithynia.

Told me he was going. I gave him some traveling expenses. He didn't.

Where did he go? Oh, he's over in Macedonia and other parts of the world. Why? The spirit of God stopped him on the way. What would have happened if he'd gone the other way? Supposing God had sent the ambassadors to India.

They say St. Thomas went there. We were in total darkness like these other countries are over in other areas of the world, Japan and China and elsewhere. God directed the message of God this way because he knew in his foreknowledge what was possible through the agencies here.

Verse 15 says, You have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear, but received the spirit of adoption. I love that word, adoption. I told him our little boy in England was going to a private school.

He always had money when the other boys were broken, broke. He'd come around with his candy, give them a dollar. He always had something to spare, a pair of shoes, socks.

One boy said to me one day, oh you, you come to school in the Rolls-Royce, your father's wealthy. Do you know what? The little boy said no. The man you've been calling your daddy for the last 10 years is not your daddy.

He said, you say that again, I'll give you a bloody nose. He said, it won't alter it, he's not your daddy. When the boy went home, the Rolls-Royce pulled up before this awesome mansion.

The little boy ran into his daddy's library and daddy says, oh I've got you that Christmas gift. I got you that little white pony you needed. The boy would not go to his daddy.

What's wrong? I want to ask you a question, daddy. Ask it, are you my daddy? Am I your daddy? Why do you ask? A boy at school says you're not my daddy. Are you my daddy? Come here, he said, sat him on his knees, said, you see out there, you see that, that village? You see all the smoking chimneys? I own every one of those mills.

I own most of the property. I own hundreds of acres. The yacht that we have our vacations on belongs to me.

The Rolls-Royce belongs to me. This mansion belongs to me. Let me tell you something.

Your daddy and mummy were killed in an air raid in Liverpool. You were picked up, they picked children up every night after the bombing, in trucks, dozens of them, homeless, forgotten, unclaimed. And he said, you were picked up with one of the trucks and they took you to an orphanage.

And mummy and I were told by the doctor we couldn't have any children, so we decided that we would go and choose a boy. And we had 500 boys to choose from. We got them down to 15 and then we got them down to five.

And mummy, I said, let's take the five, we've enough money to run the orphanage. Mother said, what? Start with five boys? Oh, come on, no, no. Well, let's ask some advice.

So they asked advice and finally they took this boy. Now he said, that's what happened. That little boy made you cry.

Yeah, because I thought you were my daddy. When you go back, he said, tell him this, I'm not your daddy. I've adopted you legally, I've changed your name, those factories, everything you see, the cars, the yacht, everything is in your name.

When I die, you inherit everything. And tell him this, not only are you one of the richest little boys in England, would you tell him this? That when we wanted a boy, we had 500 to choose from. But when he came to their house, they had to have him whether they wanted him or not.

Do you think the boy was sorry he was adopted? I have eternal life, I'm going to an eternal home. Pity me if you like, you'll waste your pity. Scorn me if you like, you'll waste your scorning.

How do I know I pass from death unto life? Because this book was once dead and it's alive. Somebody asked D.L. Moody and he wasn't much of a scholar. Somebody said, Mr. Moody, how do you know the Bible's inspired? He said, because it inspires me.

That's about the best answer you'd ever get. It should cost you ten dollars, but there's an offering box at the bank called Follet. His forebears, you may not know much about the Huguenots, they fled in persecution from France in 1620, something like that, and his forebears came over.

He became one of the greatest scholars, one of the most saintly men in the Pentecostal testimony in the last 100 years in America. I was reading some sayings of his. And one saying was, he said, Lord, let me live until I die.

Do you know what he meant? Don't just let me exist, let me live. Let me draw life. I'm a living Christ.

I'm a living Christ living in me. I'm not a Christian because I renounced sin and gave up dirty habits. I'm a Christian because I've been justified by the Lord Jesus Christ, sanctifying by His presence.

And Christ liveth in me, Paul says, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. I hate watches. Let's look at this verse a minute.

Verse 26 says, Like also the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, so the Spirit comes to aid me in my weakness. We know not what to pray for as we are, so the Spirit comes to help me in my ignorance. He maketh intercession for us with groanings, so he comes to help me in my weakness again.

As I read over this this morning, the early hours again. Paul's summary here of Jesus Christ is that he's totally adequate for everything in my life. The Holy Spirit will help my infirmity if I confess my weakness, because if we've gone on reading the other scriptures, he says, when I'm weak, then am I strong.

