

# The Great Apostasy

by Paris Reidhead

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*The great apostasy refers to a falling away from the person of Christ and a turning back to a life of rebellion against God, which has been a gradual process over the centuries.*

**Duration:** 56:56

**Scripture:** 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Hebrews 6:4

**Topics:** "Great Apostasy"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the principles of the word of God in order to comprehend what is happening in the world around us. He encourages constant alertness and resistance to the negative influences of the world. The speaker warns against relying on creeds or specific statements from the Bible as the foundation of fellowship, as this limits the importance of the rest of the word of God. He also highlights the transformative power of the gospel, citing examples of missionaries bringing about positive change in the lives of savage tribes.

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## Transcript

Now this evening we've announced to speak on the theme, the great apostasy. Will you turn please to 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. The English word apostasy does not occur in the New Testament, but in the third verse the word falling away is a translation of the very word from which we get our apostasy. So we find our text residing in this chapter which I shall read for you.

Now we beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto him that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled neither by spirit nor by word nor by letter as from us as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped so that he has God sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God.

Remember ye not that when I was yet with you I told you these things and know ye what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time for the mystery of iniquity does already work only he who now hindereth will hinder or preventeth will prevent until he be taken out of the way and then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish because they received not

the love of the truth that they might be saved and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie that they all might be damned to believe not the

truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness but we are bound to give thanks all the way to God for you brethren beloved of the Lord because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth whereunto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ therefore brethren stand fast and all the teachings the traditions which you have been taught whether by word or by our epistle now our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God even our father which hath loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work this is a tremendous portion of scripture and one that has through the centuries led to a great deal of speculation

for if you will read the writings about the time that Paul wrote you will find that they were attributing the man of sin to Nero and Diocletian and then others of the those who persecuted the church and it's carried on until the present I remember some years ago when they were finding in our newspapers the ones who identified with this man of sin and so we are not prone to speculation I believe that it's wrong for us to do that because more often than not we are wrong when we have identified some particular individual with the scripture the scripture gives us principles and when we understand these principles and see them then we are able to understand what's taking place in our newspaper it makes it has to make sense we we can realize that whereas the personalities will change the screen

is flowing in a given direction so I'm not proposing at all this evening to try and identify the details of this portion with the day in which we live I am particularly concerned about this third verse let no man deceive you by any means for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition the part of importance to us today is the falling away as Paul wrote it had not yet taken place we would like to think at times that the scripture were written directed toward our day and toward our time but remember that this was written about 54 AD some 24 years after the ascension of Christ by that time Paul would say that there had not been an apostasy of falling away from the simplicity of the gospel although there had been

corruptors that had tried to get in Judaizers that had tried to bring them back to legalistic observance there had been those that brought gnostic heresy in but this was not called the apostasy the falling away that had not occurred according to this text by the time Paul wrote or else this of course would have been irrelevant what is this grace great apostasy has it happened or is it yet to happen we will see it in three different lights first individuals have apostasized we recognize that this falling away is more than just being overtaken in temptation or falling into sin it has reference to a complete return or turning back attempt I think the scripture would have us see this word used in the connotation of a deliberate revolt against the government of Christ repentance as you

understand is an open and complete break with the past in the government of Satan it's a renunciation of Satan's rule in the life and a commitment to Christ a receiving of Christ as he is presented as a prince and as a savior therefore falling away as it's understood in the scripture would be the reverse of repentance a re-repentance or a changing of a mind back again to what it was a complete re-changing of the mind now we understand that a child of God can be overtaken in a fall let aside by appetite and fall into sin this book does not teach a state of grace where that one will attain where he cannot be tempted we've heard in the past criticisms of teachers of sinless perfection I have yet to find anyone that teaches what we usually see attributed to them most of my friends that would

be in such a camp would be the first to repudiate it but I understand from the fact that there's so much smoke some somewhere along the line there must have been some fire and someone went beyond the scripture and said he couldn't sin so we'll allow that as a possibility but the scripture does as that there are those of holden not a scriptural possibility but the the scripture does not so teach that there is any state of grace where one cannot sin but it does teach that God gives victory in temptation and enables one to have the life of Christ made manifest in him delivering him at the time of temptation enabling him thus to stand but we whereas this is true we also recognize that a christian can sin someone whose face is headed toward the new jerusalem having the cross current blow catch

