

Ye Are the Light

by Leonard Ravenhill

We are in one of two kingdoms: the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness, and we must choose which one to follow.

Duration: 59:49

Scripture: Matthew 5:13

Topics: "Christian Life", "Light in Darkness", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the stark contrast between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, urging believers to recognize their role as the light of the world. He highlights the importance of not compromising with the world or signing an armistice with Satan, as true discipleship requires a lifelong commitment to Christ. Ravenhill illustrates the struggles of those who serve God faithfully, often unnoticed by the world, and the necessity of maintaining one's spiritual light amidst moral decay. He calls for Christians to shine brightly in a dark world, reminding them that their light must be kept burning through discipline and devotion to God.

Transcript

We're still in the same chapter, Matthew chapter 5, Matthew 5, 13. Near the salt of the earth, if the salt have lost its savour wherewith shall it be salted, it is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and be trodden under foot of men. Near the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

And let's emphasize again the fact that we're trying to get established in our own minds that there are two kingdoms only, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Another way to say it is the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, kingdom of truth and the kingdom of error. And these two kingdoms don't just contrast, they conflict.

We've got to keep in mind the fact that we never have to make peace with the world, we never have to make peace with our archenemy Satan. We can't have any, what they used to call, what they call them during the war, at the end of the war, signing an armistice. We can't sign any armistice.

When we signed on the dotted line to serve Jesus, we signed on for life, no retirement. Other armies you get a pension maybe, but not in this one, at least not in this life, in that which is to come, all right. And so it's a warfare, it's a conflict.

There are two opposite, I call them ideologies, or ideologies if you like, and they cannot in any way be reconciled. I thought of this this week when, in one of the announcements, it said a certain girl had won three medals and she was coming home and get a hero's reception, you know, ticker tape and everybody's going to be shouting, that's fine, it belongs this world and the world loves its heroes. I wondered if some missionary came into the same city that afternoon, beaten up after fighting the devil and scarred and lonely and disappointed and crushed.

If anybody would have noticed, they went in the city. There was a missionary coming in a few years ago, I think the time that Eisenhower came into New York and received a hero's welcome, which was all right. But everybody was told to stand back.

I'd been on boats when they said that, they didn't say stand back for me either. Everybody had to stand back until somebody distinguished went down the gangway. And when Mr. Eisenhower came, the trumpets were there, the band was there, the TV cameras were there, the interviewers were there, swarming around, here this great man is coming, fine.

But there's a missionary on the deck of the boat and he'd had a pretty rough time for about 30 years in Africa and he was coming home, he'd been through the problems, you know, getting malaria, malnutrition, disappointment, criticism by the home board, you know, when the devil hasn't enough you can always get somebody else to help him along and he just felt that he's sharing everybody else, isn't he? He was really under the weather. And he said, Satan said to him, now look what this fellow gets. He's only been out there a few years, you've been out 30, you won't get any medals.

They won't put your photo on the front of Time magazine. You won't get a pension for this. He began to tell him all the things he wouldn't get.

Boy, he said he was just about ready to slip over the deck rail into the water. And he said, I just felt, well I guess that's right too. Boy, you get beaten up, battered up, criticized, lack of funds, lack of this, lack of everything.

And he said just about when he felt right at the bottom, the Lord just whispered in his ear, son, you're not home yet. Makes all the difference, doesn't it? Sure the world will reward its own. They go after the honors that the apostle said and he says, think how they strive.

They don't even give them medals over at Innsbruck or whatever these things folk have been trying to kill themselves and break their legs skiing and whatnot. But you've got to work mighty hard for it. The girl that missed the golden, the medal, the gold medal, missed it by, what was it, a two hundredth part of a second.

I think that's disgraceful. You should give them both medals at that rate. I mean, not many people try to commit suicide at 200 miles an hour, but there you are.

But it's the world, it's the world. But what they do for it, they discipline, they train, they risk their necks. More than one, there's one girl now that attempted some great big skiing effort a few years ago, paralyzed from her shoulders down to her feet, from about 20 years of age till she's 70.

The world loves its own. If you've been up north just a few days ago, they carried a casket out of a house. Cheapest you could ever see.

Little old man, a friend of mine, 90 years of age. He wasn't withered and worn either, he was more healthy looking than I am. Ninety years of age, in a little casket.

Cheapest you could ever get. But what's unique about dying at that age? Nothing. Do you know there are more than 5,000 people in America over 100 years of age? Isn't that tremendous? So we keep going on, some of us.

But anyhow, this little man, 90 years of age, was carried out in a common wood casket. Do you know the unique thing about him? He hadn't been out of that house once in nearly 13 years. You think of that? You know, there's a saying in the world, when something goes wrong, they don't make them like they used to, or they don't make them like they used to, you know.

But I'll tell you what, God makes them like He used to, if we can get the stuff. There aren't many folk around at that age, are there? There are not many folk that haven't been out of their house, out of doors, for 12 and a half years. He was wed in to the task God gave him.

He was a strict, spiritual athlete. He was prepared to carry the cross the Lord had given to him. And this is what the Lord asks of us.

All right, then there are two kingdoms, the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. Now, it was Alexander Pope, if I remember right, a poet who said that hope springs eternal in the human breast. It never dies.

Well, that can't be right. If it was, nobody would ever commit suicide. There is a point where people give up, give in, and get out.

They don't get out. They only get into trouble. Don't get out of it.

