

The Way to Enter In

by Ralph Mahoney

God's main interest in you is to have a love relationship with you, not just to use you for His purposes.

Duration: 1:02:12

Scripture: Exodus 19:6, Psalm 103:1, Isaiah 43:18-21, Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the idea of God doing a new thing and the hindrances that can prevent us from being a part of it. He shares a vision that someone had of a mountain covered in ice and snow, with the fire of God melting it and causing the water to flow into dry valleys. The speaker emphasizes that any crowns or rewards we receive from God should be cast at the feet of Jesus, not used to boast or compare ourselves to others. He warns against becoming so captivated by a particular phase of God's work that we fail to continue on to the end.

Transcript

Jesus said, Go ye therefore and teach all nations. World Map Tape Outreach is fulfilling this divine commission by bringing you these messages for your spiritual edification. Open your Bible and your heart and share now in the teaching ministry from God's Word.

And we dealt the first several nights with the fact that God was doing a new thing but there were hindrances, hindrances to new things. We found those hindrances were former things and things of old. The last couple of nights we've been trying to define the new thing God is doing, to show you what we believe the new thing God is doing.

We believe He's pouring resurrection life into that which once had life and lost it. And we also believe that as we spoke last night to you, that another one of the things that God is doing in bringing this new life to us and in pouring out of His Spirit and bringing through to the church the resurrection life that He's giving rivers. Last night we were speaking on the rivers of God.

The new life coming out in resurrection expression, bringing us up out of our graves and releasing us from our grave clothes. Now as that happens for us, the water starts pouring in and it should start pouring out and rivers should start flowing throughout the land as a result of God's visitation to us. Now for some of you who may not be or may feel you're not related to what God is doing today, I felt it would be good to take tonight and tomorrow night to show you the way that you should relate to what God is doing, how to

enter into this new thing.

You say, well, I believe God's doing a new thing. I believe He's giving resurrection life. I believe that He's releasing His rivers in all the earth.

But how do I get involved? How do I become a part of the new thing? How do I enter in? Well, it's those questions we want to try to answer tonight and tomorrow night. I would like to just share one other thing. One of the brothers came to me this morning in the dining hall at breakfast.

He said, Brother Ralph, the Lord gave me a vision a short time back. He said, I can't ever remember reading the 47th chapter of Ezekiel, where you were reading last night. He was speaking of last night's service.

But he said, the Lord showed me a great mountain that was snow-capped and great glaciers covering the top of it. And he said, I saw the fire of God coming down upon that mountain and the fire of God melting that ice and that snow and it began running down into dry desert valleys down at the bottom of the mountain. They began to spring forth into luscious bloom and fruitfulness as the waters began flowing down.

And he said, I'm not sure I understand that vision. He said, I'm not sure I understand what all that ice and snow is. I said, oh brother, it's very simple.

That's God's frozen people. And that's what's happening, isn't it? The fire of God is coming down on God's frozen people and he's making rivers in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, waters for the wilderness. And as God's frozen people get thawed out and melted, why, the rivers are beginning to flow.

Can you say amen? Amen. Now, how do we enter into this thing and how do we properly relate to it? And properly relating to it is very important. Because sometimes there is a danger that we get enamored, we get captivated, our attention gets arrested on the means rather than on the end that God has in mind for us.

In other words, God has a way of bringing us in to the thing he's doing. He has a way of relating us to it. But tragically, what happens is that as God begins bringing us along, some phase of his dealings with us so captivates our attention that we stop there and we think, hallelujah, this is glorious, and we don't go on to the end because we've become enamored or captivated or our attention has been seized by the means.

Now, I'll make this a little plainer as we go along tonight to show you how that pitfall so easily develops. But in reading this passage again to you tonight and with you, we've just been singing it. Verse 21 is where I'm coming to now tonight.

We've been five nights getting this far and tonight we want to get to verse 21 of Isaiah 43, in case you've not been with us. Isaiah 43, verse 18 through 21. Because I think you know these scriptures now, I'll just read verse 21 tonight in the interest of saving time.

Verse 21 says, Now, when God says, remember not the former things, don't consider the things of old, I'm doing a new thing, rivers in the desert, waters in the wilderness, what has he got in mind? Well, you notice in verse 20, to give drink to what? My people, my chosen. The new thing that God is doing involves his people. But it involves an understanding of what he's after.

And so in verse 21, he tells us that in visiting us with great revival, in visiting us with resurrection life, in releasing the rivers of God to us, he's got something in mind. And verse 21 tells us what he has in mind. This people have I formed for what? For myself.

This people have I formed for myself. Now, God has something at stake in all of this. There's something God wants in all of this that's happening today around the world.

