

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the eternal nature of Christ and the importance of a personal relationship with Him amidst life's challenges.

Duration: 53:58

Scripture: Proverbs 8:17, Isaiah 40:31, Matthew 11:28, John 14:6, John 17:5, Romans 8:31, Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 13:8, 1 Peter 5:7, Revelation 1:18

Topics: "Future", "Faith in Trials", "The Unchanging Christ"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the unchanging nature of Jesus Christ, who remains the same yesterday, today, and forever, as stated in Hebrews 13:8. He reflects on the glory of Christ before creation and the significance of His incarnation, highlighting the contrast between His divine majesty and the humble circumstances of His birth. Ravenhill urges believers to recognize the importance of a personal relationship with Christ, especially in times of trial, and to understand that true faith is tested in adversity. He calls for a deeper commitment to Christ, asserting that He should be our only focus and source of strength in a world filled with darkness and despair.

Transcript

is the Lord. All the people said? Amen. Good, good.

Well, tonight we've, in the last few weeks, we've been going through the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Uh, tonight I want to break stride and still stay in Hebrews, but jump over to chapter 13. Hebrews 13 and verse 8. What's Hebrews 13, 8 without looking? How many of you know? Everybody's lost their memories tonight.

Hebrews 13 and verse 8. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever. This morning in our devotions, Martha and I read the 8th chapter of Proverbs. We're going through the book.

Turn back to Proverbs chapter 8, will you? Let's start at 12, verse 12. Now skip down the chapter. Verse 12.

Thy wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of wit inventions. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride, arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth do I hate. Verse 17.

I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Verse 21. That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures.

That will help the prosperity boys. 22. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before the works of all.

23. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or before the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth.

When there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. Verse 27. When he prepared the heavens, I was there.

When he set a compass upon the face of the deep, when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep. Verse 39. Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men. Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children, for blessed are they that keep my ways, hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the post of my doors.

For whosoever findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. That to me is a picture of the pre-existence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer to the Hebrews narrows this down here.

He says Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever. If you want to know about the glory he had, he says in the fifth verse, you remember of John 17, when he prays that supreme prayer. The first five verses are about the Lord Jesus.

Six to nineteen are about the disciples. Twenty to twenty-five are about the world outside. But he talks about the glory I had with thee before the world was.

You get a picture of that in Isaiah six. When Isaiah says in the year that King Uzziah died, I so also the Lord, sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. Even the cherubim couldn't bear to look at him.

What do you do when the sun is too bright? You put your shades on. They didn't have shades, so what they did, they think, they put their wings up and filtered the blazing light of the Son of God through their wings. With two wings they covered their faces.

And what's more, they had two more wings, and they covered themselves, because they couldn't bear the blazing light of the Son of God. That's a mild picture of what is going to be at the judgment seat of Christ, when his glory is unveiled. Jesus Christ the same yesterday.

Oh well, we've got Christmas coming up. It's been coming up a long while on the news, but it's coming up. Have you ever thought of the angels going back to heaven empty-handed? Left the greatest treasure that eternity ever had there on earth, in a stinking stable.

It's a beautiful stable. It had wall-to-wall dung for carpet. It had cobwebs for curtains.

It had the sweat of beasts to make it warm. And the holiest being that ever was, ever will be, was left in that pile of dirt. I think it's symbolic of the corruption of the world that he came to.

And you, you parents, I'm sure you've told your children a story about Humpty Dumpty. Supposing they ask you who he was, do you know? No. You want to know, I'll tell you.

Humpty Dumpty is a satire on the fall of man. A satire. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, he had a great fall.

All the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again. You know, 17 times, according to one of the greatest modern historians, Toynbee. Toynbee says there have been 17 attempts to build a permanent civilization, and everyone has fallen down.

Why? Because we're building with the same substance, human depravity, human knowledge, human wisdom. And the house is going to collapse again for the worst time ever. And only Jesus Christ can put it right, and you know that as well as I know it.

But the glory he had with the Father before the world was, it's indescribable, the glory he had with the Father before the world was. Go over for a minute there into Revelation, the first chapter. Revelation chapter 1, let's read from verse 9. I, John, who am your brother and companion in tribulation, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony.

Emphasize that there, I was in the isle. Emphasize the next verse, I was in the spirit. Do you remember in one of these letters Paul says, there were saints in Caesar's household, that was next door to hell.

Every vile thing operated in Caesar's household. Everybody in it was a slave. Every indecency was committed, their nightclubs were worse than our nightclubs.