But you know, there seems to be an element of truth in it when you remember that Arnold Toynbee, I suppose he is to modern history what Herodotus was to ancient history, maybe. He's the father of modern history. And Arnold Toynbee reminds us that 19 times men have built a permanent civilization and it's fallen down.

Now, if you built a house and it fell down, would you build it right up again without checking on something? And if you did build it up and it fell down again, do you think you'd have courage enough to rebuild it and build it 19 times? That's what civilization has done. Oh, this is permanent. This is not like the other thing.

I mean, we've got it this time. And yet 19 times the house has fallen down. So either the foundation is wrong or the material is wrong or the guy that's building it doesn't know what he's doing.

And now we've come to another civilization. You see, the thing that I want to pass on to you today is this, that Jesus says in this 14th verse, Ye are the light of the world. Now, he says he is the light of the world.

In this great gospel, as we call it, the gospel of John, Jesus makes stupendous claims. I like the I am's of Jesus. I am the door.

I am the light. I am the resurrection and the life. And writing there in John, in John 8, Jesus says, Ye speak unto them, saying, I am the light of the world, and he that dwelleth in me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

Now again, there are only two kingdoms. There's not, you can't be on a bridge between the two. Every one of us here this afternoon is in one of two kingdoms.

We're walking one of two ways. The broad way that leadeth to destruction, the narrow way that leadeth to life eternal. We're under one of two masters.

You're of your father the devil, Jesus said. Do you wonder people didn't like him? Now it's not very flattering, is it? Particularly when they were religious and impeccable, they thought, and they kept every conceivable law and did everything that was right. Externally, Jesus says, you're beautiful outside, but inwardly you're like the sepulcher on the side of the hill.

They whitewash it every month to keep it looking nice. Well, I wouldn't like to live in a sepulcher, how nice looking it was. And Jesus said, outside it looks beautiful, but inwardly it's full of dead men's bones.

You know, you can say in one sense this book is about light, isn't it? What did God say at the beginning? Let there be light. What did it say at the end? I like that book of Revelation. I've got to love it more and more the last few years.

I don't know why, but I do. But, you know, it says at the end, there's no need of light. He is the light.

My, that's going to be great, isn't it? You know, it doesn't mean much now, if you go out there and shine a flashlight, it doesn't mean much. You get in your automobile at night on a dark road, put the headlights on, the way they go. But in the war time in England, we were not allowed to drive like that.

You had to put a disc over your headlight with a little hole in it as big as a shilling, which was as big as a quarter, maybe a bit less. And that was the only light you could have. That's how I sprained my eyes.

I used to speak at a military camp, one of the largest RAF camps, Royal Air Force camps in Britain. And I had to go up this mountain in the dark at night, creeping with my headlights, you know, snaking up that horrible road. And oh, it sprained your eyes.

And I learned the value of light. When do you learn the value of light? Well, when you're in the darkness. When do you learn the value of freedom? When you're in jail.

I got sick to death, and I'm not playing with words, when I was in New York with Dave Wilkerson and the youngsters that came to New York thinking, if only I can get away from home. And they discovered when they got away from home, nobody pays your bills. And either you steal, or if you're a girl, you're a prostitute, or you're a boy, you go and you get in jail.

And all we were doing was handling the wreckage of young people's lives who were smart enough to run it. Do you think it would happen to me? Everybody came to Teen Challenge. I challenged with the same thing.

One of the most beautiful girls in America. She was going to marry a prince in this country, a multimillionaire. I'd been in his home.

Oh, she was gorgeous. She had four mink coats, full length, worth \$4,000, \$6,000 each, ten years ago. She had rings on her fingers and bells on her toes, and she was gorgeous looking.

The only thing is, she ended up in the gutter. And I remember she came in our office, and I faced her up with Dave Wilkerson. And she said, get my friend off drugs.

She's on drugs. And Dave said, you need help. And she burst into tears like a bop.

You know what she said? I've got jewels. I live with a Hollywood crowd. Give me the name of a film star I haven't slept with.

Tell me the name of so-and-so. She went down the line. You know the bitterest thing was this, that she told me there in that office.

She said, you know, oh, I can recite, let's see, the 23rd Psalm. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want Psalm number eight. She went down the list.

And she said, you know, I used to sing in the choir of a Pentecostal church. David put his hand on her table, and he said, oh, look here. Oh, this is the New York News.

She had a picture about that size of a photograph of the girl that was once as pure as a lily and found she could manage her own life and couldn't find it. And it's when you get into that kind of thing, you discover what freedom is and what purity is and what things really are. Somebody said the prodigal son needed to go to hell, as it were, to find out the value of things.

That's rather like saying if you've never been injured, well, there's a bus coming down the road, throw yourself in front of it just to prove how good doctors are and antibiotics and modern medicine. I think there are better ways of proving it than that. You see, there are two kingdoms, the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light.

And I'll tell you one thing amongst others, you'll hear Madeleine O'Hare making fun. She made a fool out of one of the most famous Southern Baptist preachers not long ago on TV. And she mocked everybody that's Christian, but I'll tell you what, you'll never find people like that suggesting they go to heathen darkness and start pulling people out of the hellishness of heathenism.

A very famous doctor preached over the BBC in England before we left, made fun of Christianity, what has it done? I offered to give a pound note along with anybody else that would give it to ship him and his brood to a place I'd been to in New Guinea where the people are still in stark nakedness and there's cannibalism and all the devilry you can imagine. I said, go there and work your philosophy out. This is a lovely room, I like it very much.