the sails and and drive the ship off course can cause that individual to sin and of course sin is sin and it has to be dealt with the scripture says do your first works again and this includes judging it to be sin forsaking it as sin confessing it as sin and knowing the cleansing of the blood of christ and when one does choose to disobey the lord there is of course uh sin in every sense of the word not to the destruction of the soul but certainly to the grief of the lord and of the individual and so the bible teaches that there is this possibility of a child of god sinning but this is in contrast to personal apostasy i do believe that hebrews 6 and hebrews 10 teach the possibility of a deliberate apostasy now i didn't used to believe this i would have said years ago that this was

impossible but a hebrew 6 and hebrews 10 are there i've collected innumerable books that expound it and take away the sharp edge from it but after i've read the involved and sometimes intricate explanations that take the edge off of these chapters i go back and the chapters are still there and the edge has not been changed and they stand as a dire warning to anyone and anyone that would try to minimize them and just to make light of them is certainly doing harm to his own soul and being dishonest with the people that might listen to such now hebrews 6 and hebrews 10 remain in the word and they're there and they're terrifying and they ought to be and when the scripture says serve god to serve with godly fear and reverence this is exactly what it means for i personally hold to and believe

that there is the possibility of apostasy where one can come to that place where he deliberately turns his back upon christ he turns his back upon the truth and commits himself to a life of rebellion now six says something like this that if one deliberately sins there is no place found for repentance in him it didn't say that if he repented he wouldn't be forgiven but something happens to the human spirit and he doesn't want to repent i've told you about that individual the former pastor and one whom i met some frequently for some years that would be in services especially down at uh washington dc and elsewhere in delaware and maryland and southern around philadelphia when i'd be ministering i'd see him he'd come in and he'd be there in the service and several times tears would stream

down his cheeks as i'd be preaching and i'd go to him afterwards where he always spoke to me and i'd say why were you weeping tonight and his answer invariably would be something like this i'm weeping because i have no heart whatever to repent i'm weeping because my heart is so hard i don't want to change and this is the thing that makes my tears come he wasn't repenting and finding that he wasn't being forgiven he was weeping because of the fact his heart has become so hard no place found for repentance in him so let's just accept then you search the scriptures on the point that there is the possibility of personal apostasy that one can having had some state of grace who knows what it was i'm not prepared to say some of the well he wasn't saved in the first place then well this is to my

mind a begging of the question because he had a testimony it was accepted for the testimony and as far as i'm concerned that we will see that the scripture does teach that personal apostasy we have the one of

the cases in history was the julian the apostate one of the associates of the early church fathers he was given the opportunity because of his being related to the emperor becoming the emperor of rome and he renounced christ took up his place as a as a head of the state religion of idolatry and he absolutely repudiated all of his connections with the christians and his dependence upon the lord he was engaged in battle he was immortally wounded by a sword thrust and tradition tells us that as he fallen to the ground he reached down and took the sand that had been moistened with his

own blood squeezed it between his fingers and there he saw in the sky a vision of the cross and he flung the sand and blood at the vision in the sky and cried out oh thou galilee and thou has conquered at last julian the apostate one that had walked with the children of god before gain had turned his back we know the demons had forsaken all and forsaken the church having loved this present world so let's allow that there is this possibility to not become involved and down in the or what the state was i too far as i'm concerned let's accept it that they had some testimony and they've done it now when the child of god crawls into sin and temptation there's a difference between that and this kind of final and uh uh unchangeable apostasy and unchangeable i say because of the heart of the

individual then we recognize a second kind of apostasy or falling away and this we will have reference to a doctrinal uh corruption this takes place wherever truth is intellectually held without being inwardly experienced let me say it again wherever truth bible truth is viewed simply objectively and held intellectually without having been inwardly experienced you have the gradual erosion and the the decline the gravitational pull is going to change that for if you will study the history of of the church going back to the greek orthodox and the syrian orthodox and to the roman catholic you will find that there was a time when truths were finally real then to one generation they were not real and so they attached us a ceremony a symbol a form and gradually there was this evolvement of

