

Time to Travail

by Ralph Sexton

Ralph Sexton's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for spiritual maturity and travail in the church to effectively reach the lost and experience revival.

Duration: 20:22

Scripture: Psalm 30:5, Psalm 150:6, Isaiah 13:8, Matthew 6:33, John 14:3, Acts 1:11, 1 Corinthians 12:27

Topics: "Spiritual Revival", "Salvation Power"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the urgency for believers to recognize the gravity of their mission. He compares the experience of a woman in labor, facing fear and pain, to the journey of believers in bringing new life into the world. The preacher highlights the need for the church to prioritize the power of God and the salvation of souls over trivial conversations and distractions. He reminds the congregation that God has the power to send revival, save loved ones, and heal the sick. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the victory of Jesus over death, hell, and the grave, and the authority believers have through his name.

Transcript

Tonight I want you to think with me on this subject, Time to Travail. Time to Travail. Galatians 4 and 9, But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements? Whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months and times and years.

I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Galatians 4 and 19, My little children, of whom I travail in birth, what, again, until Christ be formed in you? The definition that we find in Webster's of the word travail is this. Travail means painful, arduous, arduous labor, pains of childbirth, to labor with difficulty, to suffer pains of childbirth.

That is the definition that's given of travail. The Bible says that it's time for us to travail, that we would not go smaller spiritually, that we would become more mature. We do not have the nursery of our churches filled up by the nursery.

Adult women have babies. The body has to be mature. Chemicals have to be in place.

Actual construction in the human body has to be mature and formed. Immaturity cannot produce new life. Only maturity can produce new life.

I wonder in our churches tonight, all across America, we had church yesterday. I wonder if we only had religious entertainment. I wonder if we only had religious habits.

I wonder if we only came and walked in and went through a religious ritual that we've always gone through. I mean, it's time for Sunday school. It's time for the birthday offering.

It's time to have a prayer. It's time to have a song. And in some churches, they even pass out a menu and tell you that it's time to stand up and it's time to sit down and it's time to bow your head and it's time to sing.

Because we have it organized, we have it orchestrated, but there doesn't seem to be any spiritual maturity because we're not having babies born in the house of God. The only way there's going to be life is that there's some maturity. And we can't have the nursery filling the battlefield with soldiers to battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Now, Isaiah, if you will, in the Old Testament, Isaiah 13, verse number 8, the Bible says, And they shall be afraid. This is the book of Isaiah, chapter 13, and verse number 8. And they shall be afraid. Pains and sorrows shall take hold of them.

They shall be in pain as a woman that prevails. They shall be amazed one at another. Their faces shall be as flames.

They shall be in pain as a woman that prevails. I think that we could be honest tonight, and without being critical of people that are trying their very best to serve God, I think that God would bless us to be honest. I think God would bless you to be honest and bless me to be honest.

And the truth of the matter is that we do go to church on most Sundays, Sunday nights, and Wednesday nights. But I wonder about the body of Christ that is in that church. That body of Christ that's in the church represents a three-times holy God in heaven.

God Almighty said, I'm a spirit and I cannot change. Jesus said, well, Father, I'll lay aside my crown of righteousness, I'll put down my royal robes, and I'll go down to earth and I'll represent us. And I'll be a savior, I'll be a lamb sacrificed for the sins of men, women, boys, and girls.

Jesus did just that. He invaded this mud ball of sin. He laid down his royal robe of righteousness, took off his crown of authority, and became a flesh being just like you and me.

He was not half God and half man, but he was all God and all man. A mystery, and the power of that mystery is great and authoritative today that he was Jesus Christ Yeshua, the Messiah. He was the living Son of God and he is the Son of God tonight.

He's not only the Son of God, but he is God. And his very being is that there are three in one and one in three. You say, that doesn't make sense, isn't that wonderful? That makes him God.

He's smarter than you and smarter than me. You say, well, you can't have three in one. Well, I didn't hear you go into the restaurant this morning and say, could I have an order of scrambled shells, yolks, and whites? You said, could I have an order of scrambled eggs? And yet that egg's made up of three parts.

It's got a shell, it's got a yolk, it's got a white. And all three of those are made up. They have distinctive personalities, but when you whip it all together, it's a good old scrambled egg.