God wants something in this charismatic renewal that's sweeping through the church. God is after something in these rivers he's releasing in the earth. God is after something in this resurrection life he's pouring in and bringing us up out of our graves and divesting us of our grave clothes.

This people, he says, that I'm visiting, that I'm blessing, that I'm pouring out my Spirit upon, that I'm refreshing, have I formed for what? For myself. Now, tragically, most preaching in the years that I've been in the church, and that's most of my life, has been geared to what I get out of God. How many of you know that? We come with the approach, what's in it for me? Now that's only natural and there is something in it for you.

It may not be just what you think, but there is. But you see, God approaches it and he says, what's in it for me? God is after something. As well as giving us something, he's after something.

This people have I formed for myself. And I've heard very little preaching, now I'm not criticizing anybody, I'm just telling you my experience. I've heard very little preaching of what God wanted out of me.

Of what God saved me for. From his side, why did he want me? And so tonight I want to take your eyes for a moment and turn them away from what's in it for me and try to get you to see it from God's perspective and say what's in it for God? Now turn with me to Ephesians for a moment and I'll just let you know now that in what I'm saying I'm on scriptural ground. Ephesians chapter 1. I just want to share a verse or two here with you.

Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 17. Now Paul was praying constantly for the churches. The Lord used him to establish these churches and he prayed for them.

And when he came to the church at Ephesus, he had a prayer that he prayed. Verse 17 of Ephesians 1. Here was his prayer. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

That the eyes of your understanding, being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of His calling and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. Now how many of you know that it's not just that you have an inheritance in God, but God has an inheritance in the saints? God is looking for something. God is wanting to inherit something out of all of this.

And so He prays for this church that they will begin to understand what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints is all about. What God is after. What God is seeking in all of this.

Now if you go back to Deuteronomy 32 and verse 9, you'll see the same thought expressed in the Old Testament. That God was after something. He's got an inheritance in His people.

This people have I formed for myself. I want them for me, God says. Deuteronomy 32 and verse 9. Here's a very familiar passage, at least I think it is for most of you.

The Lord's portion is what? His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. Now what does God want? The Lord's portion is what? His people.

He wants you. And He wants you for you. Now let me explain that, because now I'm starting to plow and put the plow in a little deep here.

And so I want to get back to where you can relate to what I'm saying. When we come to the Lord, and He saves us and takes us up out of the muck and mire of sin, sets our feet upon a rock, establishes our going, we say, Hallelujah! He's cleansed me from sin. Glory to God.

And we shout about that for years, and that's all right. It's something to shout about, isn't it? It really is wonderful when God picks us up and sets our feet upon a rock and establishes our going. But when this happens, right away the church comes along and the church tells us, Hallelujah! God saved you for a purpose.

You're saved to serve. Now the Bible doesn't happen to project that concept, but some of us that are in the ministry do. So we come along and leave God's people with the idea that God needed a bunch of slaves.

So He saved me so He could have a slave to polish His shoes and clean up His dishes and wash His hair. He needed me for what I could do for Him. So that I could become His slave.

And so the Martha Syndrome gets started. How many of you know what I mean by the Martha Syndrome? You'll have to read the eleventh chapter of Luke if you don't understand that. But the Scripture says that Martha was cumbered about what? Much serving.

And she complained to Jesus because Mary wasn't cumbered about much serving. But you know when she complained, Jesus came to her and said, Martha, Martha, thou art careful, or that word should be translated anxious, about many things. How many of you know that the server is always filled with anxiety? That's their personality type.

Anxious, guilt-laden, and they're trying to work their guilt off by getting busy for God, doing something for God. See, they've never fully entered in to the expiation that was theirs through the blood. They can't believe that the blood was sufficient atonement for their sins, so now they're going to live for Him who died for them and show Him how much they appreciated and now they're going to earn the great salvation He gave them as a gift.

See, and that service syndrome gets started. Now, I need to preach a sermon to balance this, but I don't have time. See, there is a place for service in the Lord's work, but it's been misplaced in the emphasis that's come forth in the church.

God did not save you because He needed slaves. How many of you know He could have evangelized this world by Himself and in one angel? See, so He didn't really need that. That was not His object in coming to me and saving me.

Now, He may allow me the joy of becoming involved with Him in that, but He saved me for me. How many of you know He saved you for you? He loved you. Not what you could do for Him, but He loved you for you.

And He doesn't expect you to try to pay Him back for what He did for you. See, if that's the motivation, you see, and if it's a guilt thing that's working in you so you do it, you've missed the point of why He saved you. He saved you, first of all, for Himself.

This people have I formed for Myself. And that's what He's after tonight is you. You for Himself.