ritual and ceremony and symbolism that took the place of reality before the stations of the cross are an excellent picture of our identification with christ and many times individuals in that context that have found the lord jesus begin to see the meaning and it has some little measure of life to them but there's this falling away from the vitality there's this falling away from the reality of truth now this could be happening in your life and we're certainly not equating this with the great apostasy in that sense in which the scripture sets it forth it is a process that takes place in any mind or in any group of people whenever they allow truth to be objectively held without being inwardly experienced takes place on the mission field you find the missionaries going to a tribe of savages

headhunters cannibals perhaps living in gross worship of satan and as the gospel is preached there's a complete change from vile black to white but these are christians now and so they have a christian home they've given up all these vile practices their bodies may have the marks made by the witch doctor or in the evil practices of their uh heathen religion but their hearts have been cleansed and their minds have been enlightened so their children grow up in a christian home and a christian home is a christian omen anywhere regardless of where you are so these children have acquired the idea that they're not quite as bad as their cannibal fathers were they grow up there's some reality because father had such a transforming experience such a glorious experience that the boys get the

reflected light and the little girls see something so different in their mothers in contrast with the mothers around them but they have less of reality and sometimes there's just a form of godliness just the doctrine just the plan and the little girls then marry christian boys and the boys marry christian women and there's the third generation and so frequently you find that in that third generation things which were vitally real to

grandfather are just so so to the grandchildren and it's a strong movement a religious christian movement that can live past the third generation and hold its vitality because of this falling away this eroding of reality if it could be that every generation all the churches fell down and all the organizations disintegrated and all the groups just disappeared

and everybody had to start all over again there might be some preservation of reality but as it is there's this continuous erosion doctrinal erosion practice uh devotional life it's just going on around us constantly and it's going on in my home it's going on in your home we have to be constantly alert to it continuously resisting it and seeking to have our everyone we touch in need not brought into a formula but brought into a vital relationship with the living christ because it's just so easy for them to go through a little ritual and miss him and then years later they'll stumble over this fact because as they come under the real tests and pressures of life they found that it wasn't real and so they just give it up and this i say behooves us to recognize that this eroding this

ritualizing is a continuous thing i put it this way whenever you do anything in your christian life today just because you did it yesterday and because you don't want to break your record you've already started to make your own rosary whether you have beads or not whether it's saying the blessing whether it's your quiet time whether it's reading the scripture you say well isn't it valuable yes it's valuable it's certainly better than not doing it at all but it's infinitely better than it should be done with vitality and done with reality lest you should be eroding your life and you should be just sort of enduring you know the scalpel that can cut if it's properly wheeled it can also callous if it's just lightly scraped across the skin and you take that scalpel that's designed to make a

deep incision and remove the malignancy and just rub it in such a way that it doesn't actually cut and you'll soon callous and so there is this aspect of apostasy the eroding of reality and the eroding and the washing away of vitality in the life of a group or the life of a church we see history filled with this but this is not the apostasy of which the scripture speaks what is it does it have some great invasion such as took place 100 years ago and the effect of which continues until the present hour when we add the impact of science falsely so-called in my estimation carrying over into the church and the inspiration of the bible was brought into question when the principles of evolution that were then being propounded to nature were extended over to the bible and it was to be simply

the groupings of primitive pastoral people across the century and did not represent the revelation of god this attack that struck at the very foundation of our faith that divided christianity over liberalism and fundamentalism is this the apostasy the great falling away well it could be in some sense perhaps muted there's certainly been nothing quite as blatant and quite as overt as what's transpired in the last 100 years but my feeling personally would be that this is not what we're referring to i think it's more subtle than this and i think perhaps it's even far older than this i would suggest to you that the great apostasy that we have set forth here this falling away that has not yet occurred it took place far earlier than 1850 it probably was beginning in 100 years after christ and

was quite noticeable by 313 the time that the church was recognized by the state and christianity became state religion may i put it this way that the actual apostasy in my mind is is the worshipping around a creed instead of a person put it in terms that you can grasp that something happened very tragic back 1500 years ago 1600 years ago when men lost sight of the person of the lord jesus christ and began to meet around a creed now creeds are important and i recognize that but i also think that something terribly disastrous has taken place because there is the effect of a continuous extension of any creed the moment