You know what God has done for us. You see, we have a mystery in front of us and he is God and we need to understand that. And he did come to this earth, but then when he left this earth after he had been to the cross, after he had cleaned out the grave and made it a peaceful place to wait for the resurrection morning, after he had conquered death, hell, and the grave, after he had taken the keys of hell away from the devil, and when you go home tonight, the devil's the only booger in business that doesn't have the keys to his own shop.

Huh? All he can do is just walk around and act mad because he's not mad anymore. God's already whipped him. I love it when the bully gets whipped, don't you? That bully got whipped.

I mean, God's Son whipped him. He didn't give up those keys without a fight, but God's Son took authority over him in the name of the King of kings and the Lord of lords. And by the power of his own blood, he took from him the keys of death, the keys of hell, and the keys of the grave.

And tonight, he has those keys tied to his side. Now, when he was ready to leave after he had resurrected his own body by the authority of his own name, and then he had appeared to this earth to be a living witness forever that he was indeed the resurrected Son of God. Now, you can understand something tonight.

You're practicing and living the only religion in the entire world where your Founders are alive and well. You go over to see where they buried Buddha, and you look in there, and there are Buddha bones. Huh? You go over there to where Muhammad is, and there's Muhammad bones and ashes.

You go over there to where the Spiritism was born by the Fox sisters, and you'll see bones and ashes. Hey, you go over to the Hindus and see where their leaders were that came up with their religion, and all you see is bones and ashes. But you go over to Jerusalem and go inside that empty tomb and look around, and there's no bones and there's no ashes, because he's alive, and he's alive forevermore.

Only religion in the world. If you're confused on which religion to follow, you might ought to pick one out where the boss is still in the shop. The rest of them are just hanging out in a grave with plaques around them, how they used to do and what they accomplished.

And it says they were born in this year and they died in this year. But you go over to our Founding Fathers' grave, and it's got a little sign on the door. It says, He is not here.

Come see the place where the Lord lies. Only religion in the world. That ought to sort of weed out the false cults and the false religion when you've got the only one where the Founding Fathers are alive and well.

That ought to encourage your faith. That ought to let you know you can still have revival in these last days. It ought to encourage your heart to know that you don't have to look at the storm anymore.

You can look at the God that's over the storm. You don't have to look at the walled cities anymore of unbelief, but look at the God that's over the walled cities. You don't have to look at the giants that are walking around over the land, but look at the God that's bigger than the giants that are trying to take the land.

We've got a God of power, a God of authority. And this great God loves you so much that He saves you out of a devil's hell in spite of who you are and what you are and who you used to run around with and what you used to say and how you used to act. And He still loves you enough to let His Son die for you.

What kind of Savior is that that'd love you anyway? Now, watch what He did. He came out of that grave and then He ascended up, walked up to the Mount of Olives, and He said, I go away, but He said, if I go away, if I think about you again, there's a good possibility I might come back. That's one of those new Bibles.

That's not that old black-backed 1611 King James. That Bible, that's the authoritative voice for the English-speaking world. You know what He said in that one? He said, if I go away, I will come again.

That's Bible prophecy. I like that because it means He's coming back. And you know what, church? He said, if I go away, I will come again, and I will not leave you what? Comfortless.

And He left the comforter. That's what gets ahold of you every now and then when you're not even expecting it. You get a hug from heaven.

The comforter's kicking on you, saying, you're going to make it. When you got them old lonely nights and the lights are off and them old hot tears are rolling down your cheek and dripping on that old pillow, the comforter's there with a little handkerchief of grace and mercy saying, this will only endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning. Hey, help is on the way.

I read the last chapter in our sidewinds, and everything that has breath ought to be praising the Lord, ought to be thanking God that we're on the winning side. He said, now, I'm the head and I'm in heaven. You're the body, you're on earth.

The body is where the babies are born. You see where I'm going with all this? The body is where the babies are born. Someone has to have a burden.

Someone has to have a vision. Someone has to pray. How many of you here tonight have a blood relative that is lost? Would you hold up your hand, please? A blood relative.

How many of you have someone that you love and care about that's not a blood relative, but you care about them very much, you love them? And you don't want them to go to hell, you want them to go to heaven, and you know that if Jesus were to come tonight or they were to die, they would be lost. How many of you have someone in your life like that? Now, now, wait a minute. Just about everybody in this tent raised their hand they had someone lost, a blood relative.