I couldn't build it, I could destroy it. I could set fire to it, I could drop a bomb in it. You don't need to be a genius to pull down Christianity or skid at it, produce something better, there is nothing under God's heaven.

This is why Satan hates light, because light exposes. And the apostle, when he's writing in the 26th chapter there of the Acts of the Apostles, and I wish preachers would read this every week on their knees and I keep telling them to do that. He said, God called me exclusively for this purpose to make me a minister.

Well a man ought to know God calls him before he ever gets in. And he says, this is my job to take people out of darkness into light. To deliver them from the power of Satan unto God.

There's no greater job in the world. Fighting Muhammad Ali is a schoolboy's job compared to fighting the devil. This is the greatest task in the world.

To bring people who love darkness, because they love darkness more than light, the word of God says, they love darkness more than light. Why? Because their deeds are evil. Now some people say, well they're still saying it.

They're still saying what they were saying a hundred years ago, that the way to emancipate the world is to educate it. Bertrand Russell said that. He didn't like the Bible, he didn't like the Ten Commandments particularly since it's about five or six wives.

But he never found anything that could substitute it. He never found anything to transform men and women out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear son. He couldn't do it, it is not possible to do it.

Now you have your opinion, I have mine. Do you know what I think? I think we, as Malcolm Muggeridge said at that recent convention, though I said it before him, I don't know whether he heard and copied it, but Malcolm Muggeridge says this, we're moving back into the dark ages again. You see that was a period until about the 13th century, 13th, no 14th, 15th century in Europe, before that Oxford University had been established in the 13th century.

And that is a sense in which knowledge brings light. Of course it does. We're always glad for every new discovery that science makes.

But you see we're dealing with something that the x-ray can't find, the computer can't analyze it. We're dealing with something which is called sin, which is not a substance like a rotten tooth you can pull out. I wish you couldn't do that, I get a lot of folk in hospital.

If you could eradicate sin by giving people an injection, if you could pull it out like a rotten tooth, it's not possible to do that. The only way that it can be done is to, of course, visit Calvary, as we say. Now man was born in light.

God loves light. God said in the beginning, let there be two lights, one to rule the day and the other to rule the night. And right through the word of God you find the gospel is referred to, and Christ is referred to as light.

The people that sat in darkness, Isaiah says, have seen a great light. He's called the son of righteousness. Well you know the difference when there's sun and there's no sun.

We watched the sun go down last night and I said to someone, well there it is and all the faith in the world won't bring it rolling back. I don't care how much faith you have, you can't say the sun come back. Well somebody said Joshua did that, yes he did.

He made the sun stand still. And everybody talks about those extra hours when Joshua said, sun stands still on Gibeon and thou moon in the valley of Agil. And he hadn't time to finish the job.

So he got daylight saving on his own, it was the first time it was done. Very good. So he lengthened the day.

But what about the other part of the story? The 27th chapter in the Acts of the Apostles, the longest night on record, went for how many days? 14 days, 14 nights. There was no sun, there was no moon, there were no stars, nobody ate, everybody was terrified. I think that's a great picture, I love it.

I love it because it's a miserable. They were all seasick, nervous, terrified, hungry, screaming children, tossing waves. The ship was breaking, the spars were flying, the winds were roaring, and the seas were roaring and howling, and it was just black and black and desolate, day after day after day after day, and finally they said, look, let's throw the cargo overboard.

Okay, throw the cargo overboard. Throw the extra gear overboard, they threw that overboard. In fact, they were going to throw everybody overboard, and Paul came on the deck.

This is why I like it, preachers save the situation. Not the pilots, a preacher. I think they took him for a walk on the deck, like people walk their dogs, you know.

Some people let them run wild, but some people take them for a walk. It's very nice to see a prisoner taken on board a ship, isn't it? Chains on him, little man, his nose is all twisted, and his face is pleated where they didn't sew it up properly, and one eye hangs down and he has a limp. What do you think he went like, Hercules? That big colored boy is always saying, I'm handsome.

Well, if he didn't say it, nobody else would, I'm sure, but anyhow, he's always saying, I haven't a mark on me, what a marvelous body, and I walked into him one day, and I looked up at him, he's certainly a character. Do you think Paul was athletic? Paul's poor old body was twisted, hunger, weariness, fast, when he wasn't short of food, he fasted. That takes a bit of courage when he was constantly going without food.

He had everything under control, body discipline, mind discipline, spirit discipline. Somebody once said, why didn't the lions eat Daniel in the lion's den? And the little kid said, because he was all grit and backbone. Pretty good answer.

That's the same reason why the Apostle Paul was an embarrassment to the devil. Why? Because Satan couldn't get at him on any level at all, he'd taken full measure. You see, after he was saved, that was one thing, he says, on that Damascus road, God revealed himself to me.

I think that's beautiful. But he went in the wilderness, and he had about three and a half years by himself. Do you remember the difference? He says, on the Damascus road, God revealed himself to me, because he said, there shone round about me, and then that journeyed with me, a light from heaven.

He never forgot the day when the light came upon him. And he says, on that Damascus road, he revealed himself to me, and in the wilderness, he revealed himself in me. Makes all the difference in the world.

Revealing himself to him, revealing himself in him. This man carried the load. You couldn't discourage him.