that you accept a creed as the foundation of fellowship and you take out five 10 15 20 statements from this book and you hold those 20 statements up and say we're meeting on

the foundation of these 20 statements literally what you've said is this nothing is important but these 20 and all the rest that the word has isn't as important as that well where are you going to pick out something that isn't important in this book what is it that god has said that isn't important and so i would say that the falling away the great apostasy took place back in centuries gone by when men can were content to meet around a creed instead of a person because there's something so deadening something so destructive to human or to spiritual life and vitality that it could almost be said to be satan's grand masterpiece and strategy for having impoverished and weakened and divided the church today we have 312 groups known and recognized and registered with the government 312

so-called denominations and if you take the number of independent churches or one or two you probably will get it up nearer to 500 or 600 you name it whatever it would be but nevertheless we have seen this continuous fragmentation of the body of christ and it's been on the basis of creeds oftentimes it's been personalities that have differed and clashed and they've simply tried to dignify rather than having a personality squabble and trying to i'll come right out honestly and say it's vanity and ambition that's led to it they've had to find some place where they differed and then they'd get a doctrinal or a biblical basis this would be it but if the truth were known it was probably that somebody wanted to be the duke of goatville instead of what he thought he was the good of the goat of

dukeville and so he found a biblical basis for this and he could make a division then and with the dignity and with some degree of uh of approbation of the general public he was fighting a good fight of faith and so we've had this fragmentation 666 someone said the man of sin the number of the man of sin of the divisions that have come over doctrinal differences now the the tragedy of this is that the moment that you assemble around a statement of doctrine anyone that agrees with that doctrine is thereby eligible to participate in that assembly because you've advertised to the world that the basis of assembly is on a doctrinal statement and you can recognize that it wouldn't be long then that if a clever evil genius such as satan were trying to rob the church of power that he would soon

get people in to support the doctrine who had no experience even of that fragment of the doctrine so then it would be doubly doubly poisoned having divided from all the others over a point of doctrine then to have been infiltrated by people that hadn't even experienced that much of the biblical statement and of the truth of the doctrine that they on which they met in fellowship and so we find this strategy has continued down across the centuries and it has been so eminently successful until today we have this place where the church is not split it's actually splintered it's like a bundle of toothpicks scattered on every hand and it's been going on across the centuries now i could spend a good bit of time on this but i think it's preferable that we should move on and see what else

accompanied this this great apostasy if you're prepared to think with me at least it'll i trust stimulate you the second aspect of it was that we now had to have and i'm thinking back 1600 years ago we then had to have priestly interpreters to help keep us on the doctrinal rail you understand that if your fellowship is not with the risen christ but it's over the portion of scripture then you've got to have somebody there to sort of as an engineer to keep you from getting off because along the way somewhere you might meet someone that loved the lord jesus christ and had a real warm vital relationship with him but didn't have the cross the the t and dot the i the same way and so you need someone to warn you as to who the ones with whom you're to have fellowship and so we find developing at

that same time the idea of the clergy as over against the laity and this i believe is that which uh the lord said he hated when he spoke of the nicolaitans and the error and the falsehood of the nicolaitans the idea that we could hire somebody to do for the body of christ what the risen christ by the holy spirit wanted to do through every member of his body and that this is the second great uh strategic attack of hell that was so eminently successful in achieving this goal of impoverishing the church of jesus christ if we understand this book at all it teaches that god has no stepchildren that what he has done for one he willingly does for all and he's quite willing to give any relationship to you that he's given to anyone in the past if you're prepared to meet his terms and in the the

context of his will and purpose for your life so this thought that we could hire somebody to do for us what the spirit of god wanted every member of the body of christ to contribute to the health and the welfare and the blessing of the whole body of christ or the the curse of the nicolaitans has been the second great successful attack on the church of jesus christ now see the effect of it here is a division over something that's extracted from the word instead of taking the bible as the rule of faith and life and we meet gather to the lord jesus christ and see him exalted risen and in the midst is the one whom we gather not to uh some fragment of truth but to the person who himself is the truth what is the contrast what has actually happened well we find that here are the presbyterians