He helps my ignorance. I need illumination on the Word. I need illumination on the affairs of life, maybe, to translate them in the realm of this Word.

But let me recognize again, in all these things, all these things we tabulate, we can be more than conquered. This is the voice of experience. This is a man with a bloodied head, a broken body.

I think his jaw was out of shape. I think he limped. How could he be stoned three times and look like Adonis, the masculine figure of the Greeks? I'm sure he had marks all over his face with those rocks when he walked.

He'd been in fastings often, bodily presence. He was no orator in the 10th chapter of what? 2nd Corinthians there. He's looking up a bunch of intellectuals and they said his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible.

The orator of the early church, remember there were three people divided that church as it were. I'm of Paul, I'm of Paulus, I'm of Cephas. I'm of Paul, he's a great intellectual.

I'm of Paulus, he's the orator. I'm of Cephas because he once walked with Jesus. They said his bodily presence is weak.

Traditionally we're told he was about five feet one high and he had a hump back and a big nose and very unpresentable. He may have been outside but inwardly had the glory of God. He may have been a dwarf physically, he was a giant spiritually.

Again he had a trip into heaven for some time. He was known in hell, he was known all over the Roman empire. He made kings tremble, Felix tremble.

I guess Paul laughed about that secretly. And Agrippa, the rotten Agrippa was terrified. But could you step into the corruption of Corinth, the rottenness of Rome with a message less than this message in all these things? Whatever your twisted depraved nature is suffering from the power of the devil, whether you inherit it from people or you're occupied by the devil, it's possible for you to be cleansed, to be purified, to be in the dwelling place of God.

And in all these things, if your record of misery outruns, but he never had misery, he has majesty. He's never overcome, he's the overcomer. He's never defeated, he's the defeater.

All right, in all these things we're more than conquerors through him that loved us. Let me give you a list quickly, very quickly. Conquerors, overcomers.

Early this morning around two o'clock I was reading the 22nd chapter of Genesis there. One of the most amazing stories, I never heard anybody preach on it really. Here's a young boy, athletic, he'd never eaten junk food, lived in the open air all his life.

I think he was a hairy man, a strong man, a muscular man. He's going up the hill with his daddy and his daddy says, lift that rock and put it here with me. And they build an altar.

It's very difficult to build an altar, you're going to be sacrificed on yourself. In England, I used to read about the Hudson's Bay Company. I went there to preach some years ago.

The pastor there was a young man who had been in the Bible school when Billy Graham had it there in Minneapolis. He was dragging a withered leg. After he got up there, he had polio.

He had four beautiful little girls and they wore bridesmaid dresses every day because the dresses were too long that they send in the missionary barrel. He put every penny of his income, every penny apart from food, every Christmas gift, every gift to his children, he put in that little assembly hall to give it a new heating system. He got new seating, new heating.

The whole community was rejoicing. Then he began to lay down the law. Like Jesus didn't do so much healing, he laid down the laws of the kingdom.

And they voted him out of office. I said, where are you going? I don't know. But he said, I know there's a tribe of Indians down the railroad track.

There's no road out of Churchill, only a railroad track. I'll walk down that track and I'll meet with those Indians. I'll talk with them.

I may stay a week or a month. Where do you sleep? In my sleeping bag. What about the snow? I just brush it off in the morning.

What about food? Well, I get some Indians to let me buy a few things from them. If it's terribly severe, below zero, I knock on the door and say, please could I sleep here tonight? They say, come in. Daddy sleeps near the wall.

Umpteen children sleep in between. Oh, the wife sleeps near the wall, umpteen children. Daddy sleeps here.

I sleep behind when one turns you alter. I'm going to start a new work. Maybe it's the only way God could get me out of here.

They voted me out. I'm going to, he was put on an altar that he built himself. Oh, here's this healthy boy.

Daddy says, help me build an altar. He says, now son, climb on the altar. Would your 18 year old boy do that? His daddy binds him to the altar.

Would your son have punched you on the nose? I had to read it to really get hold of the thing again. The son is lying on the altar and the father takes the wood and puts it on the son, and in one hand he has a knife, in the other hand he has a bucket of fire. Why didn't the boy kick away when he submitted to his father? When he saw that knife go up and it's coming down to take his life, he was meek, type of Jesus I guess.

When he said nothing, he was a conqueror. When he was unbound, he was more than conqueror. The Hebrew children went into the fire.