Not you to do something for Him. I hear people all the time about talking, you know, got to get busy and do something for God. As if poor God was a helpless, tied up, bound up, dead, you know, little meany mouse up there that couldn't do anything for Himself.

We've got to get busy and do something for Him. Hogwarts! How many of you know that we don't have to get busy and do anything for God? Oh, I know that you haven't heard that kind of preaching before. See, that is not why He saved you.

He saved you first for Himself. And He may in His grace involve you in what He's doing, but He doesn't ask you to do anything for Him. Not one time does the Bible say or teach us that we should work for God.

I've written a little article. It's free. It's back in the bookstore.

Quit Working for God. Get it and read it and then send me a letter and tell me how false it is. See, God never calls you to work for Him.

He called us to work with Him. And there's a vast difference in those two concepts. Now, if I can tonight cause you to understand that He first of all wants you for Himself.

Let's go back to the book of Exodus now, chapter 19. And I want to nail this down with a few of the Scriptures and hurry on along here. This people have I formed for Myself.

Now what I'm trying to show you tonight simply is this. If you're going to rightly relate to what God is doing today, you must understand that God is first of all interested in a relationship with you. He's interested first of all in a love relationship with you.

He's not first of all interested in you working for Him. In fact, He's not ever interested in you working for Him. But He's first of all interested in a relationship being established between Himself and you and yourself and Him.

And out of that relationship all these other things begin to happen. Now notice in Exodus chapter 19, I'll start reading at verse 3. Try to behave myself here now and act dignified. Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountains, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel, Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you where? Unto Myself.

Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant, ye shall be a peculiar treasure. Now let me give you a little correction there because you know, we've got enough funny people today without adding to it through a confusion in the translation. This word peculiar doesn't mean oddball.

It doesn't mean ready for the funny farm. It means a special or treasured treasure. It means peculiarly special.

Then ye shall be a treasured treasure unto Me. Now God sees you as what? A treasure. Something of great value to Him.

Not for what you can do for Him, but because He loves you. God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son. Because of His great love.

So He says, if you obey My voice, keep My covenant, you will be a treasured treasure unto Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine. Now how many of you know that every one of God's kids is special to Him? Every one of God's kids is one of His pets. You know why people get to thinking all the time? You know, everywhere I go, I run into little groups, you know, and they always tell me, Glory to God, Brother Ralph, God's shown us a special revelation.

We're the select of the elect. We have a special place nobody else has. Ever seen little groups like that? Well, I'll just let you in on a little secret.

All God's kids are the select of the elect. See, He treasures you all for yourself, for what you are. This people have I formed for Myself.

Now, verse 6 He says, if you obey My voice, keep My covenant, you will be a treasured treasure unto Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine. Verse 6, and ye shall be unto Me, what? A kingdom of priests. Now, it's remarkable to me that it's not been more emphasis, there's not been more emphasis laid on this fact, that when God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, He brought the whole nation out, three million strong, to make every one of them a priest.

Do you know it was not the will of God that there be only a priestly tribe of Levi? That is not what God wanted when He brought the people out of Egypt. He came to them first of all, and He said, there are two conditions. Obey My word, and keep My covenant, and I will make the whole nation, all of you, a kingdom of priests.

He wanted to make every one of those Israelites that came out of Egypt a priest. Every one of them. It was not God's plan to have a tribe of priests where only one tribe out of the twelve or thirteen tribes became a priestly tribe.

His ultimate, his first intention and desire was to make the whole nation priests. But why did not the whole nation become priests? Well, the two conditions were, hear My voice, obey My voice, and secondly, keep My covenant. Now how many of you know what they did about God's voice? Well, the first time they heard it they got scared to death, and they entreated Moses, according to Hebrews 12, and about verse 8 I believe it is, they entreated Moses that the word spoken should never be spoken to them again.

It scared them to death. So they rejected the voice of God. Secondly, the second condition was, keep My covenant.

Well, what did they do? Moses went up on the mount. What did the people do? Scripture says they rose up to play. And they played and danced around the golden calf and they broke the covenant.

And when Moses came down off the mount he found that before the covenant was ever delivered to them they had broken it. And he took those tables of stone and threw them down and only did outwardly what the people had already done in their hearts. So both conditions were violated.

And so God could not make them a kingdom of priests. And so His second best was to take the tribe of Levi and make priests of them. Now, here's my question.

Why did God want to make them all priests? Well, if you'll turn with me now to the book of Deuteronomy, I think it is, chapter 10, verse 8 and 9, you'll see why God wanted a whole nation of priests. You'll see this because of what He said to the Levites after He made them priests. Deuteronomy chapter 10, verse 8 and 9. Deuteronomy 10, 8 and 9. At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

To stand before the Lord, to minister unto Him and to bless His name unto this day. Now, why were the priests chosen? They were chosen to bear the ark of the covenant, the presence of God, to stand before the Lord, to minister where? To the people? No. To minister unto Him.

