

# The Gospel

by Paris Reidhead

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*Paris Reidhead's sermon emphasizes the necessity of understanding the gospel and law while encouraging believers to pursue spiritual maturity and community engagement.*

**Duration:** 57:20

**Scripture:** Revelation 1:5

**Topics:** "Gospel"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the challenge of bridging the gap between church services and daily life. He emphasizes the need for a full and developed ministry, not just limited to sharing the gospel but also becoming mature Christians. The speaker highlights the potential impact of a dedicated group of believers who are filled with the Spirit and hungry for growth. He references John Wesley's statement about turning the world upside down for Christ with just a few committed individuals. The sermon concludes with a focus on the book of Revelation, specifically the fifth and sixth verses of the first chapter, which hold the power to transform lives and ministries.

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## Transcript

I'm pleased to Revelation chapter 1, first chapter of the book of Revelation. Two weeks ago this evening we started our study of Revelation. We saw the latter part of the fifth verse.

Tonight I'd like to have you relate the statement in the fifth verse with that made in the sixth verse. A tremendously important scripture is before us, one that has the power to completely change your life and ministry. Hear it now.

As I read, I'll begin with the fourth verse. I think this will clarify the matter. Said it before us in its full dimension here.

John, to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace be unto you and peace from God, from him which is, which was, which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his father. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

I want you to notice the gospel. I believe we should always keep the gospel clearly in mind and see it in its full beauty and its full perfection. This is the gospel.

Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Now we must ever preach the gospel, but we mustn't stop with preaching the gospel. We must preach the word and declare the whole counsel of God.

Everything in the Bible is true. It's all the word of God, and yet it's not all gospel. Some of it's law.

There's a great distinction between law and gospel. The law is the revelation of the holiness of God. It's the revelation of the righteous demands of God upon morally responsible creatures.

The law is the yardstick by which men measure their conduct and their character and find that they've come short of the standard that God has set. By the law is the knowledge of sin. The law's purpose is to be the grappling hook God uses to strip us of our pretensions to self-righteousness.

It is the gospel, the law that breaks us down or breaks down all of our pride and reveals to us that we are in need of salvation. It is the schoolmaster indeed that checks off our examination report and proves we fail. In other words, the purpose of the law is to prepare for the gospel.

Tragically enough, there seems to be a grossly inadequate proclamation of law and therefore a grossly inadequate preparation for the gospel. But should I be speaking tonight to someone that knows that you're lost and you've seen the holiness of God and you've seen the justice of God and you understand that since God is holy and God is just, that the only thing that he can do consistent with his character with you is to exclude you from his presence and send you to that penitentiary for moral criminals the Bible calls hell. If you see that and understand that and you're prepared to take sides with God against yourself and consent that you deserve his wrath and his anger.

In other words, if I'm talking to a lost man or a lost woman, I have good news for you. I have good news for bad people. God loved you and Christ died for you.

He took your place. He took to himself the penalty of wrath that ought to have been poured upon you for your crimes. The sentence of death which was leveled against you and the Lord Jesus died in your place instead.

Now, that's the good news. God's wrath had leveled a spear at your heart. You deserved it.

The Lord Jesus never contested the fact that you deserved it. What he did was to step between you and the spear and draw it into his own breast, your spear. God says he bent his arrows, bent his bow because of your sins and those arrows were aimed right at you.

The Lord Jesus never argued. He knew that you deserved them. What he did was to step between you and the arrows and draw those arrows into his own breast.

The sword of God's wrath has been sheathed in the heart of God's son. Christ died for you. Your sin have been paid.

Your debt has been settled. You may go to hell unsaved but you can't go unloved because God loved you and gave his son and his son loved you and shed his blood. You can go lost but you can't go unloved.

God has seen to that. The debt of your sin has been paid. Jesus Christ died for you.

Now this is the gospel. Christ died for our sins according to the scripture and was buried and was raised again the third day according to the scripture. Oh, has the gospel reached your heart unto him that loved us and washed us in his blood.

Nothing in my hands I bring. Simply to thy cross I cling. Now the grounds of your meeting God are the fact that you have nothing but sin and he has everything you need.

You come with your need and God meets it. You come with your filthiness and your uncleanness and your crimes hating them turning from them to God and he'll cleanse you and he'll forgive you and give you a new heart and make you a new person. Oh, I'm so glad that I can preach the gospel.

Perhaps it would be wonderful if we could just confine ourselves doing that. However, if he gave evangelists and pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry we have to do more than that because the gospel is the grounds by which you come to Christ but it's not the message by which you grow up in Christ. Now if you have never been born again this is the message for you.