There's a historic fact, the women in those shows went topless to banquets, and yet there were saints in Caesar's household. You know, if God sent you to the hell, he could keep you there. In fact, Madame Guion, that strange mystic, that was locked up in the Bastille, she didn't care she was there.

What is she right? 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. But she had such an intimacy with Jesus Christ.

She uses a strange illustration. I've never seen that in history, except for her. She said, I've enjoyed your presence so much on earth, if heaven doesn't have, if heaven has need of room, well send me to hell.

I'll enjoy your presence in hell, she said. What I've enjoyed on earth, I'll carry with me to hell. Now that's an exaggeration, I guess.

But you see the idea, you see, she got to the basic, and the basic thing about the Christian life, Christianity is Christ plus nothing. And the only time you can say, Christ is all I need, is when he's all you have. Brother, I've got four people calling me now that two months ago were millionaires, multi-millionaires.

They haven't a dime now, they can't pay their way. They used to be able to lavishly spend their money, they can't do that now. And I said to one person, dear Martha and I, at a dinner about a year or more ago, I said to this person, the only time you can really prove God is when you've nothing.

It may not, it may come to that, it's come to that. They can't pay bills, and now their world has dissolved. The crutches they leaned on, materialism, creature comforts, country clubs, it's gone up in smoke.

But that's where God wants to bring all of us, where we can really sing with John Wesley and his great hymn, Jesus, lover of my soul. Do you remember what he says? Thou, O Christ, art all I want, plus what? A fur coat? A new car? Plus what? Plus what? Plus nothing. I believe the greatest saints in the world today are in Russian concentration camps and going through hell.

This bloody man, and he's a bloody man, is coming to America next week, and they'll be fawning at him. Mr. Gorbachev. It's estimated that Stalin put, what, 60 million people to death.

And later, since then, 20 million people have died for Christ in Russia. I have a report on my desk now that says 300,000 Christians perished for their testimony last year. And dear Lord, we, some people worry because they can't get white wall tires for their car.

And if they have a hangnail, they expect the whole church to go to prayer for a healing meeting. We're so wrapped up in ourselves. John was in the Isle of Patmos.

Do you know what it was? A rendezvous? Yes, I'll tell you when there. It was the Alcatraz of the day. Asia Minor dumped all its criminals and perverts and liars and mentally disordered people on the Isle called Patmos.

And God put him there to prove him? No, I don't think so. I don't think God has to test me to find what's in me. He has to test me to show what he thinks about me.

I don't know myself apart from him. I'm more mature than other people. After all, I've served the Lord now.

I've been preaching 66 years. I haven't said much, but I've been talking. 66 years, that's a long while.

But when the pressure comes, theology goes through the window. If you don't have a living relationship with him, brother, all the theology in the world won't do a thing for you. But Wesley says, thou, O Christ, art all I want, and more than all in thee I find.

Okay, let's read this quickly here. I was in the Isle of Patmos, in a devil's island, amongst lunatics, amongst perverts. Every rotten thing you could imagine about corrupt society was in that island.

And John put him there. Where? Where do you put a light? In the darkest place, don't you? So if you say, oh boy, I'm in a rough spot. You know, I've never heard the light say, oh, it's too dark for me to shine.

What they do is the opposite. It shines more fiercely in the darkness. And the Word of God talks about a period into which we're moving now, I'm sure.

Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness. I remember two little brothers, they were mischievous. These little boys aren't, I'm sure.

They were mischievous little guys. And before they went to bed one night, mother was reading from Isaiah, and she read the scripture, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. And she said, what does that mean, boy? No, one boy said to the other, what does that mean? He said, why, are you dumb? You don't know what gross darkness means? It means 144 times more darkness in the other place.

Pretty good answer. But that darkness is coming on more and more in this day in which we live. I was in the Spirit, verse 10, I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice out of the

trumpet, saying, I'm Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches. Notice when he says, verse 12, I turned to see the voice. Not to hear it, I turned to see the voice.

In the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, verse 14, his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire. Now how long is this room, is it, what about 45 feet? Well the Bastille, do you know what the Bastille was? Let me see your hands, you don't know. Two of you have been to school, good.

The Bastille is destroyed now, but if you go to, you know, that famous Englishman's house, George Washington's home at Mount Vernon, you didn't know it was English, well you better find out. When you come down, you come out of the kitchen, you go right, you go up the steps, look down there, there's a model of the Bastille at the side. The walls were 30 feet thick, 30 feet, and it was in that place where Madame Guillen stayed.