and they have taken the sovereignty of god and this is the truth that's very precious to their hearts over here are the methodists who've taken the responsibility of man and this is very precious to their heart and so we find that the whole denominational spread in this land of ours has been over some emphasis of the scripture well these things if the bible teaches the sovereignty of god and it does doesn't belong to the presbyterians belongs to the lord and his people if it teaches the responsibility of man doesn't belong to the methodist it belongs to the lord and his people do you see and yet we've had these crystallizations of groups around a fragment of truth that's divided the body of christ until we have this 312 groups that now are around us and very much part of us bob finley was

here a few years ago and told of his experience up in chung king china how that there he met a man obviously a believer and he went to him and said uh by the i gather you're a christian are you and the man said i'm not only a christian but i am a missouri synod lutheran well now mr finley said what pray tell business did the missouri synod have in making its stamp on someone who spoke the chinese language up in the very heart of china nothing wrong with the missouri synod lutheran but you see what has happened has been we've exported all of these and all the confusion that it that it raises so we've got these two errors these two things the one is the meeting around a fragment of truth and we get that fragment in front of us instead of the risen christ who is himself the embodiment of all

truth and the second is the clergy which have had to take the place of what the head of the church wanted to do through every member of his body and out of these these two things has grown the the weakness that we're facing we're losing the race against time we're we're losing it in on every front if you please but uh uh we keep hoping and praying that sometime we're going to come back to give the lord a chance to demonstrate again the glorious power that is resident in our head the lord jesus christ what is the answer to this great apostasy this this falling away that has resulted in our leaving him and gathering to a fragment of doctrine and instead of being to him what he wants to be uh raking our own arrangements what is what is the answer to it well we find today that the answer

that's being proposed by the world council of churches is an ecumenical a political ecumenical union that is going to mean the ultimate control of all of these groups by some theative governmental enforcement so

that all the 312 groups will ultimately have to come under one head and we can then be christian again you understand that pope john shortly after his accession as the pope of the roman catholic church called for an ecumenical council it's been rarely done i think the previous one was in the middle of the last century spent some hundred years three things are being presented at this time we're told we're in the herald tribune a while ago first the mass after the intent of this council is carried out after it's done the mass will always be rendered in the language of the people

rather than in latin secondly priests will be able to marry especially the deacons and those who do not wish to go on to the higher echelons of church responsibility and administration and the third thing that is being proposed to this ecumenical council is that the pope will be elected no longer by the cardinals but by the archbishops 11 being the number but the archbishops of the syrian church the orthodox church romanian and serbian and so on will elect the head of the role of the church but he will be elected from the cardinals this is a tremendous concession from the world religious point of view it was set up i think as a trial balloon there's been no one that's taken any exception to it and so probably this will be the effect of the ecumenical council that's called for next

year and we you heard just a while ago eugene carson blake and bishop pike on television who said that the union of the four great denominations was just the first step in the ultimate union of all christendom you see when i say something like this happen and see all this excitement all i can think of is that this is a faith this is a sort of a distraction on the part of the enemy to get our minds off of what the lord is doing now you recognize that in all denominations there are multitudes of people that are just nominally members not just through the roman catholic but it's through the baptist baptist methodist presbyterian the alliance through all of us nominally members i've had some little interest and then the interest lapsed and waned and they're no longer to be found their names

are there and they're counted in all the statistics but nevertheless they're not personally participating and it seems therefore that this ecumenical movement that's so obvious that's so political so material so organizational is if i can use the word of faith to get our minds off of the real things the lord is doing there is something that he's doing i think it began back eight years ago right here with this church if you were to ask me to name one of the most historic dates and since the time of martin i would say it was that sunday the day b simpson met with seven people down here on 23rd street or he had an entirely new biblically new concept a concept of meeting no longer around some fragment of doctrine not even around the fourfold gospel but it was christ holy christ putting the