Christ died for your sins. But if you are a child of God then this is the foundation upon which your Christian life rests. But you have not yet, you will not grow up into Christ by this message.

This is the milk of the message that Christ died for our sins that he shunned to him that loved us and washed us from his blood. This is the milk. Now it's indispensable that we have that milk and drink deeply of it for by it we live.

But Paul said to one church he said when you ought to be eating strong meat you have needed milk and you ought to be teaching others and you aren't able. And so we have to go on just as the text goes on. You see the text there's no period.

If you look at verse five you'll see there's no period there. It's a comma. Not that the punctuation is inspired but the message is.

Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Now many people wish that the message stopped there. They'd be happy if it stopped right there.

They'd just be so glad if we just preach the gospel and just Sunday after Sunday and service after service preach the gospel. But people would never go beyond it. They'd never go but they'd never grow up into Christ.

Now if you gave as I said evangelists and pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of ministry then we must go on. We must go on as we read in Hebrew six. Go on unto maturity.

Go on unto perfection. Go on to become full grown in Christ. You see Paul as we pointed out in messages ministry in days past did not want to preside over a playpen full of believers that were paralyzed in their spiritual infancy and simply had been washed in his blood and forgiven and pardoned but never went on.

He said Christ in you the hope of glory whom we preach warning every man teaching every man that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Full grown in Christ. Now I realize we have a problem.

Very real problem. I want you to turn back to Acts the second chapter with me for just a moment and I want you to realize see again in this moment what happened to people that believed the gospel so that they could go on to perfection. They could go on to maturity.

On the day of Pentecost Peter preached. Two thousand people were pricked in their heart and said to Peter and the brethren what must we do. Peter said repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

And they that gladly received his word were baptized in verse 41 the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. But look what happened. They didn't go back to their apartments to sit all the time till the next Sunday.

They didn't go back to the dormitory to stay there all alone in a godless educational institution. Look what they did. See what happened and you'll understand why they came to maturity and you'll see the problem we're facing.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine. They weren't just taught once a week. Their lives were given over to learning.

Do you see? Their lives were given over to learning. They were consumed with a desire to know. Perhaps the only way we're ever going to see God get what he wants in the church is to bring it back on somewhat the same basis as the communist party now operates.

When a person is even a candidate to become a communist so I'm told and so I read he's disciplined in his reading and in his study and he's told how to use his time. Oh if I could I'd love to put every one of you on a budget. Believe me you'd read.

You'd read. You wouldn't just buy the book and take it home and let it gather dust in some corner and stack up between your bookends. You'd read.

You'd study. Oh I wish I had the authority and the influence with you to to give your get move upon you to give attendance to reading. Because by means of it you're edified.

By means of it you're built up. They continued in the apostles doctrine and then they continued in fellowship. Talking with one another.

Day after day. I suppose they had work to do. I'm sure that when they were saved the harness maker didn't close the shop.

I don't suppose the brick man didn't go to I think he went. You know someone says it must be wonderful to be a pastor and you can give all your time to the study of the word. What do you mean? Aren't you acquainted with the facts of life? I have to work eight hours a day with things which have absolutely no bearing on study.

They're related to the work of the church. I have to spend as much time in things that have virtually no bearing on study as the person who has an eight hour a day job. The study that I do has to come out of the nights and the days.

If I take five hours for study in the morning you'll be sure of this that it's 12 30 or one o'clock before I can get to bed at night. You say well if you can pastor you just give yourself to study. I wish it were so.

That's what it was intended to be you know. They gave deacons so that they could give themselves to attendance and prayer. Trouble is you can't get deacons to deacon the way they did in the new testament or elders to hell the way they did.

And so it falls back on the pastor apparently. But at any rate my life is a little different than yours. The details, the responsibilities, the administration.

Beloved if you ever grow up into Christ it's going to be because you give attendance to reading and you give attendance to study and you give attendance to meditation and you give yourself to the word of God and you determine you're not going to go on being a baby in Christ. It doesn't come easy. You know you can live all year all your lifetime on a college university campus push a broom down the halls and never get a degree.

They don't give you a degree for proximity to the ivory tower, ivy covered towers. You've got to go in and discipline yourself with the work. You can spend your lifetime here.

You can have been here in the time that Dr. Simpson was pastor and never not missed a Sunday since and not have grown in the things of God. Because your attendance here is only relatively valuable. It depends upon what you do afterwards.