In other words, in the words of Jesus, he sat down and he counted the cars. He was going to fight against principalities and powers. In Ephesians 6, what does he say? He says, if you're a believer, well look, I'll give you some advice.

He says, put on the whole armour of God, because if you're a real Christian, you're going to have conflict with, what? The rulers of the, of the what? The darkness. He conceived the world in darkness. Well, if you go around here, it may not trouble you too much.

If you say, well I can find myself a way in the dark, maybe you could. Would you like to go in the forest? Would you like to go in some part of the world? I remember once speaking to three different tribes of people in the heart of New Guinea. And when I'd finished, it was late at night, maybe eleven o'clock, and I remember they opened the door of that small mission station with three different tribes of people in, and we went out into the darkness.

There's a scripture that talks about the darkness that can be felt, like an Egyptian night. And, it was like that. There wasn't a star, there was no sun, there was no moon.

It was black. You put your hand out like that, you had no idea where it was. It was the blackest black I'd ever seen.

Are there shades of blackness? I think so. The scripture talks about gross darkness. And the little boy who asked his mother what that meant, his brother said, well anybody knows that, 144 times darker than normal.

Well, that may not be what Isaiah meant, but that's what it says, gross darkness. It was gross darkness that night, it was terrible. You couldn't see a thing.

Personally, I wouldn't like to have gone through that jungle that night. Not because I was afraid of wild beasts, I'll tell you what happened with the people that ran out of the meeting room, they put their fingers in their mouths and they, made noises, why? Because they were terrified. Because they were terrified.

Things move around in the dark. They believe the demons came in the dark, I don't doubt that at all. You see, this is why, so, such enlightened people are so grossly in the dark.

Because they say, well leave the heathen alone, they're happy. Well all they have to do is go spend a week there, go spend a day there and see if they are. Watch them bury the dead and see if you think they're happy.

I get sick of people who say, well I'm not too worried about Christianity, I don't get anything from it. Look, the very fact that you're here civilizes this afternoon. Whether you're a man or a woman, you're here because of Christianity.

There is no love where there's no Christianity. I've been in countries where girls are married at six and seven years of age, and become just servants of men and have to stay like that. I've been in other areas where a man has four or five women and they're just chattels, that's all they are.

They do everything from burying the children to digging the gardens from morning till night while the men sit and smoke and carry on all day. The only reason we have any emancipation at all for women is because of the gospel anyhow. People are trying to fight off other things, but they're fighting with morality and so forth and so on.

Well, we have a thousand benefits from Christianity, there's no question about that at all. The light has come. Sure, around what, the 14th century was it? 15th? Gutenberg gave us the Bible, the first one that

we knew to move, use movable press and lights and plates and so forth.

And the result is we got the word of God spread abroad and we got so many other things. Education surely brought a certain amount of revelation. And now we're going back into the dark ages.

The simple difference to me between people in the jungle and people say in America or England is that people over there would hear the gospel if they could and over here people could hear it if they would. I usually get into trouble when I go to churches. Do you know why? Because on a Sunday night you're expected to go up with a bunch of teenagers that want to put their arms around each other on the back pews and I raise Cain.

And I say to them, look, if you do it once more I'll call you out if you're a blonde or a redhead or you're a black-haired boy or what, and you'll stand up and answer to your father and mother. I've seen churches get into chaos nearly some Sunday night. But I'm not going to let youngsters who are so-called educated and supposed to have morals and supposed to have even good manners upset a meeting.

I'm not going to sweat and pray and pour my heart out before God while kids are impudent. No, forget it. I'd rather talk to three or four people who are sincere and really want the gospel and realize there's a heaven to, as we used to say, to gain and a hell to shun than people that just come to pass.

I don't want patronage. You see one of the most awesome things I'm realizing these days is to claim I'm a Christian. Better not claim it than claim it and not try to live the thing.

After all this is what it's all about. Jesus says, you're the light of the world. And he's speaking as individual, you're the light.

Then he says a city. So when he says ye, he's talking about the individual as a light. And then he's talking about collectively a city that is set on a hill.

A bunch, a testimony if you like, is set on a hill that cannot be hid. Now going back to the word of Jesus there, when he says in the, in the 8th chapter of John and verse 12, then spake Jesus again unto them saying, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.

You notice there's this continuous antagonism between light and darkness. In the first three gospels as we call them, Matthew, Mark and Luke, there are only 15 references in the, in the three books. There are only 15 references to the world.

In John's gospel there are 77 references to the world. Because you see in the first three gospels he's speaking generally to the Jews. He's relating Jesus Christ to them as persons.

And now in the gospel of John he's showing us the deity of the Lord Jesus and he's showing us how Jesus is related to the whole world. And Jesus is the light of the world. This is why this is shattering to the Jews.

They thought they had a monopoly of religion. They thought they had a monopoly of God. Now Jesus says I'm the light of the world.

Remember here he's still in this area that we call the feast of the tabernacles. Why does he use this figure, I am the light of the world? You see it's John who tells us three things about God. In John 4, what does he say? He says God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

In his first epistle, pardon me, he says that God is light. In 1 John 1, God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. Now my first reaction, it's maybe the way my mind's made up, my reaction to that is this.

Here is God, he is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. Satan is all darkness and no light. Then I said but wait a minute, you're not the judge the scripture is.

God is light, in him there is no darkness. Satan is all darkness, in him there is no light. No, no, no.

Paul doesn't say that. He says in 1 Corinthians 11, what? That even Satan is transformed as an angel of light. He comes with subtlety.