See, God's first call for priests were to minister to Him. See, He wanted something out of the priests. It wasn't to minister first to the people.

It was first to bear the ark, to bear the presence of God and to minister unto Him and to bless His name. See, now, we always come to church and we say, Bless my soul, O my Lord, and all that is within Thee. Bless me.

Is that right? All of our courses are, Oh, bless me now, my Savior. Bless me, O Lord. Feed me, clothe me, drink me.

You know, me, me, me. Mine, mine, mine. How many of you know that's true? See, all of our religious experience is me-centered.

But, you see, the biblical concept David held was when he came to church, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, what? Bless His holy name. And we'll get on that more tomorrow night. But the thing was, you see, from God's point of view, His plan was to choose a people for Himself, make them priests to minister to Him.

And secondly, we see, to bless His name. And then verse 9. Now here's the key I'm getting to. Deuteronomy 10, verse 9. Wherefore, Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren.

The Lord is his inheritance. The Lord is his inheritance. Now in making a man a priest, what did God want to give them for an inheritance? What was God going to give them as priests for an inheritance? Say it out real loud.

Himself. You see, the Lord is His inheritance. Now He wanted to give Himself to the whole nation.

That's why He wanted to make the whole nation priests. But they rejected God's conditions. And so He picked up one tribe and made them priests.

And He says, now their inheritance is Me. The Lord is their inheritance. Now, what's involved here then? God wants you for Himself.

And He wants to give you what? Himself. He wants you for Himself. And He wants to give you Himself.

You see, and this is the whole plan of God in bringing us out of sin is to give us Himself and for us to be gathered to Himself. Do you see that tonight? Now, let's go over to John chapter 17. Let's get into the New

Testament now for a moment.

And I want to carry through here because, you see, if we begin to understand that the reason God is doing all this glorious thing today we've been sharing these last nights with you, increasing the flow of His river, is not just so there's water. But He's trying to get a people for Himself. It's not just to get the grave flows off.

He's trying to get a people for Himself. It's not just that resurrection life flows. He's wanting a people for Himself to whom He can give Himself.

Now, in John 17, verse 3, it says, this is life eternal. Or, as one translation says, this is the purpose of life eternal that they might what? Know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. Now, this word know, and I've spoken to some of you about this before, but bear with me for a moment.

This word know is a word of intimate relationship. If you go over to the book of Matthew, chapter 1, you'll find the story of the conception of Jesus who was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. And I think along about verse 25 or 26, I'm just giving you the address, or rather the neighborhood.

You can look up the address later. But along about verse 25 or 26, he says, the Scripture says, that Joseph knew not Mary until she had brought forth her firstborn. Now, when the Scripture says Joseph knew not Mary, what does it mean? It means he had no intimate relationship with her until she had brought forth her firstborn.

The love relationship was not established in that dimension until she had brought forth her firstborn, even Jesus. Now, the purpose of life eternal is what? That ye might what? Know Him. Have an intimate relationship with Him.

Give yourself to Him and He gives Himself to you. Is that right? This is life eternal. This is the purpose of life eternal.

This is why God saved us to give us Himself and for us to be unto Him. This, people, have I formed for myself that I might give them myself. Oh, hallelujah.

Well, I don't see anybody shouting tonight. I think we'd rather have a mansion over the hilltop. Or a cabin in the corner of Glory.

Or a harp and a crown. See, these are the things we sing about. You know, one of the great tragedies of the church is that its theology has come out of its song books rather than its Scripture book.

And so we have sung, you know, when I get over that, you know, just over the hilltop, there's a mansion waiting for me. And I'll have a mansion, a harp and a crown. Glory to God.

And what have our eyes been turned to? See, if you get saved, you know, we good evangelists get up and preach, Jesus as your Savior, He'll give you a mansion in glory. He'll give you a crown. He'll give you stars in your crown.

I know you've all heard this story 50 times, but it just can't be passed up because we're at camp meeting. But over in Arizona, you know, we used to have three camp meetings all in a row. The Methodists, the Baptists, and the Pentecostals.

And the Methodists would be singing, Will there be any stars in my crown, in my crown? The Baptists would be singing, No, not one, no, not one. Down the road the Pentecostals would be singing, Oh, that will be glory for me. But you see, that is the whole projection of why we're saved.

You know, we're going to have crowns and stars. And praise God, we'll pull out our hanky every day and polish them up. Glory to God.

See my crown. Glory, I've got more stars than you. Hallelujah.