They continued in the apostles doctrine and in fellowship. How do you mean in fellowship? I continued in fellowship in the things of the Lord. Do you meet with other people to talk about the things of the Lord? When you get with Christians does your heart overflow with a deep longing to talk about Christ? That's what happened here.

They continued in the doctrine. They continued in fellowship. They continued in breaking in bread.

They just went they they spent a lot of time visiting, not gossiping, visiting, sharing in their homes, being with one another. This was not only visit but it was worship. Oh when your visit becomes worship then it's profitable.

The breaking of bread, you know, as we've said was a common meal at the close of which they would break the bread and drink the wine in observance of the Lord's death. And they continued in prayers. Now we've got to do that.

John Wesley had the pattern. Maybe the thing God, I've said this recently and I'm thinking more and more about it. Maybe the thing we've got to do is go back to the old Wesleyan class meeting.

I'm having, just last year I was able to get the entire works of Wesley and I am reading them now with a fine-toothed comb trying to find out the genius of this thing that moved, that God used so that changed the history of England. He'd have a class meeting and one of the godly men, most mature and oldest in the Lord, would be appointed leader. And if people weren't vitally interested in being part of the class and seeking God, then they couldn't be in the class meeting.

In other words, it was a privilege not a right. And as a person was born again, he gave evidence of a real interest in God, he was made part of the class meeting. And they worked out, John Wesley and those with him, worked out a series of questions, something like a catechism.

They'd meet together in a group and the leader would say, now John, have you been praying? Well, how did it go this week? How was your prayer life? And they were all moving on to the thing that John Wesley called entire sanctification. They were moving on to that state of being filled with the spirit and then they didn't leave the class meeting when they were there, they went on to maturity. But the purpose of the class meeting was not just a Bible study, but the purpose of the class meeting was to draw people on personally and individually into a normal relationship with Christ.

And it was used. Now, some way we've got to bridge the gap between now and next Wednesday and Sunday. You go home and you're going to be tired and weary tonight, and you're going to be busy in the morning.

You'll come back, you've got your plans made for the week. I suppose it'll be hard for you to squeeze an hour in for God between now and next Sunday. Our lives become so complicated, so quickly.

Now, let's suppose that God makes a tremendous impression on your heart tonight and you leave here saying, this is what God has for me. What are you going to do about it tomorrow? You found out where you are. You found out your need.

You've discovered what you must do. And you go home tonight and you say, yes, God has put his finger on my problem. This is where I must meet him.

But tomorrow you're going to have to, you'll be getting up. You'll oversleep your alarm by 10 minutes. You've got to hurry to get ready to go to work.

When you get back tomorrow evening, you have your plans made and you'll be so tired. And you say, what was it yesterday? No, it was something I was going to do. What was it? And by Wednesday, you'll forgotten that you were at church and by, or at least forgotten the sermon.

And by next Sunday, you'll forgotten which Sunday it was you were at church that God spoke to your heart. Because it will have been dissipated in the passage of time. Where most of the, most pastors have influence with their people two hours a week and with many people only one hour a week.

And there are 168 hours in the week. Think of all the things that come from magazines, newspapers, radio, every means of communication. And then their conversations and your work and your thinking, all of these dissipating influences.

So God makes an impression on your heart today. And unless you are, have fellowship with someone that is concerned about the same thing, it's soon going to be dissipated. It's going to evaporate.

And this is why you've been in the same spiritual state, months after months and year, even year after year. And there's not been the progress that ought to have been made because we've not been able to bridge the gap between the impact and the impression and the conviction and the creating of an atmosphere in which this can be brought into its full development. Now, I don't know the answer.

It's complicated a hundred fold in New York. I don't know the answer. Other than the fact that you become personally interested.

Oh, there are several things we could say, speculate wild dreams. We could say, well, let's get us a great big apartment building here in the city. And everybody that's interested moved into that.

The rent we're paying somebody would buy it. And then we'll have Bible classes morning, afternoon, and evening. Well, it's a lovely idea.

The only trouble with it won't work. And probably if it did work, it wouldn't be good because it would coagulate the Christians in one place and rob them of the influence they ought to have scattered throughout the city. So that doesn't seem very practical.

And then we could say, well, we'll have district meetings and, and those that are interested will meet in a district. The only trouble about it is that that's hard to do. I think it comes down to this, that you get an earnest.

And when you get an earnest, you're going to do something about it. I wish somebody would come to me and say, pastor, I know you can't probably come, but isn't there somebody in this congregation that's mature enough in the Lord that he could meet with a group of us every once, one, one night, every two weeks in a home. And we could talk about these things and go on because we've just been going on and on, listening and listening.