You see, there's been a gradual invasion of the word of God. We talk about the invasion of government on our private lives. They know so much about us.

But there's been an invasion on the word of God. This is why again you maybe think I'm an oddball. But I'm forever sticking up for the King James, not because it's an English version, but because it's the purest version.

Almost every other version, you can take the Living Bible, it denies in many areas, it denies the fundamental things of the word of God. It leaves the blood out in certain places and so forth. The attack is on the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan is transformed. He doesn't care how he comes. This is new scholarship, forget it, it's below me.

You see, we're saying again, we can put Humpty Dumpty together again. Who's Humpty Dumpty? Is that a nursery rhyme for children? No, certainly not. Not in my book.

I've never read this anywhere, but I was praying one day and this came to me and I hold to it. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall. Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

So the children laughed. You say Humpty Dumpty is an egg. You put an egg on a wall, it goes off.

All the king's horses and all the king's men come for Humpty Dumpty together again. Do you know what Humpty Dumpty is to me? A sign of the fall of the world. That nobody can put humanity back together again.

The only way to integrate men is that God makes them whole. As many as touched him were made whole. W-H-O-L-E.

And I don't care what a man has outside of Jesus Christ, he's not whole. There's an area in every personality that only God can fill. Food will fill your body.

Sure, you enjoy your food. That's okay. Knowledge will fill your mind.

Friendship may fill your emotions. And yet there's a little section in every one of us, a God-shaped blank, if you like, that only God himself can make. As Augustine said, we're made for God.

God didn't make us just to grow flowers or invent machines. God made us for companionship. As by the same token, he didn't redeem us to save us from hellfire.

He redeemed us because he wants fellowship. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son. I'm going to tell you this, agree or disagree, that every time you fail to have communion with God in the day, take time to behold.

Every time you miss it, God's lonely for you. God's lonely for you. Some of you wouldn't go through the day without forming a friend that you like or contacting.

Every time you miss out on God, God is so constituted. He knows every sheep of the pasture. The Word of God says his name, our names are engraved upon the palms of his hands.

God loves us. Now God is light, John says. And in him there is no darkness at all.

And there are so many subtle things around. You see, if you were given a hundred percent impure doctrine, you'd back off from it. But Satan's smart enough to take something like the Jehovah's Witnesses and put an element of truth in it, and use the Bible, use the Scripture to their own ends.

He talks in what, 1 Corinthians 5 or somewhere there about those who have perverted and corrupted the Gospel and the influence is that they do it for money because they love money and they've corrupted the Gospel. I don't think there's ever been a day when there's been more impurity, doctrinal impurity, than the day in which we live. We hear so much about gifts and that's fine, they're all right, I'm not arguing about that.

But you know, one of the greatest gifts we need these days is the gift of discerning of spirits. People say, I've got the gift of discernment. I can show you lots of unsafe people who've got gifts of discernment, but that isn't what the Bible says.

The Bible talks about the discerning of spirits, which is an entirely different thing. You can discern things because you have a higher IQ than other people, you can see the way, oh I knew it was going to go that way, so you discerned it. But what about the discerning of spirits, what about testing the spirits to see what is of purity and what is impurity, what is of God and what isn't of God.

It's a day of darkness. And the Bible talks about a day at the end of time that we're coming into now, I think we're in it, when darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the people. You see God says, I'll tell you what I'll do, I'm the truth.

Jesus says I'm the truth, and if you won't accept truth, I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll send you a lie and you'll believe it. So now people want to have Christ, what do you have, you have Antichrist. There are 2,000 gurus in America alone, right now.

From the young 17 year old Maharaji, to this old boy that started Transcendental Meditation, do you notice that they've got a place reserved in the Pentagon now, a special room for Transcendental Meditation. There's somebody trying to get a day established in the country. Well the devil's smart enough, he knows we're getting worn down nervously, what's the best thing, get on one side, cross your legs, meditate, think, get a blank mind.

Where's it come from? Well it's a counterfeit of Satan, to what? To be still and know that I'm God. That's all it is, it's a take off. The Bible doesn't say this, but I say that Satan's a great ape, he copies everything.

Everything God has, Satan has a substitute. God has given us Christ, Satan will give us Antichrist. God has given us the greatest miracle that is possible, regeneration.

Satan has given us a counterfeit to that, reincarnation. God has given us divine healing, Satan has given us Christian science. God has given us the Holy Spirit, Satan has given us the cult that's out now.

I've taught with girls that were educated, they weren't dumb. They didn't have one degree, they had two, they had three. They weren't poor, they were rich, they lived in mansions.

They weren't little hickies on a backfield and they can be as good as anybody else, they were girls that have been round the world, and then gone caught up in what? Well some of the most obscene sexual acts you can imagine that they've done, in the privacy, the privacy of mansions. Devil worship. You think it's funny, don't, for a minute stop, don't let somebody give you one of these Ouija boards as they call it, and say you can fool around with it, because that's the first time the devil gets his toy in the door, and you may end up in an insane institute.

One of the most brilliant girls we had at Teen Challenge, she talked, you know, with such refined accent. And her folk lived up there, north of New York City, went westchester county, where all the elite live, in beautiful mansions. Well to cut a long story short, she got into sexual impurity, lesbianism, harlotry, ended up in a madhouse in New York, got out of there for about six weeks, and we were talking one day at breakfast and somebody said, you know that lovely doll, you know the girl who said, my mother needs educating, my mother's old fashioned.