It was in that guy, in that very place where Marie Antoinette, you know, the darling of the French king, she idolized him, he idolized her, but then she somehow got the wrong side of him, or something happened, and so he said he put an end to it. He stopped her talking, do you know what he did? Sent her to the guillotine, that finished it. They put her in that place, night after night, oh well they told her tomorrow, well so many days, then the next morning you're going to the guillotine.

She's said to have been the most beautiful woman in the world, her face looked like porcelain, it was so gorgeous. She wore a fancy hairstyle, which is still popular, and she stayed in that prison all through the night, never slept a wink. She heard the bell tolling in Notre Dame Cathedral, 10, 11, 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, after 7 a man came in and he said to her, uh mademoiselle, he said I know, you're going to take me to the guillotine.

But the difference is this, when she went in at night, she's a beautiful looking lady, which hadn't got a single, I was going to say pleats, you know what ladies call them? Cracks or whatever they are, creases, what? Or wrinkles, that's right, we men don't have them, but you have them. She hadn't a wrinkle in her face, when they went she was crouched in a corner, she was a hundred years old, her face had withered, her hair was as white as snow, why? She's facing death, every time the stroke of that clock went, it's nearer and nearer and nearer, relentless she's going, his hair and his hair were white as snow, what do we sing in Wesley's hymn, lo the tokens of his passion, though in glory still he bears, what's the next line? Lo the tokens of his passion, though in glory still he bears, oh it doesn't matter, but when we see him, he's going to have hair as white as snow, symbolic, like that hair of that woman was symbol, symbolic of her suffering, her agony, her loneliness, but he took the sin of whole world. So you have this graphic picture here of the Lord Jesus, in the midst of the candlesticks, verse 14, his head and his hairs were white as wool, as white as snow, his eyes were flames of fire, and his feet, so you've got his head, his hair, his eyes, his feet, as if they burned, and his voice was the sound of many waters, and when I saw him I felt his feet as dead.

Now go back just in your thinking here, think of the end of the different, again there are not four gospels, there's one gospel told by four different people, but what was the last time that John saw Jesus? He saw him ascending to heaven, and he raised his hands and blessed them, nail-pierced hands, now he sees the nail-pierced hands, with what? Seven stars in his right hand. He fell at his feet as dead. Have you ever wondered, I have, why didn't he fall at his feet as dead on the mount of transfiguration? That was blinding

glory.

He was above the brightness of the sun. No, no, not quite. It says here, verse 16, it is right, and he had in his right hand seven stars, out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.

His countenance was like the sun in its strength. Let me exaggerate it, his face at that moment was like a million sunrises. However vast heaven is, it doesn't need illumination, he is the light.

And the wretchedness about the world in which we live tonight, it has no light, except where the gospel goes, except where this book goes, a lamp to our feet, a light to our path. The whole rotten mess in America tonight, or England, or Europe, is due to the church of Jesus Christ. It's not due to humanism, communism, romanism, socialism, moonism, forget it.

Those are alibis for the preachers. Those are goats that they chase, scapegoats, instead of feeding the sheep. There's only one light for the world and that's Jesus Christ.

Do you wonder that John falls at his feet as dead? As I say, the last time it's seen going into heaven and a voice saying, this same Jesus shall also come in like man was he seen in glory. And there'd been a promise, every eye shall see him. But you see, God is concerned about individuals.

Do you remember the psalmist says, the Lord of hosts, by that he means the hosts of Israel, millions. He's the God of Israel. And the next time he says, but the God of Jacob is our refuge.

He's the God of individuals. He's the God of the universe. He's my God.

F.B. Myers said he preached a wonderful sermon one Sunday morning and he had one little lady that really liked him. I never had a church where the lady liked me, but anyhow, a little old lady came up. She said, Dr. Mayer, I found something very wonderful in this service this morning.

Do you usually come? Oh, I've come for years, but I discovered something. Oh, so precious, so precious, so precious. Everybody's looking.

What's the old lady telling the preacher off? What did you find? I find I had a whole Jesus to myself. He loves me. Karl Barth, the great Swiss theologian was asked one day, what's the greatest thing you discovered in the Bible? You're supposed to have more knowledge of the Bible than anybody else in the world.

What's the greatest thing you found? Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so. Do you know that? Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong.

They are weak, but he is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.

Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible. I saw a good brother singing there. He's blown in, I was going to say.