We haven't come to the place of really gripping this thing. That'd be marvelous. Well, you've got to do it.

It's got to be done. In other words, unto him that loved us and washed us from his blood is marvelous. That's a wonderful place of beginning.

The only place of beginning, but for too many, it's the place of ending. And it shouldn't be. You say I'm forgiven.

I'm pardoned. Yes. But now notice the text back to revelation chapter one.

Unto him that loved us and washed us from his blood. This makes me a child of God. This puts, this puts me in the family of God.

This relates me to him. Every parent looks down into the face of that little wee one that's in his hands so small and looks at the child and says, well, isn't this lovely? Here's a life. But are you content that the life should remain this way? No.

Is God content to have you well born? No. He says he gave evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of those saints into the work of the ministry until we all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. And he wants you to grow up into Christ.

Unto him that loved us, washed us from our sins in his blood, and now we come to something further, and hath made us in his sovereign purpose. He has made us in his condescending love. He has provided room for us more than providing room.

God has geared his work to you. It's all very well and good for somebody to say, we don't like cheap claptrap. We don't like shallow things.

We want something real. Do you know the cost of having something real? It's a lot easier to have something shallow. Believe me, the trouble with me was I grew up on it and was weaned on it, if I can use the word.

And I know how to give it to you shallow. I could give you somehow about 10 years ago, God did something in my heart and he created an allergy to it, and I just can't bring myself to it anymore. It either has to be real or I'm not interested.

But I want to tell you something, it costs to have things real. Costs. At least when it's shallow, you can have something big.

But when you start for something real, well, it's hard. It's costly. You see, as long as you keep a cross on a hill, and people sitting in the pew looking at a cross on the hill, and they say, well, that's where Jesus died.

Isn't that wonderful? My sins are under the blood. Then you can, they can do any, live any way and go any way and be any kind, they get a preacher that's going to do it all for them, and their whole job is just to bring people to him. It's well and good, but it's all on the level of milk.

It's all on the level of first floor. The moment you say, wait a minute, there's not only a cross on a hill, but there's a cross for your heart. And you can't be what God wants you to be until you let the cross come into your heart.

Not only a cross for Christ, but a cross for you. Not only that he died for you, but you died with him. You've got another matter.

The cross gets to be mighty cutting. It comes to the place where it's a tremendously expensive thing to go on in this way. And so, when you start for something real, you've got to be prepared to pay the price.

And you've got to be prepared to pay the price. Not just to believe that there's a cross. You see, there again, you come to the easy believism.

It's just, it's terrible to have an easy believism in respect to salvation. Deadly. Destroying.

Multitudes will miss heaven because of it. But, you know, it's a terrible thing to have an easy believism in respect to the deeper life. I had a conversation recently with someone.

We both had the same background. We'd grown up in an area that, a church community that had the deeper life message and ministry. And had to know the altar.

And gave invitations to the altar. And we both had the same reaction. People, preachers, would preach on the necessity of entire sanctification, being filled with the spirit, and invite people to the altar.

Now, when they came to the altar, they had to do something. They had to say something. They'd say, now look, take it by faith.

And so the person would take it by faith and go away. Now, one of two things. If they had something, well and good.

If they met God, good. But if they hadn't met God, if they had not entered into the experience of the fullness of Christ, they had gone through the formula. They had taken it by faith.

Now, one of two things. They either had to lie and say, I didn't get anything. It didn't work.

Or, they had to say, I did, when really they didn't, which was a lie. So, they're in a terrible place. And the moment that I set up a formula for you, in respect to union with Christ in death and the fullness of the spirit,

I've made it easy for you to slip out into another side.

I put a fence and a stile, and you climb over the stile and you're in. But the tragedy of it is, you can get people that have climbed over the stile of your formula that haven't actually met God and haven't been filled with the spirit. And the consequence of that is that you've just moved your problems from one side of the fence to the other.

And so to say, now here it is. You've got to meet God. You've got to meet him alone.

You ought to meet together to talk and to pray and to think and to let these things come to a boil in your heart until you really come to a point. It's costly. It's terribly costly.

It costs your time, costs your interest, costs your prayers, your convenience, but it leads to reality. Now, everything in the Christian life is postulated on first being washed in his blood, being born again. But you see, it doesn't begin there.

It also is postulated on coming to the cross and dying there with Christ. But it doesn't stop there. It also is postulated on being filled with the spirit.

Christ taking up his lasting dwelling place in your heart through faith. Let me bring you back to Israel. Remember where we were last year? Coming across the Red Sea is what you have here at the gospel.