That's right. Please turn the tape over for the remainder of the message. Now listen.

Costa, they're here yet. See, the Muslims have a hope. When they get to paradise, what are they going to have in paradise for the Costa? Now Costa was raised, you see, born and raised in Palestine and with the Arabs all his life.

And he knows the Islam religion very, very well because he was raised with it. But what is the Muslim hoping to have in paradise? Sixty virgins. A harem with sixty virgins.

That's heaven. Now listen to me. See, that may strike you a little funny, but do you know some Christian's concept of paradise is almost as carnal as that? The reason they're saved, if you ask them, oh hallelujah, so I can live in a mansion.

Have streets of gold, gates of pearl, foundations of topaz. See, now I'm not, you know, I'm not for a moment taking away, if you believe in that, you know, that literal interpretation of Revelation 21 and 22, that's perfectly alright. It may be that way.

Praise God if it is. Praise God if it isn't. It doesn't matter to me.

I'm not here to defend that pro or con because my heart is not set on mansions over the hilltop. It's not set on hearts, crowns, any of that. It's set on Him.

See, why He saved me was to give me Himself. And that's what thrills my soul tonight is Jesus. This people have I formed for myself to give myself.

This is the purpose of life eternal that they might know Thee, have an intimate relationship with God. See, and when we get our minds, you know, on harps and crowns and all this business. Now, I know the Bible talks about crowns, it talks about white robes, it even talks about harps in the book of Revelation.

But if you find the fourth chapter, you read the fourth chapter of Revelation, you'll find that all the crowns are cast at the feet of the Lamb. That's where they all end up. So if He gives us any, it's only to cast at His feet.

It's not to go around heaven bragging on glory to God, I got 50 stars, you only got 39. I want more souls than you, hallelujah. You weren't a very good soul winner, glory to God, hallelujah.

That gives me a place in heaven on Park Avenue and you go down on Skid Row. See, I used to think for years I was a good Pentecostal believer that when I got to heaven, the Baptists were going to be my servants. They were inferior.

See, only those that could shout hallelujah would live on Hallelujah Avenue, the main street of heaven. Well, I'm trying to give you something better. Yeah, I'm not really trying to steal your mansion.

If that's what your heart set on, well, I'm sorry you're going to be disappointed. I was just looking here for something that they wrote me over in New Zealand, Peter Morrow. I was down with Peter Morrow in New Zealand a couple of years ago preaching at his camp meeting at Gunsbush.

Gunsbush, New Zealand. And so the last couple of days of the camp, they wrote me a psalm, Psalm 151. To our brother Ralph Mahoney, a psalm of Gunsbush Kitchen.

And you'll have to understand when I read this that I had a little problem over there. In New Zealand, they make salad dressing and whip it all up and it pours out and looks just like thick canned milk. So I was going in, you know, they always had free coffee there after service like we do back in the bookstore here.

So I was going in to have coffee after the service one night and I pick up this little pitcher and I pour in thinking I'm getting cream. Turns out to be salad dressing. It looked like cream, but it was salad dressing.

So if you understand that, you'll understand this poem a little bit. But I was preaching a little along these lines over there that I'm talking to you about tonight. So here's this 151st Psalm.

Behold, thou hast instructed many and strengthened the feeble hands. Thy words have upholden we who were falling and broken asunder our bands. Notwithstanding, we have a few things against you which need to be said.

We've been stripped of our mansions, our harps turned to mourning, and the crowns have been snatched from our heads. However, we acknowledge thy words to be true. Godly wisdom thou hast told, and we thank you that thou restrainest not for wisdom is better than gold.

So as you've given to us, we will give unto you. For as King James Version is not what it seems, we'll not cease to pray you'll be wise and discern that mayonnaise is different from cream. That's Peter Morrow's kitchen crew.

But you see, what Jesus did say in John 14 was not as our King James Version reads, in my Father's house are many mansions. That isn't what he said. He said in my Father's house are many abiding places or rooms or placements.

Nowhere did the Scriptures ever promise us anything like that. God's promise to us is not mansions. It's not all these things.

It's Himself He wants to give us. And you see, if we can learn tonight that He formed us, this people have I formed for myself. He wants us for Himself to give us Himself.

And if we can get that understanding into our hearts tonight, it will help us to relate rightly to what God is doing today. See, all the blessing, all the renewal in the church is not just so we'll be thrilled and come up in life, but He's trying to through this bring us to Himself. Now back in the Old Testament, I just want to share this.

It's a little on a negative note, but I think it's worth throwing in here. Isaiah 4 and verse 1. Isaiah 4 and verse 1. The thing I'm trying to emphasize tonight is that we rightly relate to what God is doing through relationship. Through relationship with Him.