lord jesus back in the center and it was to be a people of all different groups they met sunday afternoon so that the baptist and messengers and presbyterian could come to some neutral place other than right here at this point but around the country they met meet in the women's club in the ymca they meet in the neutral ground so that people could come without prejudice and have their hearts fed he didn't want to start a denomination at all he wanted people to come to be nourished to be strengthened and sent back to their own churches as fifth columnists for the life there to live christ and witness and preach so that they could be the means of blessing and so the concept that he had that motivated the movement was distinctly new something that we do not find expressed or proclaimed

elsewhere but of course again there again in the erosion of time you have that process we've talked about until today the genius is somewhat obscured by the mechanics of our present responsibility but i firmly believe dear heart that the lord is moving in this day to answer the great apostasy on the part of the spiritual on the part of those that love him where we find everywhere around the country that the hungry

are finding each other baptists are meeting with presbyterians and presbyterians finding delightful fellowship with episcopalians and episcopalians are rejoicing that they are being helped and encouraged along the way by the methodist and the pentecostals are finding that they can sit down with the others and the sheep can eat with the lions and they can have blessed fellowship

together in the things of the lord and there's there's been a marvelous new thing happening even in the very present hour and we find that the hungry are finding each other now i believe this is this just the first little indication of what the lord is going to do for his own i believe that we're going to see two things working concomitantly the first is going to be the ceaseless increase of ecumenical power you've heard me expatiate on that that this is an insult to intelligence and the kind of a world that's represented by the building at the other end of 44th street the united nations will no longer count them into christianity that's divided into four five or six hundred different fragments and so the process is going to be organizational political ecumenical union but at the same

time there is going to be and there is now this increase of personal fellowship on the basis of individual believers that find fellowship with the lord jesus christ are are brought into a place where they share the same hunger and the same delight and the same blessing it's happening now and out of it then the strategy of the enemy is going to be for i think to some degree nullified because we're beginning to realize that there is a true biblical spiritual ecumenism and it isn't on the basis of organization it isn't on the basis of membership it's on the basis of our meeting around the lord jesus christ on the basis of his word and not a doctrinal derivation from his word or an extraction from it but we meet him on the basis of this it's simple it's clear and i believe it's understandable

and hearts everywhere responding to it evidenced by the tremendous increase in groups hundreds hundreds and hundreds of groups starting all across the country that have no recognition of denominational lines the only thing that qualifies one for being part is a hunger for the lord a desire to know him and to go on into all that he has for the us this i believe is the lord's answer to this organizational ecumenism where an individual discovers that his heart has a corresponding hunger with someone else's heart and so they begin the fellowship together in prayer and meeting in the word i've had testimony of one of the people of this congregation who said that they had wanted to have from among the membership of the group you've heard me speak about this at such length in the past how i've

tried so hard to get groups going well i'm beginning to realize that this is something the lord is sovereignly doing because she said well there was a person from another from a baptist church and from an episcopal church and someone that's come from another church and the four have been meeting strangely drawn together by an accident and yet they find they're sharing the same interest and burden and hunger and they're fitting it into their already pressed and busy schedule no dear heart i believe that this is the great apostasy this meeting around an extraction from the word that obscures the blessed lord jesus christ and allows people to come into an organizational relationship that do not have a vital living relationship with him that all of this is going to be gathered up it's the

tentacles are reaching out even now pressing and drawing and as this is drawn off that way then the lord by the holy spirit is going to draw this way and there in such groups without any plan without any enlisting without any membership and then any statistics i believe we're going to see the release of the spirit of god the power of god made manifest in our communities and made manifest in our homes and perhaps even to some encouraging degree in our churches so has the great apostasy come the opinion of the one speaking to it has and it was the strategy of satan back there 1600 years ago to get christianity to organize

around fragments for taken from the word of god and so to obscure the blessed head of the church the lord jesus christ is this going to continue indefinitely i think not i

think the time has come when the ecumenical pressure on the outside is going to correspond to the inward pressure of the holy ghost as he causes those of like precious face to find each other and to share together in their hunger one for another and it encourages me therefore to pass this word on to you and to ask you how real is your faith are you just loyal to a church of building a statement of doctrine a fragment of truth or has the spirit of god done something so transformingly wonderful in your life that you are finding others of similar hearts similar hunger similar burdens and you're sharing together with them because deep is calling under deep and you have an inward spiritual recognition of those of like precious faith is this so but you will find hunger everywhere you'll find it