They were redeemed by blood, the blood on the lintel on the doorpost, redeemed by the hand of God. But the Red Sea stands for forgiveness and pardon, deliverance from the wrath of God. But the wilderness stands for the state into which the Christian comes when he's born again.

An intermediate state, a state where there's a war between two natures. Where the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. Where there's murmuring and complaining and lusting on the one hand and then great desire for God on the other.

And this speaks to the wilderness experience. Now, unfortunately, we as pastors have been under tremendous pressure to gear all of church life to wilderness Christians. But this isn't where God put it.

You see, God said that you get blessing when you go into the land. When you go through Jordan, which speaks of death with Christ, and into the land which speaks of being filled with the fullness of God. Then you're in the place of blessing.

But you remember what happened to some of them? They were willing to come through the Red Sea, but when they came up they turned and went back. And then you remember what happened? Korah, with 250 of the elders and the men of renown and the famous men in the congregation came to Moses and Aaron and challenged Aaron, saying, Aaron, you're taking too much to yourself. You're saying the only ones that can possibly minister in the temple are the ones that are of your family, Levites and of your family.

And Aaron, you're taking too much to yourself. We ought to do it. And this is exactly the state of the church where people are to minister in the church on the basis of being forgiven, instead of on the basis of where the whole of the church is placed on the other side of Jordan.

But you say Aaron hadn't gone over Jordan yet? Well, he hadn't typed. Because Aaron and all that were authorized to enter or serve in the temple tabernacle were those that had the blood on the great toe on the thumb and on the ear, which speaks of death with Christ, that on the blood had been placed the oil which

speaks of the fullness of the spirit. No one was permitted to work in the tabernacle offering incense before the Lord or sacrifice before the Lord unless he had been anointed with the blood and with the oil.

Thus the picture is there. Now, here you are. You've been washed in his blood.

You've been born again. If you haven't, then this is the invitation to you. Let me ask you, have you come to the Red Sea? Have you entered in? Have you gone into the land? For it's this verse, he's made us kings and priests, is a ministry of Canaan.

It's a ministry on the far side of Jordan. It's a ministry that God intended for every believer, every believer. Some years ago now, four years ago, it's hard to talk.

You know, you become a tradition so soon. That's the trouble. Dr. Tozer and I were talking when he was here in October.

He said, you know, my trouble is people say, oh, that's just Tozer. He's written again. There it is.

That's a terrible thing when you become a tradition. And I understand the same, same thing about me now. Oh, that's just ridiculous.

You've been with him too long. But the fact is, truth is truth. And it doesn't make any difference whether my parrot says it, it's still true.

And this is what we've got to face. And here it is. Everything in the church is postulated on a person's being brought into union with Christ in death and resurrection and the fullness of the spirit.

In other words, let it be put it this way. And I speak for myself. I think I have more to lose than most of you do.

Fourteen years of ministry as a pastor and a missionary before I knew anything of the cross and union with Christ in death or anything of the fullness of the spirit. And when I look back on those 14 years, I'm absolutely convinced that before God, they're nothing but ashes. People were helped.

And I'm glad for that. But as far as the glory of Christ is concerned in my own rejoicing of having something to lay at his feet is concerned. I believe that in that day, there'll be nothing but ashes.

Everything that God ever does through a man, he does through a man that has entered into union with Christ in death and resurrection. And isn't filled with the spirit of God. It's the basic minimum for service, not to be in his family, but for service, but for service.

All right. Now the question with you is first, are you under the blood? Are you back there under the lintel under him that loved us and washed us from his blood? Are you there? Have you come through the red sea? Do you have the witness of the spirit that you're born again? The next question is, is the cross real in your life? And are you filled with the spirit? Now I'm talking to you that say, yes, I'm under the blood. I know that.

And I'm at Jordan's banks. But I need help to go in and to get over. These things have got to become real in my life.

You are the ones that I am saying ought to get together with your Bibles. You ought to read. You ought to study.

You ought to pray. When you have problems, you ought to ask for them. If you need counsel, you ought to get in touch with me and have me arranged with you or someone that can come and act sort of as a class leader to you.

But it's as you give yourself, give attendance to reading that the Lord is going to be able and study and conversation and fellowship. God is going to be able to make the truth in your heart. You know, sometimes I think of sowing seed in a seed bed that's pulverized and fertilized and powdered and the seeds under the ground about an inch, but it's so dry and it lays there one month, two months, six months, a year, two years, three years, four years.