Through an intimate relationship. The purpose of life eternal is that ye might know Him. Have an intimate relationship with Him.

The only true God in Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. And we know that in the Old Testament, in Isaiah chapter 4 now in verse 1. The prophet said, In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to what? Take away our reproach. Now you say, Brother Ralph, what's this talking about? Well, one brother said, This is a prophecy concerning these aggressive women we've got.

I said, No, brother, I don't think it's quite that. The seven women that take hold of one man, undoubtedly is a prophetic parable of the seven churches of Revelation chapter 1, 2, and 3. And the churches take hold of one man, Christ, and say, Now we'll eat our own bread. We'll wear our own apparel.

But there's one thing we want. We want your name. Give us your name to take away our reproach.

They didn't want relationship with him. They wanted no intimate relationship. All they wanted was the name.

Go through the marriage ceremony, but, you know, it's only a sham. It's only something to give us the name to take away our reproach. Now how many of you know that many people that call themselves Christian are only Christian because the name takes away their reproach? They don't want any relationship with God.

They're not interested in having Him or He having them. Just let us be called by Thy name. I used to be, you know, a very zealous soul winner as a young fellow, particularly.

And my tactics have changed a little, although I still believe very strongly in soul winning. I'd go up to people on the street and I'd collar them and I'd say, Are you a Christian? And this one fellow looked at me one day and he said, What do you think I am, a heathen? Well, the point is that everybody's a Christian. They've all got the name.

But how many have the relationship? You know, what God is interested in is not just being called a Christian. You know, anybody can call themselves a Christian. Over in Revelation 3, verse 1, it says of the church at Sardis, Thou hast a name that thou livest.

I'm giving you a Weymouth translation now of Revelation 3, verse 1. Thou hast a name that thou livest, but in reality, you're dead. Now, many of us have the name, but we don't have the life. We have the name, but we don't have the relationship.

Now, the Lord is not only interested in giving us the life. We've been preaching about that the last couple of nights. But He's interested in bringing us into relationship with Himself.

Why has He raised us up together? He has raised us up together and put that resurrection life in us and quickened us to sit where? Together in heavenly places. He wants us for Himself to share Himself. You see, He's interested in togetherness.

Can you remember that? Very much interested in togetherness. God wants us for Himself. Now, going back to Genesis 15, in verse 1, another scripture here.

How many of you have heard of Abraham? Everybody knows about Abraham. Alright? Genesis 15, 1. After these things, the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram. Genesis 15, 1. Fear not, Abram.

For I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward. Now, you talk to Christians and you say, What are you expecting for a reward for faithfulness to the Lord? Well, I think that, you know, I'm going to have a mansion with 72 rooms. I want the front door to be made out of gold-plated ivory.

And the back door out of silver-plated carbuncle. And, you know, they order up their reward. But what did the Lord say to Abraham? He said, I am thy exceeding great reward.

Abraham, if you're faithful, do you know what you're going to get? You're going to get me. Now, if you don't want him tonight, you're in the wrong business. You ought to go back out and find something else.

Because Hebrews 11, 6 says, He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. He's a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. And you know what the reward is? Him.

He rewards you with Himself. You seek Him diligently, and how does He reward you? By giving you Himself. See, now, if you don't want Him, you know, really you ought to, what do they say, split.

If you don't want Him, you're entangled with the wrong deal. See? Now, I know that some of us come to the Lord because we think, hallelujah, I've got my fire insurance all paid up now. But see, there's more involved than that.

It's not just fire insurance. It's not all these things that we've held to. It's not a harem with 60 virgins.

See, it's none of that business. It is Him that's at the end of this road. In fact, it's Him before we get to the end of this road.

It's Him tonight. This people have I formed for myself. I want to give them Me.

Oh, I'd rather have a mansion. I remember a brother telling one time about coming home, and every time he'd come home, he'd bring a little gift for his little boy. So his boy'd come running out, and he'd always have a little gift for him.

So one night he came home, and he thought, well, I'm not going to bring anything tonight. So Johnny came running out to grab Daddy around the neck. And Johnny says, oh, Daddy, what have you got for me tonight? He says, well, Johnny, I just brought Me.

Johnny says, oh. And you know, I find some Christians that way. When I tell them what this thing is all about, oh, such a letdown.

All I'm going to get is God. Oh, but oh, if you could understand the glory of His inheritance in the saints. That the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of His calling.

What His hope was in calling you was to have you for Himself, to give you Himself. What is the glory of His inheritance in the saints. Hallelujah.

Now, I want to go over to Genesis 24 here as we start moving toward a conclusion. I'm always allowed seven conclusions, you know. But Genesis chapter 24.