What about it? They pulled her out of the East River last night. Been assaulted, battered, stuff stolen from her. Oh smart.

Oh I know you're not bad drivers, but everybody else outside of this room is. You better watch them when you're driving on the road. Not you.

And yet you take an eye off the wheel, off the road, there's something in a second, and you're gone. I've talked with men in jail, I've talked with murderers, I've talked with prostitutes, and I fix them all with the same question, tell me this before we go any further, do you ever dream you'll get here when you started off? No I didn't. Talked with millionaires, kids.

We were holding a street meeting outside of London one night, past midnight. A friend of mine was going at it with a great crowd, they come out of the theatres and what not. Society people, all kinds of people, having a great meeting.

My friend kept saying, you know, the love of God, and the fellow behind me was saying, well, I wonder what word he means. Let's see, there are four Greek words, and he kept chewing over about the Greek, and I listened for a long while, and I stepped back a bit and looked, and here's a guy with his long whiskers and his dirty shirt, all torn. I could smell him when I turned round, but I waited till the meeting was over.

And I went to him and I said, Hey, I want to ask you a few questions. He said, OK, go ahead. Early, one o'clock in the morning, I have nowhere to go.

He said, you've got nowhere to go? I said, no. I said, but you're just talking now, you're quoting Greek. Oh yeah, I can recite the New Testament.

What do you want? John 3.16? What do you want, Prodigal Son in Greek? Come on, give me out. I said, well, how come? Oh, oh, well, he said, of course, I've got good parents, money, went to school, college, seminary, went home one night. Father chided me because I came in too late, and I whipped round, told him to go to hell, and I walked out.

And he said, I live anywhere I can, I live off anything I can, I guess you'd say I'm derelict. Got nowhere to go? No. Any money? No.

Any food? No. Any home? No. Okay, I said, you want to share my bed tonight? What, you mean that? Sure.

Come and sleep with me. Where are you going to sleep? Oh, I'm going to sleep on the floor of a church. I don't have a bed either.

Ah, come on, preachers aren't like that. I said, I don't know about preachers, I've got nothing to do with them, but I said, I happen to be a priest who doesn't have a bed. I sleep on the floor of a mission room every night, I've no bed.

I use my boots for my pillow. I make my own breakfast, cut a piece of bread and boil a couple of eggs. And I'll be out here tomorrow night at this time, this is my team here, I've got six young college fellows, they could all be in bed tonight, you could go to hell.

Every other preacher in town seems to think so, so why shouldn't we? But here we are, standing here because we love you. You can put whatever Greek word you like on that love. But as far as I know, it's the same love that you have in John 3 16.

God so loved the world. Agape love. Love that loves without getting anything back.

Love that loves for the sake of loving. Love that the Word of God says that if Christ loved the church, God so loved the world, he gave his son for it. Christ loved the church, he gave himself for it.

If you love me, you'll give yourself for me. Are you coming home? He said, sure. So we took him back to the mission hall.

Made him a supper at one o'clock, now it's two o'clock by now I guess in the morning because we had to walk back to the mission anyhow. And just wore him down with the simple fact that there was somebody that really loved him and cared for him. To show him that if he was ready to walk into the jaws of death like that, I'll tell you why the devil's a bad taskmaster and God is a good one.

That God says, look, I'm not asking you to be a disciple, I'm asking you to run away from your sins. I'm asking you to sit down and count the cost whether sin pays in this life and in that which is to come. Sit down and count the cost.

Now you never met a man or a woman going to hell that sat down to count the cost. Never met one. Jesus doesn't say, look, come it's easy.

He says, I'll tell you what I'm going to do, I'm going to take your rights away from you, I'm going to put a cross on you, I'm going to give you a chance to suffer. This is, this is what discipleship is. It's losing all your rights.

It's letting somebody come and take control of your life from your pocketbook right down to the nth degree of your life. Somebody takes the mastery, that's the part of coming into the kingdom. There are laws in the kingdom.

There are no laws in Satan's kingdom, it's a lawless kingdom. Do as you like, to anybody, anywhere, at any time. The kids used to say, you know, when we used to listen to them in Teen Challenge, I was going to do so and so, but somebody tipped me off, I was going to get busted.

And I'll tell you this, you can break every law that God has given, and he won't bust you, necessarily. You'll bust yourself. He lets the world go on every day.

Today, people will break every law of God, millions of times over in America and England, and God doesn't shut the business up. They live in the kingdom of darkness, and they love the kingdom of darkness. And there's this conflict.

All right, Jesus says, then I am the light of the world, and ye are the light of the world. There is no light apart from Jesus. There's a light of knowledge.

There is a light mentioned in the first chapter of John, in which it says, there's a light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. That's the light of conscience. There's moral light.

I think the thing that amazed me most, when I went to the heart of New Guinea and Papua, where people are just about stark naked, was that they've such discipline, such laws. Well, don't people commit adultery there? Yes, they do. Do you know how many times? Once, and then they hang them.

I wish they'd do that in this country. That's all. Just once.

And as soon as it's known that a man has defiled another man's wife, they chase him out of the village, put a rope around his neck, and hang him up. Break any laws of the commandments? And they don't have the commandments. They don't have a bible.

But they have discipline, they have laws, and they impose those laws. But it's still a kingdom of darkness. Now, when the light of the gospel comes, you see, as I said a few minutes ago, now wind up.