Blown in from Nigeria. There he is, Steve. Good to see you, Steve.

Thank you for coming. Boy, he was really singing, he sang that first, second hymn there. Number one, what's number one? Holy, holy.

Boy, you're really going with it. Do you sing that in Nigeria? No. Well, these people think I sing too slow.

You sing it slow still. Can you sing it for us in Nigerian? Yeah. Now the Bible says you to do it cheerfully.

If you can't do it, don't do it. Great, great. Boy, I'd like to hear 10,000 Nigerians singing like that.

Great brother, praise the Lord. So again here, Jesus comes back and John is saying, if I go back to verse nine, I am your brother and companion in tribulation. Now if you go down these different churches that are here, remember that in a terrible mess, Laodicea is all messed up.

One church is where they're persecuting Antipas, my faithful martyr. My faith, three words describe his life of martyrdom. What did he do? Was he in prison 10 years or 20 years? Did they chop him in bits before he was finally killed? That's all it says, Antipas, my faithful martyr.

Every day I live, I believe, I say to myself, somebody's dying for Jesus Christ in Russia today. This dirty rascal that's coming, why in God's name don't they drive him out of the city? Oh he wants peace. Pull the Berlin Wall down.

Set everybody free that's in captivity in Russia. Jesus came to John in that hell of a hole. You know some people without a greater revelation of Jesus Christ today in prison, without a Bible than you and I have had with it? Because they have to cleave to him.

They can't turn to references and keep looking over and over to see how many times Romans 8, 20, 8 is in the chapter. They've discovered another way. They've discovered a living Christ in the midst of death.

Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. Go back to Hebrews for a minute. I'll give you the script in a moment.

4.15, Hebrews 4 chapter 15. It's a negative. People don't like it.

Here we have it. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Those in all points tempted like as we are, yet without seeing.

What do we say? He's the same yesterday and forever. What he was, he is. What he felt, he feels.

What he said, he still says. His word is as valid to me as he was to John on the Isle of Patmos. In the old edition of crowning with many crowns, it stands in that it says, who every grief hath known that rings the human breast and takes and bears them for his own.

There's not a pain any Christian has had today that hasn't been felt. What is the church described as? A what? A machine? Or what? A body. What's the head of the body? Yeah, but we have a head and Christ is the head.

If I was to stand on your toe, before you feel the pain, you'll feel it in the head. And every abuse that's put on the church is felt by the head before it's felt by the body. And there's not one thing that's been done to the body that will not have to be accounted for in that great day.

He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin. He's touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Don't you insult God and say nobody understands me, nobody feels.

Sure they do, sure he does. The rest of the body may not, but the head does. Does it matter if he feels and he knows and he understands? Leave it in his hands.

People often ask me, do you have a favorite scripture? I said I've had a favorite scripture for 60 years. Nobody else wants it. It's all mine.

It's in my chest that's collapsing. It's this thing. What's my favorite scripture? The Lord preserveth the sinful.

I can't look after myself. My wife says for sure, I heard you say that. Now you wait till you get home Martha.

Isn't that amazing? I'm English, Martha's Irish. We never quarreled once in our life. Yes once I think we did, and I laughed so I never did it again.

Touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Stalin never thought when he liquidated 60 million people he'd account to God for it. Heinrich Himmler, the butcher, liquidated, he said I shall jump into my grave with joy knowing that I liquidated four million Jews.

That's not the problem. The problem is when they jump out of the grave and accuse him of the judgment seat. You see this dumb world, the biggest idiocy in the world, it thinks it's done with Jesus Christ.

Hasn't even started with him yet. The whole human system is going to collapse. We're moving to it quickly.

And then Jesus is going to take over. And everybody not only will see him but stand before him one day. I'll tell you what, the old pope will be embarrassed to find out that he's going to be tried straight after a prostitute and I don't have any privilege.

No bishops or popes, presidents, potentates, plebeians, priests. The ground is level at the cross and the ground is level at the judgment seat. We need to live more and more in the book of the revelation these days.

The glory that's yet to be revealed. All the glory that that was seen by all the saints of the ages previously is nothing compared to the accumulated glory that Jesus is going to have there at the throne. Brighter than the noonday sun.

And so he comes and John says I'm your, I'm your fellow laborer and I'm with you in trouble in this first chapter. And I think we ought every day more than more to identify ourselves with a church in suffering. The church in poverty.

The church in need. The church with all its tribulations. But we don't know a thing about.