And that seed never germinates for want of moisture and sunlight. Well, what does God want to do? God wants to bring you into maturity. God wants to make you a mature Christian.

What will your ministry be when you are? Do you remember some time ago, the first year I was here, I gave you the outline on the hand. And I talked to you about the ministry of a spirit-filled Christian from the hand. Some of you weren't here.

I'll give it to you. Some of you will be reminded by the thumb, which touches all the fingers was the ministry of the fruit-filled life, the fruit of the spirit, without which nothing is profitable. Love, joy, peace, the fruit of the spirit.

Here it is against which all other ministries have strength. Then this was the ministry of authority. I mean, excuse me, the ministry of intercession.

This was the ministry of ambassadorship, the ministry of authority and the ministry of the gifts of the spirit, the fivefold ministry of the spirit-filled believer. And tonight, when we read in these words have made us Kings and priests under God, we are talking about this ministry, the ministry of intercession, and this ministry, the ministry of authority. Two of the five ministries that are set forth in the word, they're not all set forth here, but they're all set forth in the word.

Now, what ministry do you have? I am speaking to you that are washed in his blood. Do you have the fruit of the spirit? Could you say there's much fruit? If you're in Christ, you have some fruit, but much fruit, very patient, very kind. This is the ministry of the fruit-filled life, but it's only possible by being filled with the fullness of God, a normal Christian.

Then what's this? Ministry of intercession. He hath made us priests unto God. I'd like to have you turn so that you see it and relate it to what we're saying to first Peter 2.9 and see there the kind of church he wants and the kind of church that's going to show forth the praises of him, which called him out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Here he describes it, but you are a chosen generation. You are a royal priesthood, a royal priesthood. Do you see the joining of those two words? King, priest, royal priest.

You are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Unto him that loved us, washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us to be kings and priests unto God, a royal priesthood. Now

because of Judah's back in the children of Israel, the children of Jacob, sons of Jacob, you remember it was Judah that tried to sell Joseph.

He was the leader in selling Joseph to the slave traders that took him into Egypt. He was the one who originated this plot to get rid of him. But remember it was Judah that said to Joseph down in Egypt, when Joseph insisted on taking Benjamin, unknown, not yet revealed to his brethren, he said, if you take my younger brother, Benjamin, you will kill my father, you will break his heart.

And I promised my father that I would bring Benjamin back, and I entreat you to let me be your slave or take my life but spare my brother. This is the same Judah that says, oh, sell him and get some money out of him, don't just kill him. God's done a work in his heart.

So now from then time on, Judah is the one from whom the king must come because of his intercession with Joseph in behalf of Benjamin. And this was Joseph's test to see whether Judah's heart had actually changed before he'd reveal himself to them. If I think that it would have gone hard for them if Judah said, okay, well, we got rid of one, we get rid of another.

But no, something happened in Judah. And so out of Judah, the king should come, not out of Levi, not out of Levi. Now, the Levitical priesthood was priests, but they never could be kings, never could be kings.

So it was out of Judah that our Lord came, but he was a king and a priest, but it didn't say he was a priest after the order of Levi. He was a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Now, I don't think anyone can tell you who Melchizedek was.

Personally, and you can't make me prove this, I'd like to help a lot, but I can't. I think Melchizedek was Job. You say, why? Well, Job is the oldest book of the Bible, and I think that Melchizedek was Job, but nobody, maybe nobody else does.

And I'm probably wrong, and it doesn't make much difference anyway. But the fact is, there was a man by the name of Melchizedek that met Abraham, and Abraham recognized him for what he was, a king of Salem and a priest of the most high God. And he combined two ministries, king and priest.

So in Hebrews we read that the Lord Jesus Christ was a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Now, you remember what it says? That we are joint heirs with Christ. Now, what does that mean? That means that when you were placed in the father's family by adoption in the father's household, given his name, major father, you were heir to everything to which Christ was heir, for you were a joint heir.

And that means that you too had a ministry after the order of Melchizedek, a king and a priest. Not after Levi, but after Melchizedek. Now we can get an illustration of both of these things from Moses, though Moses was of Levi, but he functioned nevertheless as a king over Israel in many respects, though he wasn't as king as such.

Let's go back and see Moses now as a priest and get some little insight in just a moment into what it will mean for you to be a priest. You remember when Israel sinned, Moses who was one of Israel, one of their number, kinsmen to them, went into the presence of God and pled with God in behalf of Israel and said, Lord spare Israel, think of the shame it will be when it gets back to Egypt that you took your people out into the wilderness to destroy them. You might as well have left them down in Egypt.