on every hand i close with the experience and i'm sure you've heard it before but what can i say after six years that somebody hasn't heard before when dear tom hair died there in chicago or did i mean not die was in that fire in the chicago and then leonard ravenhill found it necessary to drop him out of the fourth floor window to the paved alley behind and he was so broken he went into a catholic hospital there on the south side near the alliance church where dr tozer was pastor so many years and the first one he regained consciousness for he was unconscious for several days a nurse was there saying her rosary and he said oh sister i'm grateful to you for praying oh she said all of us have been praying we've been saying many prayers for you well he said come here and he reached his hand

out and took her and he says now you'd say a prayer for me now and she started one of her learned and formal prayers he said no pray in your own words and she said i don't know how is it well then i'll pray for you and so he began to pray and thank the lord that the sisters had ministered to him and cared for him and prayed for him and she went away with tears in her eyes and every time he rang the bell after that another sister came and every time they came they'd say now will you say a prayer for me and so he would and he every every time if he had three glasses of water in an hour he had three different ones bringing it to him and they all wanted to have someone to have him pray for them and one day after he'd been there about a week a monsignor from down in Notre Dame came in the head

of the church of the hospital that came mother superior she came in and introduced him and said this is monsignor so-and-so and he's asked to see you the door was closed he said don't disturb us until i come out and then he turned to brother harry said the rumor has gotten all around the diocese that there's a protestant saint here in the hospital and hearing about him and what he'd done how he prayed i just had to come and see you and then he sat down on the chair beside the brother hair's bed and he began to tell how he was a boy deeply aware of his need and greatly convicted of his sin and he saw the lord jesus christ he told of the revelation of christ to his heart how he knew his sins were washed away not by ceremonial observances but by the work of the holy ghost witnessing to his

heart that this blood of christ is a veil and then he told of his great burden for his people he said i'm so concerned for my people because so many of them come to confession and they have no intention of giving up their sin it's just a rote it's just a ritual and it isn't real in their hearts and i fear for many of them that they'll never see him who died for us and he told of his hunger to know the holy spirit in his fullness he told of his deep desire to be all that he knew the word of god said he should be and then when he finished this and brother harrod spoke in something of his testimony he turned with tears in his eyes and he said i see mr hair that you are a saint and then he said will you pray for me and the monsignor got down beside the bed and brother hair started to pray a

little bit awed by this and he said oh no no put your hand you've told me you've been a plumber he said put your hands on my head i've had the hands of archbishops i've had the hands of the leaders of the church on my head but he said nothing has ever really come from it he said i want you to put your hands on my head and so he took those two hands that had been toiled around a pipe wrench and around the plumber's trade tools of the plumber's trade and he held them with his hands on his head as tom hair prayed for him and then when he left he said you know the higher you go the more obscure the fences between us seem said the nearer you come to christ the less important all these things that separate us are you say well how could that be well i don't know it's just that god has his own

everywhere and when i read madam guy on and i read our bishop fennel on and i read uh john of roy's brook and the meister eckert the francis of assisi i find that there's an order of fellowship of the burning heart and i believe that this is the ecumenism of the holy ghost and this is what he's doing is he's finding individuals of of like precious faith quickened by the spirit of god with a hunger for the lord and this is god's answer to that great apostasy does this mean that something has to happen before the lord comes i see nothing i see no prophetic thing other than the preaching of the gospels of the last tribe that has to be fulfilled before our lord comes i as far as these things are concerned here personally it's my own opinion that there is sufficient evidence that they've been

fulfilled if i see any reason why our lord delays it's this that he can catch some who love him with all their hearts and are seeking them with all they have that'll become to him the vehicle by which he can reveal how wonderful the lord jesus is but this fellowship that's going to all be a vehicle for the christ is not going to be on the basis of some fragment of truth extracted from the book but it's going to be because there have been those that have gathered to the lord jesus christ and they've accepted the word they've just taken it and not some extraction from it and they've met him and they've met with others that love him similarly and have thus become a channel through which the lord jesus can reveal how wonderful he is and so brethren i see very little hope at all in the