And I'd like you to see a parable that I think expresses, perhaps better than I can tonight, that which I'm really trying to share with you. Because you see, there is a tendency to getting centered on something other than Him. See, we get centered on the fact that He saved us from sin, glory to God.

And that's good, you know. That really should be always a great joy to us, the fact that He saved us from sin. I'm not demeaning that in the least.

But you see, if that's all we understand, we're saved out of the muck. And I have no understanding of why we're saved. You see, we're saved from something.

But see, that's only a part of it. We're saved to something. And what I'm trying to give you a revelation and vision of tonight is what God saved you to, not just what He saved you from.

He saved you to Himself. For Himself. So in Genesis 24, here's a story of Abraham.

And he had a servant. And he had a son. Now if you study this picture, you see that Abraham becomes in this story a type of God the Father.

The Father who's seeking a bride for His son. And the son Isaac is a type of Christ, the Son of God. And the servant goes out to get a bride for the Son.

And that servant becomes a type of the Holy Spirit, who today is going throughout all the earth seeking a bride for the Lamb, Christ. The Holy Spirit's function is to gather out of the nations a people for His name. See? In marriage, you always take His name.

So the Holy Spirit is out, according to Acts chapter 15, taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name, a bride for Him. So we have the type here of Abraham the Father sending out his servant, a type of the Holy Spirit, to obtain a bride for Isaac, his son, a type of Christ. Verse 10 of Genesis 24 says, The servant took ten camels of the camels of his master and departed, for all the goods of his master were in his hand.

Now that's what the Holy Spirit has today. All the goods of His master. Jesus said, When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, and He will show you all things.

See? The Holy Spirit has all things. You can read John 16, verse 13 and 14 if you want to check me up on this. But you'll find that the Holy Spirit has had all things delivered into His hands.

And He now comes with all things from the Father to us. And when He comes to us and we see the Holy Spirit has all things, now I'm talking to people who have experienced the charismatic renewal, so follow me now. We see the Holy Spirit coming with all these lovely things that belong to the Father.

And we say, oh, glory to God! Look at that beautiful gift of tongues. Oh, I want that! Glory to God. And we start speaking in tongues.

Oh, look at that beautiful gift of interpretation. I want that! Glory to God. So we start interpreting.

And then we look at those lovely giftings He brings. Oh, there's a word of knowledge. I want that.

Glory to God. Oh, that's lovely. That discerning of spirits.

Oh, that gift of healing. Oh, for God's glory. I want the gift of miracles.

Oh, hallelujah. How many of you know a lot of people want the gift of miracles for God's glory? He comes with all these gifts. And what do we do? Oh, these glorious gifts.

Look how they sparkle. Oh, how beautiful. Oh, I want these gifts.

Covet earnestly the best gifts. Glory to God. Take them all.

And our whole life becomes gift-centered. Now, when the Holy Spirit comes, when the Servant comes with the gifts, what is He after? He's after a bride. Not just to give gifts.

See, now the gifts are part of it, and I'm not demeaning the gifts. Hallelujah, get all that He gives. Take all He gets.

Because He comes with those gifts to woo us. But you see, what happens is we don't understand the gifts are not the end. We think, hallelujah, the gifts are it.

If we get the gifts, we've got everything. No. The gifts are a means to an end.

The gifts get our attention, and Rebecca looks at those gifts and she says, oh, glory to God, if there's a bridegroom out there that can offer all this, I'm ready to go. Hallelujah! And so, she climbs on the camels, attracted by the gifts, and starts her lovely journey back to Isaac. And of course, it's when the journey starts that things change a little bit.

How many of you know what I'm talking about? Ever ridden on a camel across the Sinai Desert? See? That's the kind of ride you get on top of a camel. The most ugly beast you could ever ride is a camel. That fella, you know, he... smells... jerks around, you know, and here you're going for 14 days to get to Isaac, and how'd you ever get into this mess? It was the gifts.

The gifts will get you in trouble because once you get on that camel and start the road, there's no turning back. Can't get out. You've already been given the left foot of fellowship.

Glory to God. Kiss goodbye. Send off to Isaac.

That's when the going gets a little rough. But see, God's got something in mind through all of this. He's trying to bring you where? To Himself.

For Himself. Now we all understand that in a relationship of this type, when a man takes a bride, he obviously... there's a place for her to serve in the home. See? And I don't want to leave any wrong impressions on that.

But, you know, you can go out and hire a servant. You know, in most countries you can hire servants for \$10, \$12 a month. But see, that is not what the masculine nature longs after is just a servant.

Isaac wanted a bride. Isaac wanted someone to love and who could in part give him love. He wanted to be loved and he wanted to love.