And the intercession of Moses turned back the wrath of God, moved God to minister in justice and in love, and moved him to minister also to the hearts of the people of Israel. We have the pattern. Moses was a kinsman, and he represented his people.

So it says he's washed us in his blood and made us priests. Where in does this ministry begin to work? In behalf of your unsaved loved ones. Your unsaved neighbors and friends are under the dominion of Satan.

They're controlled by the God of this world. They're blinded by the God of this world. They're in the grip of Satan.

They walk according to the course of this world. But he's made you to be a priest. He's made you to be a representative.

Now, when you're filled with the Spirit of God, you know which one you are to exercise this ministry. You know the one. You can't do it for everyone.

There must be a selection. Now, which one? This is where the Spirit of God alone can guide you. But here's someone that you meet in your office, in your study.

And you say, in your office or in your home or where you have some connection, some point of contact. God burdens your heart for this person. They're just as rebellious and blind and dead as anything can be.

And you're to have the ministry of a priest. What is it? You see, you're kinsmen to that person. They're no worse than you would have been.

I don't care what they've done. You could have done it. You're their kinsmen, and you're their priest.

Now, what does it involve? It involves going into the presence of God on behalf of this person that God has laid upon your heart to intercede for them, to take their place before God, to acknowledge their sins, to confess the justice of God's wrath, to accept the penalty for that person, and yet to plead, to intercede. You are the legal representative of the sinner, and your plea will be something like this, Oh God, he sinned, he deserves your wrath, he deserves your anger, he deserves judgment, but he's no worse than I. Now, of course, I'm oversimplifying it. I'm simply trying to illustrate it, not tell you what to pray.

I'm simply illustrating the principle. Lord, he deserves your wrath, but so did I. He deserves your anger, and so did I. He doesn't deserve your mercy, neither did I, and yet Christ died for me, and I've come to him, and put my faith in him, and been cleansed by his blood, and I'm pleading for him. Oh God, awaken him to his need.

And your intercession now releases God to begin to work in that sinner's heart. God only works in grace, so we understand, only works in grace where the sinner asks for it, or where the sinner's representative asks for it. And the reason that there are so few people being saved is because there are so few people that are genuinely performing the ministry as a priest, interceding.

Now, I'd like to take just about a week with you on this. I think I've given you enough insight so that you can see something of what it means when you re-legally represent that sinner before God, you release God to begin to work. That's only part of the picture.

There's another picture. You've released God to begin to work by your intercession, but that person is still in the grip of Satan, still blinded by the God of this world. Now you come to the other phase of this ministry.

He's not only made us priests, he's made us kings and priests. What's the purpose of a king? To exercise authority. Well, whose authority do you exercise? The one who's appointed you to be a king.

And who made you to be a king? King Jesus. And why did he make you to be a king? To exercise his authority where he puts you. King Herod exercised authority for Caesar, not his own, but Caesar's.

And so it is that when you come into an understanding of this ministry as a king, then you recognize the nature of what you will do. What will it be? When you've interceded, this releases the Lord to work. Now you've got another situation.

You've got the Satan blinding the eyes and shrouding the heart and enveloping the spirit and smothering in the death smother of darkness. You want to see that person brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, so there's a second ministry. The first is toward God in behalf of the sinner.

Now the second is toward Satan. And the authority that he gives us is not over people. You have no authority over the person, but God has entrusted to his church authority over principalities and over powers.

And in behalf of that unsaved loved one, we can plead in this fashion. Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we stand against every tie that a defeated foe has placed around this mind and spirit and will. For the release of this heart from all of the blinding bondage into which the person has been brought.

And when you once see this ministry and the responsibility to exercise the ministry as a king, then you realize that you're beginning to come to the place where you're laboring together with God. It's not just giving out a track. It's not just giving the gospel.

But our ministry is a full ministry, a developed ministry. And it's this toward which my heart is laboring and with you and yearning with you. If there were just as many people as there are here that have been washed in his blood, have experienced the cross and its cutting edge and were slain by it, were filled with the spirit of God, were hungry to become mature Christians with a full ministry, if no more than there are in this room tonight, do you know what would happen? If God could get this many people that meant business with him and would go down with him so that they could go up with him, the world could be turned upside down.

The world could be turned upside down. God, John Wesley said, give me 200 men that hate only sin and fear only God and I'll turn the world upside down for Christ. Now here you are.

There's a ministry. He loved us. He washed us in his blood.