When Paul stood on that ship that day, and remember, they didn't say the thing, and he said, he warned them at first, they ignored him. He said, don't set off, because I'll tell you, everybody on board will be lost if you go. And then he stopped.

And when everybody was panicking, and they said, in 14 days, no night, no light, no food, no anything, we'd better end it all. And he came on deck, and he said, hold it a minute. There stood by me last night an angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve.

I want to tell you something. God's given me a secret. And he says, if you'll do as I tell you, there won't be a person lost on the ship.

But notice again, he didn't save the cargo, and he didn't save the ship. And he didn't save the extra stuff that was all stuck. The only thing that was saved out of that ship was living men and women.

And I believe we're moving back into the dark ages now, and we're not going to save the American way of life or the British way of life. We're not going to save the economy. God isn't a bit concerned.

He's concerned that men and women get saved, born again of the Spirit of God. And if the only way that almighty God can bring us to a place of repentance, he won't care if he breaks the nation, why should he? I won't hurt God. As I've reminded you before, there's not a temporal thing mentioned in this chapter at all.

He doesn't say a blessed success. He doesn't even say a blessed ministry. He says we're up against the darkness of this world, and you and I are to shine as lights in it.

Again, I say light's very valuable. I've been in storms at sea, and I remember one serious, serious situation. They said the only time they thought the Queen Mary would go over, and of course I would be on it.

And that crazy thing rolled, and I thought, well, it doesn't look as though we're going to survive this night. It doesn't look like it. We got out of the storm a bit the next day, and then I remember creeping up on deck at night when it was dark, and I looked, and away in the distance, there's a little blinking light.

Just as though somebody struck a match as far as I can tell. Oh boy, was it a comfort. There's a light.

There's a light. And the Word of God says as Christians, you and I are to shine as lights in this world. In the midst of all its panic, in the midst of all its moral darkness, in the midst of its spiritual darkness.

It's bad enough that there's a wave of moral darkness, but God knows I, I, I suffer more when I think of the darkness there is in the Church of God these days. There's practically no light. There's no illumination.

There's no revelation. There's no passion. There's little concern.

But when I have the light, I'm obligated. Paul says, they're shone round about me, and then that journey they are like from heaven. And once he saw that light.

Do you ever sing a hymn? We used to sing it at the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light, and the burden of my heart rolled away. It was there by faith I received my sight. And I was thinking the other day, supposing a, a totally blind man, he'd never had his eyes opened all his life, and he took him to the southern rim, er, lip of the Grand Canyon and stood him on it.

And then by a miracle his eyes opened. And there he is teething on the edge of that canyon. Ah, he'd take his breath away.

He might be terrified, he might stand in amazement, he'd, he'd be lost for language, and, and here he is in this yawning chasm, and if he saw it at sunset when it looks as though you spilled a million tonnes of paint over it, in different colours, he'd, he'd, he'd be astounded. And you know, I think it ought to be a bit like that, when our eyes are open to see the kingdom of God, all that's involved in it. I think if you stood for a little while, again, on the edge of a, well, one of the great revelations in the book of the Revelation, seeing again that great judgment day, when, as we mentioned earlier, the, the small and dead are going to stand before God.

You know, lights are interesting, aren't they? You know, I'm so old, I can remember the first time that these pocket flashlights were made, and we'd, we'd been to church, big old Methodist church in town, and as we came home, somebody dropped something, and a friend of my father's, a man called Naylor, pulled this thing out of his pocket and flashed it, and everybody, where did you get that? Oh, it's a new, it's a new invention. We'd never have found that thing, that coin that was dropped, but for that light. My, light itself is

interesting, isn't it? You know, the light, when you, whether you light your beak, or light a, a match, whether you see a light going up in the sky, a flashlight, or as they did that morning, when, that afternoon, when they blasted the first atom bomb off, and an American general said, we've invented hell.

A light that's so blinding, that even with the thickest glasses on, they had to stand at a range of, I don't know, 15 or 20 miles, and then nearer, and it would, it would shut your eyes. All kinds of lights, candle lights, electric lights, very beautiful. And Jesus says that, you're the light of the world.

You know, I think he's referring to two things, quickly here. One, that in the feast of the tabernacles, that they're in at this time, in the women's court, they have two huge golden candlesticks, and they were lit for this occasion. I think he's going further back than that.

I think he's going right back there, to when the, Israel was led by a pillar of fire by day. A pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. That was only for one select people, the people of Israel.

The other, that he's talking about here, he says, I'm the light of the world. You see, they celebrated at this very feast, just like a big letter T suspended in Jerusalem, and on each end of that crossbar, they had a basket of fire. There was no other way to illuminate.

They put oil and other stuff in, and they put embers that had oil in, and they illuminated them. And they were so high and suspended, that it lit over the whole city. And that was to remind them again, of the pillar of fire.

Again, it was a limited thing. It was a thing that lasted for a few days. The feast of tabernacles lasted seven, eight days at the most.

And the light went. That Jesus is the permanent light. I am the light.

Notice he doesn't say, I share the light. He does not share the light. He is it.

Solely his property. There is no light, apart from the light of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. I am the light of the world.

And then he says, ye are the light of the world. The light that has come in us, we've got to watch it. Because he says, that light can become darkness.

And if that light becomes darkness, there's greater darkness still. You know, I don't think there's anything more tragic, than to meet people who, five, ten, fifteen, twenty years ago, were really alive for God. Really vigorous in their testimony.