And in this, he becomes symbolic of God. God comes down to give His love that in exchange He is loved. He doesn't want just a bunch of servants.

He wants a love relationship. And out of that, there's lots of serving to do. If you've raised a family, you know that ladies, don't you? But you see, in the love relationship, the service is not a trial continually to you.

It's not a drudgery. Why? Because there's a love relationship that's been established. And in a love relationship, a woman can work her head off and be happy and content as can be.

But when the love goes out of it, she becomes a drudgery to do all that. How many of you know what I'm talking about? Now God is interested in a people for Himself. This people have I formed for Myself.

And the first commandment He gives to us, the most important, is thou shalt what? Love the Lord thy God. He wants more than anything else, your love. Now listen, I know I'm saying some rather harsh things here tonight, and you'll have to forgive me, but you've got to get a little extreme sometimes or people forget what you're saying and they never, you know, get changed.

So, but see here are people that get a distorted sense of service and their relationship to God is all messed up. And I've seen on the female side mothers leave children and come to me and say, God's called me to go to, you know, some place as a missionary. So I start inquiring into their background and I find out they're a mother with several children at home and I said, well what about your husband? Oh, God's called me.

What about your children? Oh, God's called me. I've got to go out to Africa and win the Africans. See, now I said, well what if you don't go? Oh, the judgments of God will come on me if I disobey God.

How many of you know that that is a religious distortion that doesn't come from heaven? Now, going to the masculine side, you can see the same thing. A man that becomes so infatuated with service and work that the family's neglected. You see, this happens to preachers and I sympathize and empathize with preachers because I know the problems.

Here they are anointed of God and that anointing attracts the people and the people are needy. And so there he is trying to be a mediator of God's grace and power and healing and atonement to the people. And in being captivated by that and demands being made on him by that, then the children and the wife and the family are, you know, 18 hour days counseling and working and increasing the church and extending the kingdom and the family goes to pot.

And it's easy to happen. Not intentionally, but it comes. Why? Because we haven't understood the first obligation in our relationship is love.

Godward and love manward. You see, the cross points two ways. The vertical stem points Godward to show us that God wants our love flowing vertically.

But it also points both ways to show that he wants our love flowing out on this level, horizontally. And that type of relationship is what God was first interested in when he saved you. But you see, tragically, we get gift oriented or evangelism oriented or anything else oriented.

Anything else that becomes the center draws us away from the first and highest purpose of God coming and visiting us. And if we lose sight of the fact that he comes to save us for himself, this people have I formed for myself, we've lost and missed the mark. Now, I'll just close with this one word.

2 Corinthians 11, verse 2. Paul writing to this church. He says, I have espoused you as a virgin to Christ. As a chaste virgin.

You see, his responsibility, first of all, in bringing the people to God in salvation, getting them filled with the Spirit, getting the giftings, functioning and working, all of this was to what? To espouse them to Christ. And ministers, your first responsibility is to get your people in love with Jesus. And to help them to understand they've been, first of all, called to a love relationship.

And if they establish that with their Lord, then all the other things that you think are necessary will be taken care of in their time. But you see, whenever we get service oriented, save to serve, all that business, we distract their attention away from Him who wants their love. And all of their time and energies are taken for service.

And how many husbands sit lonely at home because their wife is so taken up in the service, they don't have time to love their husband. Or to share His love or receive His love. And the man becomes miserable and discontented and even though she's working hard and even though she's loyal and even though she's faithful, the fellow finds himself out roaming around seeking the thing he really wants.

Not her service, but her love. And the same could be said the other way around on the side of the man. Now, God finds Himself in that peculiar position tonight with His people.

So many that are willing to be servants. So many that are willing to do all the do's that have to be done. But so few that are willing to become worshippers and lovers.

The Father seeketh such to what? Worship Him. Never says He seeks workers, but He seeks worshippers. Those who will worship Him.

Those who will express their love to Him. And that's His first call to you tonight. People come to me and say, I'm called Africa.

I say, there's no scriptural ground for being called Africa. There isn't. Your only call scripturally is to Himself.

God calls you to Himself and that's the only call He has. After calling you to Himself and establishing a right relationship with you, He may send you to Africa. He may send you to China.

He may send you anywhere. But His call is always, come unto Me. All you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me and ye shall find rest to your souls. How many of you want to respond to His call to Himself tonight? Hallelujah. Let's stand together in His presence.

If the foregoing message has been a blessing, we urge you to share it with your pastor, your prayer group, your neighbor, or someone in spiritual need. Additional copies of this tape or a free tape catalog may be obtained by writing to World Map Tape Outreach, 900 North Glen Oaks Boulevard, Burbank, California, ZIP 91502. Over 300 anointed messages available for your spiritual enrichment.

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