And almost 100% raised their hand that you have someone in your life that you know and love and care about that's lost. Well, now, let me ask you this. If that lost person only had one person in their life, only one Christian, and that Christian was you, what chance would they have of ever being saved? If that lost person is lost and on their way to hell and there's only one Christian in their life between them and an eternity without God, what hope and what chance do they have of ever being saved? You're the only thing between them and the abyss.

You're the only thing, you're the only person alive that claims the name of Jesus Christ. What chance do they have if you're the only thing between them? You say, well, Brother Ralph, that's not really fair. Why is it not fair? We are the body.

Did you know the only way, listen to this, this will scare you, the only way you could just raise your hand that you were burdened over someone lost, the only way you can even say you're burdened about somebody being lost is the Holy Ghost told you to be burdened? My righteousness is a filthy rag. I can't even think a good thought. Hey, if my flesh does what it wants to do, it'll run right back on to the hog pens he got me out of and I'll whistle happily on my way to hell.

The only way I can even raise my hand and say I'm burdened is the sweet Holy Ghost of God to come around me and let me know that the only hope they have is that God can save them. Now, the Holy Ghost must impregnate the lost. That's the seed of the Spirit.

It is not that I found Jesus, but the truth of the matter is Jesus found me. You see, I wasn't looking for the Lamb when he invaded my world. I was going the opposite direction, going as fast as I could to an eternity without Jesus.

And what did Jesus do? He just put up a roadblock of grace right in the middle of the highway to hell and I ran a slap in the grace, had to stop, and while I was addled about running into the roadblock of grace, Sheriff Mercy stepped out, handcuffed me, and carried me over to the High Sheriff of Glory and there the arresting power of the sweet Holy Ghost of God made me aware that I needed a Savior, that I could not redeem myself. The body is the only place that can reproduce. The only way reproduction can go on is that the Spirit of God impregnate our hearts with a burden and that we would prevail again in prayer, burden, fasting.

I wonder what church is now. When was the last time you were in a church service and you felt like you couldn't catch your breath because there was such a burden in the building for the lost? That you, have you ever heard a woman in labor, she goes, if they go to Lamaze class, they try to teach them to control that panic breathing by processing it into a controlled panting because there is anxiety, fear of the unknown, unbelievable pain, and then that precious woman is walking down to the valley of the shadow of death. She's walking to the edge of death so she can give new life and bring it into this world.

Huh? And you know what we're doing at church on Sunday? We're walking in there, we're talking to each other. What do you think Labonnie will do today? I don't know, but I just hope somebody wrecks Gordon. That's all I care about.

Well, I don't know. Little E's been on a streak. Let's see what we can get going.

The Braves are playing at three. What do you think about Dallas? They got a chance this year in the NFL and that's church. And we're sitting there in the parking lot talking and we're cutting up and we're having a big time.

Nothing wrong with that. Please don't misunderstand me. We ought to be happy people.

We ought to be joyful people. But every now and then, every once in a while, there ought to be the sense that there's an urgency on the land, that there are people dying and going to hell, that the church is the body of Christ, and there ought to be some prevailing and saying, this could be the day that God would walk into the house and this could be the day that the sweet Holy Ghost will get ahold of my daughter or my son or my wife or my husband. Something bigger than the preacher.

Someone bigger than the Sunday school teacher. Something bigger than the program. Something more organized than the organization.

It's the power of God we desperately need back on the land. Can God send revival? Yes, God can. Can God save you or your loved one? God can.

Can God touch those that are sick and body? God can. Can God meet the financial needs that you have under the burden? God can. Can God get your wayward daughter? God can.

Can God save your grandson? God can. Can God heal your church family? God can. Can God give you fresh oil? God can.

Can God anoint you anew for the last day? God can. Can God give you a holy boldness to witness? God can. Can God give you back your prayer life? God can.

Can God make you hunger for the book? God can. Can God? God can. He can do it.

It's whether or not we're willing to pay the price to turn off the world and spend time with God. Something I've learned about serving God is God doesn't force things. God won't make me read my Bible.

God won't make me pray. Can God? God can. Can God? God can.

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