He made us kings and priests. Have you gone on to that? Do you understand the fruit of the spirit? Do you understand this? Do you want to understand it? Will you go on with God into this mature relationship where your ministry is not just in the flesh, not just in personality, not just in enthusiasm, but in the full provision of grace, with a full ministry. Ministry of intercession, ministry of authority are but two.

Out of him that loved us, washed us in his blood. Oh, how I long to see you go on. Want us all to go on together until we shall come to the place where God has a people that he can truly use to show for the resurrection, splendor, and glory, and power of Christ.

Well, what can I say? What invitation can I give? I'm closing. I'm through. What invitation can I give? You're unsaved.

I invite you to come to Christ and know the sweet peace the cleansing blood brings. If you're a Christian, I think I've been giving you an invitation right from the very first message. I am exhorting you and entreating you to get in earnest.

Give yourselves up to the reading of the scripture and the study of the word. Tell you something, if you will, God will meet you. He'll meet you.

And I think you can sit here and I can preach before you every Sunday for the next 20 years. If you don't get in earnest, all you'll do is memorize what I'm saying and will have profited from it. Oh, dear heart that you'll go on until these things become real in your life.

I don't know any other ministry adequate for a city like New York except the ministry of people that have come to the place where they're normal Christians. Oh, I want you to be one of them. I want to be one of them.

In a hundredfold more than I had ever experienced. I'm not saying I'm on the pinnacle. Come up where I am.

I'm saying this is God's word. Let's go on together until we enter into everything God has for us. Become the kind of people God can use.

Our weapons are not to be my carnal fleshly, but to be mighty. To the tearing down of strongholds. Say, well, why hasn't this been done? There's only one reason.

It's being done where God can find a man. Get that little booklet, The Authority of the Intercessor, off the shelf. I've urged you to buy it.

Read it. See what God did with someone that understood the ministry of a king and a priest. Get The Authority of the Intercessor and The Believer.

Wonderful to see what the Lord can do. Well, bless your hearts. My heart aches for us.

Oh, how I want us to become the vehicle of God's blessing. I wish I could just get you so excited about the things of God that night and day. You just have to give your time to it.

Why not? What else is as important? You know, if you died tonight, how much of what you did last week really counted for anything anyhow? I think we ought to live every week in the light that we could die, in the light of the fact we could die Saturday night. It might change where we put our time and our strength and our energy and our effort. I don't think we'd be delectory.

You only had a month to live. I think you'd say, God, I want my life to count for eternity. The only way it can count is for you to be a normal Christian, filled with the fullness of God and equipped with the whole ministry that he has for us.

Let's go on, Brian. Let's go on unto perfection. Go on unto maturity.

That's the word. Well, bless you. Let's pray.

Oh, Lord, how little is really being done to show forth the glory of the risen Christ. How little? We're like children with our little buckets that are filling them with sand and piling them up. And the shore is so immense.

Father, are thou not adequate for a place like New York? Are thou not enough? We see the apostle Paul saying, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to a lyrical, do it again, our God, do it again. Find the people. We want to be part of it.

But Lord, if we're so indifferent and indolent and careless that we're not willing to pay the price to be part of your new thing, part of a people that are wholly yours, then Lord, bypass us and get them somewhere. But get a people that are willing to be normal Christians. Go down into death that they can come up in triumphant life.

Embrace the cross that they can know the victory of the empty tomb. God and Father of our Lord Jesus, thy dear son deserves a people that love him with their whole hearts and will die for him and live for him and allow him to live through them. We believe some of that people are here tonight.

We're asking thee, Lord, that thou will just build a fire of excitement and anticipation and concern and burden under their hearts until they'll be so intoxicated with the Lord Jesus Christ and so consumed with all that he has purposed for them that everything else loses its tang and its taste and the things of heaven and eternity become of paramount importance. Father, we believe that thou hast here some, oh, just a handful, maybe a company, but Lord, there's some here that mean business with thee. Now may the word of exhortation have found root in their hearts and take up a spring up and grow and bring forth fruit to the glory of Christ.

And oh God, our Father, we pray for that unsaved man that's here. We ask thee to just speak to his heart. And before we conclude the prayer, we want to ask you if you'd like to be included.

Are you here tonight and would say by your upraised hand, yes, pray for me, I'm lost. I want someone to pray for me. I want to be born again.

Would you put your hand down? Anyone? Yes. Thank you, God bless you. I see.

We'd stay. We'd be so glad to talk to you. Is there anyone else? All right.

Now, Father, we thank you for this hand that's been raised, a heart behind it. We ask the Holy Ghost to speak, bring this one into glory.

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