We're going to know. We're going to know. And it's not far off.

Fear not I am the first and the last. We learn about him being the first. We're at the beginning.

The scripture's got some beautiful phrase in it. You ever read that scripture that says before the trees of the field clap their hands. I drive up our driveway sometimes look up and say go on get clapping, get clapping.

And then the wind comes and they all clap together just when I told them to do it. Trees of the field should clap their hands. Before he put the stars in their places.

Jesus was there. He's the first and he's the last. He's the Alpha.

He's the Omega. He's the center. He's circumference.

He is all in all. So what was the scripture he read? Jesus Christ the same what? Yesterday and what? Well that's what Paul wrote. Now look in the first chapter again of Revelation.

Verse 18 he says I am he that liveth and was dead. We'd have said it the other way wouldn't we? We'd have said he was dead but he liveth. He says no the central factor is I'm alive.

I'm alive and I'm alive forevermore. Amen and other keys of death and of hell. Again there's there's one key that fits every grave in the world and that's the key is Jesus Christ and his resurrection.

Sign 2. Except John sees him as though all his virtues have accelerated. He couldn't bow at his feet on the mount of transfiguration because there's something Jesus yet had to do there. We talk a lot about the gifts of the spirit rightly so but actually there are no gifts of the spirit.

Now that's a contradiction. Why? Because the scripture says Jesus what did he do? Led captivity captive and then what? Gave gifts unto men. One of the old hymns of Wesley is the purchase of thy death divide.

Give me with all the sanctified the heritage of love. The Holy Spirit has nothing to give. He's the lawyer if you like.

He's the executor of the will of God. He distributes the gifts as he wills. You've no right to say I'm filled with the Holy Ghost because I have this or the other.

You should be filled with the Holy Ghost because you're filled with holiness. You're filled with joy. You're filled with peace.

You're filled with love. And that's what the world's waiting to see. It isn't waiting for another book.

I'm trying to write another book now. Sometimes I feel why should I write another book? If they don't believe this book why should they believe what I write? This is God's word we're going to be judged by. And the Christ, the Christ, the glory of the father reduced to an infant.

God as Wesley says contracted to a span. How do you explain it? You can't. The word of God says the heaven of heavens cannot contain him and yet he was cramped into the into the vortex of a woman's womb.

The heaven can't contain him. But he could come into the body of a little Mary. Poor little Mary.

Going up the hill pregnant. Another week and the baby will be born. And everybody says look at that little tramp.

I was talking to a boyfriend the other day. He said he doesn't know about it. Somebody else said in fact one so-called history says she can see because there's a German camp not far away.

And one of the one of the German soldiers raped her. But she bore that shame for so long. And the Lord said keep your mouth closed.

That's tough on a man and a woman. You can't explain to him that she knew the Holy Ghost had come upon her. And if you and I know the Holy Ghost has come upon us something's going to be born.

Whatever the spirit is he's just something majestic. The world was created by he hovered over the world. It was death and stillness.

And what did he do? In the beginning he brooded in the beginning and the earth came. Out of the womb of the universe if you like. The spirit brooded and the earth came.

He brooded over men like Moses. Moses the word says was filled with the Holy Ghost. Don't let people tell you the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was with those people.

But he's in us. Read the scripture he was in Moses. He was in other people.

He isn't somebody you hang around your neck. He's a live person. And the greatest honor this side of the world is to be consciously know the spirit of God dwells in me.

Read Romans 8. Get rid of this junky business that everybody has to live in Romans 7. Romans 7 is a funeral march. Romans 8 is a wedding march. Romans 7 is it is not I but sin that dwelleth in me.

Galatians 2 is it is not I but Christ liveth in me. You can't have an indwelling demon or evil spirit and an indwelling Christ. You can't have sin on the throne of your life and Christ he won't share it.

And the greatest thing if you read that chapter it says don't you know you're filled with the spirit of God. The next verse you're filled with the spirit of you're filled with the Holy Spirit. And then the next verse you're filled with the Spirit of Christ.

The Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit of the Holy Ghost dwelling in me. If I'm if I've been to the cross and that's the whole thing. There's no skipping the cross.

I have to go not just to the cross but get on the cross. Be crucified with him. And maybe next week we'll take that section there.

If you be seated with Christ. Let me jump over this and finish it. Who's going to sit on the throne with Jesus? Him that what? Overcometh.

If you're not overcoming you can do all the miracles in the world. If you're not overcoming of a personal sin you won't make it. Him that overcometh will sit with me on my.