Why, they could have fought their way out. When they went in with submission, they were conquerors. They were bound with their hands and feet and they hadn't a pen knife.

What did the fire do for them? It did the one thing they needed. It burnt off everything the world had put on them. It didn't singe their hair, it didn't burn their faces, it just liberated them.

In the last place they would have chosen to go to. Sometimes we're asking God to get us out of a situation in which he says, this situation will be your salvation if you go through it. You'll come out with maturity, you'll come out with strength, you'll be the man I want you.

You know you won't become a saint by reading your Bible, so forget it. And every morning you can get up and read streams in the desert or squirts in the wilderness or anything, it won't help you. It'll give you advice, it won't make you a saint.

The truth of God has to get in the bloodstream and be worked in us and work out your own salvation. God won't make me the way he makes Dave, won't make Dave the same way he makes Dr. Dave. He's got different methods, different patterns, there's only one apostle Paul.

Surely he's a type, again, of a truly sanctified life. The three Hebrew children could never have revealed, with all their talking, and though they were respected, it was then the king said, well I see the form of the fourth like unto the Son of God. What did he know about the Son of God? He was a heathen, except what they taught him.

But the only way to reveal the Son of God is you get in the fire and burn and don't squeal and don't ask for clemency, go through hell if need be. And in that horrible situation, when the furnace was heated seven times hotter, the glory of God was seven times greater. Isn't there a poem, I think, Faber said, he always wins who sides with God.

To him no chance is lost, God's will is sweetest to him when he triumphs at his cost. Here's a better illustration, here's a young man up here, his name is Joseph, pardon me, his name is Joseph. His daddy sends him down to Dothan with sandwiches and cheese.

Maybe that's a proof we should be vegetarians, I don't know. Sandwiches and cheese, go to your brothers. So he goes down from his home, he goes down to Dothan.

His brothers manipulate him, he was young enough to sock them, maybe do a bit of karate on them and fling them all over the place. What does he do? He comes down to Dothan, he's put down in a pit, he's sold, he goes down into Egypt. He's hit the bottom, no, he goes down in a prison cell again.

As far as I can see, Joseph was about 17 years of age when he went into that terrible situation. He was 30 years of age when he came out. John Baptist didn't minister till he was 30, Jesus didn't minister till he was 30.

A man could be a priest in Israel, a soldier when he was 20, a priest when he was 25, a high priest only when he was 30. It's a number of maturity. And here he comes out of this hell hole.

Isn't it something when somebody, Brother Dave says, pray for me, and you pray for them, and they get out of their situation and you're left stuck? You pray for somebody else, they get delivered, and you're left stuck. The butler and the baker said, pray for us, get us out. And he saw the baker go out, he saw the butler go out, and he's left still in this rotten old place.

What happened? He went down and down and down, down to Egypt, down to Dawson, down in the pit, down to Egypt, down in the pit, down to the bottom. He's forgotten, he's neglected. Then he starts going up.

When he went down in quietness, he was conqueror. But when he sat on the throne, when the king was away, gave him the keys of the kingdom, put a chain around his neck, you reign in my place as a king. You should go to the bottom.

We don't want to go to the bottom. Lord, that's far enough. Could you press the button and stop? No, you have three more stories.

What? Yeah, it's only going to take six months, and you'll be much more. Six what? Six months, you'll be through this trial. But when you come out, you'll be purified.

You'll be purged. You have this blessed man himself. With all his persecutions and all this, he is more than conqueror.

He adopts a son, Timothy. He has offspring spiritually all over the place. He's torn a hole in the side of the kingdom of the devil.

He's feared by men. He's feared by demons. He's adored by angels.

He has the anointing of God. He wrote a page that has never been repeated and maybe never will be repeated. On the other hand, it may be.

Let me just say this here. In all these things, we are more than conquerors. What? He said, I'm persuaded.

He's not guessing. It's not a philosophy. He says, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present.

And then he throws his shoulders back with a kind of holy defiance against the devil. He says, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth. What lies ahead of us? Holocaust.

And he says, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creatures shall be able to separate us from the love of God. Madame Guin, one of the greatest saints that ever lived, was put in the Bastille. There used to be a copy of it if you go to Washington, go in Mount Vernon, the house of Washington.

As you come out of the kitchen, go around the corner, go up the stairs, there's a table there, and it has a copy, a model of the Bastille. The walls were 30 feet thick. That little woman was put in there.