Remember in Australia, a man saying on the platform, you know, whispered this way, like people do. You see the man over on the right with the bald head. He, thirty years ago, he was the leading evangelical in this country.

He was a prophet. The man of tremendous stature and so forth, he went on. But he said, something happened and, his light has gone out.

What was the problem with the virgins? They were virgins. Keep that in mind. They weren't harlots, they were virgins.

Why didn't they get into the Barrett supper? The lights had gone dim. The Greek says, our lights are going out. Well, go and refuel, there's no time.

They didn't get in, did they? But they were virgins, they were pure, but they didn't get in. It's a difficult scripture, isn't it, when it says, without the children of the kingdom. You think everybody's going to the marriage supper? I don't think so.

We sang that hymn this afternoon, all the deep, deep love of Jesus to that old tune. Brightly beams our father's mercy. Remember this part of the stanza that says, trim your feeble lamp, my brother.

You ever go to bed with a lamp light? When we went to Martha's home, and the first time I went, after we were married there, they had electric light downstairs and lamps upstairs. And I remember when they lit lamps. Of course, I didn't know anything about lighting lamps.

I just took the glass chimney off the top, and went to light it. Martha says, Len, you can't light it. I said, well, sweetie, I got matches.

Yeah, but you've got to trim the wick. The wick goes hard, it gets crusted. You can have all the oil you like down there, but if you don't trim that wick, the smoke goes up.

It makes a mess. You can't get a proper light. You've got to keep that wick cut clean.

You've got to trim it. Get the dirt away from it. Then you've got to see you have a good supply of oil.

The lamp of testimony takes the same thing. The lamp must be kept clean. You've got to clean the smokestack if it gets dirty.

You've got to keep trimming the wick. Because nothing takes care of itself, not even the Christian life. And yet he set us as lights in the world.

Let me tell you one thing, I'm sure. There's a crossing in England. We don't have many of them.

You have a lot in this country, where the railroads cross country roads. But this one there, there was a beautiful hill, and then coming down the hill, there was the track across the bottom. And in the daytime, there was a man who stood there with a red flag or a green flag.

And if he heard your buggy coming down the hill, he'd rush out and he'd wave his green flag or his red one. And at night, of course, they were no good. You could have a lamp, a red one and a green one.

One night, there was a horrible crash. A train hit the buggy. Pitched the doctor and his friend away in the sky, and they were both killed, and the horse was killed, and the buggy was shattered, and there was a terrible outcry.

And the crossing keeper was taken to court, and he was asked a lot of questions by the judge. Finally, the judge said to him, John, I want to ask you one more question. That night, when the doctor was killed, just answer yes or no.

Did you swing your lamp? Tell me the truth. Yes, sir. All right, you're exonerated.

You went out of the court. As you went down the road, a man came after him and he said, John, I've known you many years. You've been a man of integrity and courage, and I've never seen you tremble till

today, but when the judge asked you if you... Did you swing your lamp? In front of the doctor as he came down the hill in his buggy that night, did you swing your lamp? You said yes.

Did you? And he said yes. Well, then why did you go pale? Why were you so nervous? Well, he said, I thought he might ask me another question. What was that? If my lamp was lit.

Was it lit? No. I'd fallen asleep. My lamp had gone out.

And I grabbed it instinctively and waved it. And I knew as I waved it, I couldn't do anything. He carried the lamp.

He didn't have the light. There's a lot of churches around that have the lamp. The light's gone out.

A lot of Christians that carry an empty testimony, the light has gone out. There's a time when we're salt which is hidden and it works silently and you can't see it. There are times when you've got to shine like a light if all hell is against you.

And say, here I stand, so help me I can do no other. I stand for truth. I stand for righteousness.

I stand for holiness. I stand for all that Jesus Christ stood for because as he was, so we in the world. He isn't here anymore.

And the world's pretty dark this afternoon with a few lights left. It would be dark if he took them all out. The world is pretty rotten with a bit of salt that's left in it.

If he takes the salt out. You know, I've sometimes said when I've talked to groups, I say, you know, some of you say, you know, if this, if that, if the other. You know, you know what? Just about scared me to death one day.

I was in a meeting one day when a preacher said this because at that time I was beginning to feel my oats and thought maybe I could do a few things. And he said, you youngsters, cheer up. You're not going to have your daddy and mommy long because Jesus is going to come, take them away.

And you'll live in a lawless world. There'll be no marriage laws, no laws of decency. Anybody can do what they like, when they like, how they like.

Well, that day will come eventually. But until then, we're to shine as lights in this world. We're to walk as children of light.

God is light. In him there is no darkness at all. And I trust that you and I will so live there's no darkness in our lives.

Again, that the beauty of the Lord our God will be upon us. Again, Father, we thank you for your word. We're faced again with the fact of the enormity of the darkness of this world.

The world knew him not, it knows us not. It doesn't love us any more than it loved him. People as educated and sophisticated as they are, they don't love virtue and holiness and righteousness any more than they did in the day when Jesus was here.

And we pray that you'll help us to trim our lamps and shine as lights in the world in no way at all. Will we betray thee or doubt thee, or back off from the challenge you've given to us to live for your glory. As we go

out again from this place of fellowship to a hostile world, we pray that your grace will be proved in our lives continually.

Thy grace being sufficient for us in every circumstance to bring forth your praise and glory. We give you praise in his name. Amen.

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