But listen that oh somebody called me today. A nice guy must be very nice. He never met me and he thought I was nice.

He said you're such a nice fella. I said good. I don't I've met me.

No I never met you. But I've been praying for you today. What did you pray? I'm asking the Lord to let you live 20 more years.

Great. Cheer up Martha dear I'm going to be around a long while. And live another 20 years.

Fine. If that's what God wants I'll be happy about it. You see he's guaranteed us victory as long as we're in submission to him.

Blessed assurance. Blessed assurance. Trust and obey there's no other way.

I'm going back to this. Jesus Christ the same yesterday today. Whatever he did in his days.

He was merciful to sinners. He's merciful today. He loves people.

He loves people today. He warned people. He warns people today.

And he's ever living to make intercession for us. That's the longest prayer in history. From the moment he ascended to the right hand of the father.

He's been living to make intercession for us. And there are no favorites. If I'm born again of the spirit of God.

Jesus Christ is my elder brother. God is my father. I have a right to come to this testament.

The last will and testament of the Lord Jesus Christ. And appropriate it by faith. That I may live to his glory.

This I suppose should make angels rejoice. I think it does. It's just we folk that aren't just as sharp on appreciating our blessings.

As we pray tonight I want you to remember again there are 2,000 Christians in prison in Ethiopia. In the last few years 2,000 churches have been destroyed. There are thousands of people in captivity.

In Russia. Again this old brute that's coming over. Why doesn't he stop the war in Afghanistan? He can stop it like that.

He says well tell him to do it. To get out of the country. Tell him to break the wall down and let people be free.

You see wherever this word goes freedom goes. Whom the sun sets free is free indeed. Free from the weight of sin.

Free from guilt. Free from condemnation. Free from the fear of death.

Free from the fear of tomorrow. Whatever happens. Whoever gets government control doesn't matter in that sense.

God is over all. And he's going to come and rule this world in his own way. For his own glory.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday. Today. Right now.

One offering he made for sin has lasted forever. In the old economy priests died and they had to get a new priest. Our priest has been there 2,000 years.

Ministering for all who call upon his name. Living to make intercession. Boy I'm conscious I don't know much about prayer.

But every time I pray, particularly publicly, I say Lord I know you'll make my imperfect praying, praying by the time it gets to your throne. Jesus knows my heart. It's not my vocabulary.

Some make expressions better than others. And since I had a stroke a while ago you know I don't get my words out so good. But I'm glad the Lord isn't concerned about my English or my grammar or.

He reads my heart. We pray with the heart. As well as with the understanding.

Let me ask you a single thing Anthony. What does the psalmist say about his tears? Yes, store my tears in my bottle. Wouldn't that be wonderful? When God opens that vast reservoir, whatever it is, of tears.

You know there'll be when he pulls them out there'll be diamonds. They'll shine in the light of eternity. They've glistened more than any diamonds that any person in the world ever had.

You see we're walking among the dust of earth. We're walking amongst time. And if we're not conscious, if we're not careful, we get too time conscious.

I think I told you last week. If I didn't let me tell you again. One of the brothers that came to see me from Sweden.

And he picked this up in America. It wasn't from Sweden. He said some American.

I'll find out who it was. He's not here I'm sure. He said Christianity was born in Palestine and it became a what? A religion.

It was taken to Greece and it became a philosophy. It was taken to Europe and it became a cult. It was taken to America and it became big business.

Isn't that dreadful that it's true? It's become big business. Maybe God's gonna have to send us all to the beggarly elements before we'll ever cry as we should cry. We're so smug, so satisfied.

I had one of Billy Graham's leading men in my office yesterday. He came for hours and stayed and he drank it all in. I told him.

I could have told him all I knew in half an hour. But anyhow, I told a lot of things he didn't know. I told about some of these great old praying saints and praying warriors.

These men that not only had colossal intellects, they had a mighty faith. They had hearts as big as eternity. God lived in them.

What do I want? I want one thing that's all. I'm sure, I hope, I hope I'm much further up the road than when I got saved 65 years ago. But there are some lots of things I don't know.

I have one ambition from here to eternity. That's that I may know him and a part of his resurrection. Guys write me about my books and this and give you accolades.

Forget it. I say it's rubbish. They don't mean that much to me.

What I want to do is get near to the heart of God. I want to hear God whisper. Who do you give your secrets to? The secret of the Lord is within, but fear him.