A pastor wasn't allowed to visit her. They took her Bible away from her. And there she is day after day, year after year.

She says, could I be cast where thou art not? That were indeed a dreadful spot. But with thee, my God, to guide the way, it is equal joy to go or stay. She says, it pleased the Lord, a little bird am I, shut off from fields of air, content within the cage to lie, because God has placed me here, well pleased a prisoner to be, because, my God, it pleaseth thee.

God doesn't tell me to be a success. He tells me to be obedient. If he gives success, fine.

If he doesn't, that's all right. The Spirit bears witness with peace, with joy, with assurance, blessed assurance. Sometimes I'm here, I like to stop a meeting and say, let's start right here.

Well, how do you know you've got assurance? What is assurance? What do you know? I've got assurance. But there's no condemnation. I say, Paul could not have gone to corrupt Corinth and rotten

Rome.

Read the first chapter of Romans. How do you go to twisted, deformed, depraved, devilish men with anything less than a message that can make them more than conqueror? If you've been a slave to liquor for twenty years, he can snap the fetter. If you've been a secret slave to lust, he can break that fetter.

If you have some other bondage, if you've got a cruel thing called pride, or enmity, or jealousy, he says, and I'll finish with this, David, I won't go further. I think he wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, and in Hebrews 7, 25, he says, concerning this Christ, he is able to save to the uttermost. And so he said, to the guttermost, and the uppermost, and the muttermost.

The whole scope is covered by the redemptory work of Jesus Christ. I used to like to sleep in my granny's home. I think it should be illegal to be a grandmother and not have a rocking chair.

So, David, you've got to get one now for Greg. Good. I used to get, my grandmother was a pretty hefty woman.

She wore those aprons, you know, little blue and white check, and she'd take the corners like, why do you do that? She said, this is my tabernacle. And she'd sing Blessed Assurance, or some other wonderful hymn like that. Hymns like Holy, no, what was the other one? Take, thank you dear, take time to be holy, speak off with thy lot, and she did that.

There's another hymn that she liked. Let me think, I'll do it now for a moment. It was about full salvation.

How amazing God's compassion, that so vile a worm should prove, this stupendous bliss of heaven, this unmeasured wealth of love, it reaches me, it reaches me, wondrous grace, it reaches me. Sure, David's a wonderful expert on all that goes on in the underworld. He lives for it.

I salute him always. He'll be going off soon into a, he doesn't need to go in those hell holes. He risks his life, he's going.

But he knows the effect, he knows the power of the gospel, that Jesus is able to save to the uttermost. Take the other side, just one. Two of the most amazing brothers in history, surely, were Charles Wesley and John Wesley.

In Westminster Abbey, or no, I think it's in St. Paul's Cathedral, there's a disc on the wall with the profiles of those two men. The great American hymn writer Fanny Crosby wrote over 3,000 hymns. Charles Wesley wrote, I think, over 6,000.

One of the greatest is that lovely hymn, Can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood? Died he for me who caused this pain? For me who him to death pursued? Amazing love, how can it be that thou, my God, should serve? Now here is a gentleman, a scholar, a man of impeccable morality, a man who never transgressed any known law, a model preacher in the Church of England, and he writes, long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night, thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke with dungeon flame with light, my chains fell off. I think I know where the church is right now. She's Lazarus.

Jesus went to the tomb of Lazarus and said, come forth. He shuffled out, dead as dead could be, but he got up and walked to the door of the sepulcher, gagged, feet bound, hands bound. Loose him and let him

go.

I'm convinced that I'll answer to God. I believe that 99% of the Christians in America and the world are still gagged, still bound, bound with tradition, bound with fear, bound with what the consequences may be if I really follow God and I get liberated. I may lose my inheritance.

I may lose my friends. Fear is a terrible monster that binds. In fact, many of them are even afraid of death, afraid of a coming war.

But Wesley says, long my imprisoned spirit lay. He hadn't a record of crime. He had never done violent things.

He wasn't guilty of murder. He wasn't guilty of some hellish corruption, but he had an imprisoned spirit. The law of Romans 7 is the law of death.

The law of Romans 8 is the law of spirit of life, has made me free from the law of sin and death, and not only made me free, but keeps me free, as long as I'm obedient. My chains fell off. My heart was free.

I rose, went forth, and followed thee. Maybe I'll finish this sermon another time.

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