ecumenical movement as such i see nothing there except this that there are some hungry people there and some that are desperately hungry bob walker my friend from chicago the editor of christian life was on the train into his office in chicago but he sat down next to a young man reading the bible and found out that he was the head of the methodist youth and was the international the world head for the youth organizations for the methodist church and as he began to converse with him the man told how he'd come to know and love christ how he'd been born again and he said you know mr walker my heart is so hungry for what john wesley wrote about i'm so desperately hungry to know the fullness of the holy spirit and he said our people they're just blind leaders of the blind how greatly they need

to know him and so they began to keep in touch with one another and there came a time when this man got in touch with mr walker and he said oh i know now i don't know and it was through not methodist but through some episcopalians and some presbyterians that the lord led this young youth worker into a full relationship with christ and so he'd been now prepared to minister and so you'll find everywhere the hungry there's only one question will others that come find hunger in you will there be a response in your heart do you long for him and long to have fellowship with others who know and love him too this is the question or has there come to you such a blind loyalty to some extraction of truth where i speak to many that are not of this group but you say well if they're not of our ism then

i can't have any fellowship with them oh i don't believe for a moment that we should become part of any of these movements my great concern is that we should be in the very center of what the spirit of god is

doing in the hearts of those who know and love him what about you have you been victimized by the great apostasy or have you risen above it and passed it and through it and you see that our fellowship is not on some little extraction of truth but on the word of god and with the living word the one who is himself the truth our lord jesus christ and anyone who knows him and loves him and search longs for him similarly is one with whom you can have on that level of fellowship in fellowship with them i believe this will give god something with whom in which he can work in our greatly

needy day shall we bow in prayer our heavenly father we've been victimized so through the centuries our hearts ache when we realize the great expenditure of money and time and effort in perpetuating things which better if they'd have disappeared loyalties that have lost their meaning we can see something of the rationale and pressure behind the ecumenical movement father we see so little there that offers any answer to our day and generation in politics and organizations and all of this we do believe that when two or three are gathered to the lord jesus christ and they haven't just taken some little fragment from the word but they've just come with an open book to the risen son risen christ there thou art in the midst of them and there thy glory can be revealed and there thy blessing can

be released oh father in this day save us from being victimized by this great apostasy we see on every hand the sectarian spirit this division of mind and heart that has caused people through the years to have suffered such animosity and hate even hatred at times and give to us we pray now such an overwhelming hunger for the lord jesus such a love for everyone that's been born into the father's family for such a desire to be all that thou would have us be and share all that thou has given with everyone that's interested that there shall come a sense in which we're living in the very midst of miracle and that each day is an unfolding of thy glorious plan for our lives we pray for thank thee for those here in this company that have found their hearts stirred with a great desire and longing

for thee we thank thee for those whom thou hast met in our meeting and we pray father that the original vision that made this church have a place in the community shall be re-established here and that because of the dynamic of this vision that there is a fellowship for all that are in christ and that they can go anywhere thou would lead them and carry the blessing of the fullness of thy presence with them that this shall be re-established and that there shall flow out from this a center of testimony and truth that can bless the entire community yes as it has in the past in increasing measure bless the world and so to that end give us insight give us understanding give us illumination but above all give us hunger or if we've outlived our hunger we've outlived our usefulness then grant to

us then in this day to offer the alternative to organizational ecumenism the true ecumenism of the holy ghost as hungry hearts find that they can talk with us and we can share with them of the fullness of christ and so to that end seal even our thought and our meditation tonight and gather we pray thee in these days when sin increases and abounds and satan's strategies all seem to come to their focus gather to thy self a people through whom thy great strategy of releasing the or revealing the glory of the lord jesus christ can be fulfilled when we have some part in this lord oh we we long to see the glory of thy son unveiled and we ask thee that there might be such a joining of heart to heart tonight that this can take precedence over all lesser interests and the dalkans truly have what

thou dost want from us we ask for those that may be among us that know not our lord might something be said to show how wonderful he is and they'd want to stay and talk and pray further and for those who do know him might there come a great interest and concern to share with others all they've received of christ in his name and for his sake we ask him amen

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