You don't holly your secrets, you whisper them. I want to live within whispering distance of God. I don't care if I'm awake after night, which I went to bed about three o'clock this morning anyhow.

I like to go to bed a couple of hours, get up and then the phone doesn't ring and visitors don't come. So if you're coming, if you're coming between midnight and three, I won't even listen to you. You know time is so short.

We kind of think we've plenty of time. We have not even these little guys have plenty of time. You can spend your money, be careful, but how you spend your time, be more careful.

If you lose your money, you can find it. You can't get the clock to turn back. We're all on a one-way ticket to eternity.

All of us. And I want to know this living Christ now. I don't want you to embarrass me at the judgment and say, Ramel, I had many things to tell you on earth, you couldn't bear them, you weren't mature enough.

Dear God, don't say that before the Apostle Paul and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Zechariah and all the saints of all the ages, Wesley, Phinney, Booth, all there. Will I stand by myself before billions of eyes? And God says, son you are too immature on earth. You are too busy, I couldn't get your ear.

You had other loves. You know Jesus Christ doesn't want to be number one in your life. He doesn't.

He wants to be the only one. Not Jesus first, then others. No.

This is to take one wife, and love and adore that wife, and you rejoice in each other's company. So he wants to be all in all to me, but I must be all in all to him. It's not a one-way street, it's a two-way street.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want. Sever every other thing, clip it off, prune me. Can you give me 30 seconds here? You know people clutch hold of that verse in John 15.

Watch where thee shall ask the Father in my name. Who's he talking to? Those who have been pruned. There's a promise of bearing fruit in verse 2. There's plenty of fruit in verse 8. And there's perpetual fruit in verse 16.

2, 8 and 16. 2 and then try pages 16. But after we've been pruned, otherwise we couldn't handle it.

Until I'm God-controlled, Spirit-controlled. And the work that the Spirit does this. When I'm too slow, the Spirit goes ahead and draws me to him.

When I'm too quick, let me put it this way. When I'm too slow, he constrains me. When I'm too quick, he restrains me.

And I want you to do that. I want you to put roadblocks in the way, because I'll get ahead of him. It's fantastic when you think of it really, that a bunch of people, us not wealthy as far as I know, not very important people, but we can have destiny effected as a result of our praying tonight.

I'm praying God will throw some roadblocks in the way of these communist leaders in the world, and some of them in our own country that need a roadblock thrown in their way. That think by a little manipulation, readjusted taxes, and all the rest will come out. We won't come out of this mess.

One of two things for America, judgment or revival. And both be costly. But in God's name, don't let us have to go to jail in order to find out the fullness of God.

Let's be in such union with him, we'll know the mind of God. Let him put burdens on us. My yoke is easy, my burden is light.

Let me say this last thing. Isaac Watts wrote so many hymns, I think he wrote, how many did he write? Three thousand. He said on occasion, and maybe quoted before, he said, if God called me to rule six

universes, not six worlds, six universes with the stars and all the other trimmings you have up there, planets, what have you.

He said, if God called me to run six universes, I will be happy to do it. Because with the call, he'd give me the strength. But he said, I wouldn't want to look after six sheep without his guidance.

You see, the whole trouble with America tonight, or England if you like, but we're in America. Do you know where all this pollution comes from? Do you know why the divorce courts are packed? Do you know why all these girls get pregnant? These boys are getting AIDS and all this other devilish stuff? Because of the church. Don't blame education, that's a scapegoat.

There's no fear of God. We don't tiptoe out of the sanctuary saying, oh God, it's oppressive with your majesty, it's oppressive with your glory, it's oppressive as we reveal, as you reveal yourself in your love. We should go out of every time we've been to the sanctuary.

We should be almost as though we had a zipper on our mouth. We don't want to talk about anything less. We've been bathing in his presence, in his holiness, in his majesty.

And it's going to have to take that to get us moving, to get a real burning compassion for a lost world. Friend, if you can't get excited about, and I don't mean excitement in the kind of stuff you have with a football match, I mean inspiring. To meditate on his redemption, how much he's saved you from.

Some of you guys would have been in hell tonight if God hadn't stopped you. You were well on the way there, in drugs, in sin and whatnot. Some of us were self-righteous, we'd have been there too.

And years I spent in vanity and pride and didn't even know it. Thought I was the best Methodist in the world. 15 years of age, never smoked, never drank, never been to a movie house.

I never went to a movie house till I was 50. I came to America, got a free ticket. Went to see, what, Ten Commandments.

Brought up in a strict religious home. And I thank God for that. Well, I think of that, let me, what, what, those two books, my daughter, Jack, what's the name of it? Oh, you don't have any tonight.

They knew their God. Was that the one we read, Martha? There are two volumes. I want all you fathers to order them.

They're only about, what, each? Seven dollars for two. There's about 15 or 16 biographies. What I want you to do is buy them, read one to the children at night.

They'll get a whole fantastic view of church history and it's thrilling stuff. Then the next night, take one. So for about 30 nights.

But wait a minute, when you've read one one night, don't sit down and say, I want you to listen. Say, what did we, who did we read about last night? What was his name? Where did he live? Where was the emissary? Check them up. Don't just stuff it.

Check them the next night till you get through the whole 30. And you'll find more. I had some fellows from seminaries this week.

And of course, you know, I'm a polite Englishman, very polite. I talked with them for a little while. I said, do you know, do you know what I think about you seminarians? Oh, no, sir.

What do you think? I said, you're dumb. He said, what? I said, I've asked you half a dozen questions. I asked you, who was William Gurnall? Never heard of him.

Who was, what was he called? Ambrose, Isaac Ambrose. The biggest books that were ever written, they don't know a thing about them. Do you know, you can have a better education than going to a seminary by buying about half a dozen books and get down to business.

It's winter. If you watch your TV, the dumb thing, well, watch it news if you have to. But read these books little by little.

Read William Gurnall, a hundred and, no, wait a minute, eleven hundred and thirty pages. The book's twenty-seven dollars and fifty cents, but Jack sells it for what? Thirty-five. No, twenty-one.

Twenty-one dollars instead of twenty-seven. And then you can get the other one by Ambrose. You see, these are men of maturity.

Many will walk with God. Boy, our seminaries, it's no joke, the cemeteries. There's cemeteries.

Oh, they knew their God. Volumes one and two, they knew their God. That's a bargain.

Two volumes. For the two? Oh, I'm glad I didn't tell you. Oh, I'll tell you in half an hour.

It's gone down two dollars in the last two minutes. What did you have for supper, Jack? He's in a good mood. Fun? Oh, then there's another.

How many of you read Azusa Street? The present edition? Or did you read the one when the wave rolls in? Was that the one you read? What's Azusa Street cost? Five fifty. So you get the three books. I feel like an auctioneer tonight.

You get the three books for eleven dollars. Is that right, or twelve? Ten fifty. Jack, do you want to come up here? Yeah, yeah.

Get it, really. I'll tell you what it'll do. It'll break your heart to read it.

Make you realize we don't know a thing about the Holy Ghost. I've told you, I'll go to a Pentecostal church when you can open the door Sunday morning and the pastor stands and shouts to a world outside that's scared because you're going to atomic war and scarred because of the testimony of those wretched guys in PTL and Oral Roberts that have torn up the testimony of Pentecostalism. When you can open the door and shout to a world outside, this is that which was spoken by the prophet.

I'm not concerned about ten interpretations of the Holy Ghost. Show me the brooding of the Spirit of God. Show me a place where a man didn't go in if he's a sinner.

What's it say about the Pentecostal church in the New Testament? No man dared join himself. Dear God, people are standing in church today singing, what if he comes today and they're planning divorce tomorrow? God so brooded they didn't even go to church. And that happened at Azusa Street.

Read the book. It's the best five dollars you'll ever spend. I got it right that time.

Oh, it's going up now. Well, let's get it right all together. 10.50 for the two books.

Is that right? 10.50 for three books. It's the best money you'll ever invest, I'm sure. Can you get them by next week? Oh, I see.

Well, we tried to get them, but really I'm serious about that. You see, if you leave sports magazines around your room, your house, your children will be as crazy about sports as you are. We never had a sports magazine in our house.

Never even took a newspaper. No TV either. Martha, when I was away around the world, she used to read missionary biographies, autobiographies.

Now, one of the boys has an appetite for the things of God. You see, the devil's making such a bid, boy, while you have them in the house, put everything you can into them. Put a curfew up.

Don't let them stay 10 minutes after the curfew you make. Rule them with love. I'm glad I read C.T.'s, studied other things when I was a teenager.

I got a vision reading them. Well, let's sing a verse before we, and then if you do have to go out, you can go as we leave. What shall we sing? I'm trying to think of that hymn that you used to like.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20881.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/yesterday-today-and-tomorrow/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net