

The Secret Place

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of a personal relationship with Christ and the implications of spiritual authority within the kingdom of God.

Duration: 1:23:49

Topics: "Faith And Wisdom", "Personal Relationship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having an abundance of resources, such as money, people, and publicity, for religion to thrive. However, he also highlights the significance of relying on Jesus and having a personal relationship with Him. The preacher encourages listeners to act with wisdom and consider the consequences before speaking or acting impulsively. He emphasizes the power of God to transform lives and remove sin, urging believers to have faith in His ability to bring about change. The sermon concludes with a reminder that each person has a unique purpose and talent given by God, and it is important to use these gifts for His glory.

Transcript

Lord, as we come unto you tonight, Lord, as with great thanksgiving and praise for all your goodness, Lord, all your wonderful love toward us, Lord, thank you. Pray remember Bob Porcelli, Lord, as he's in another country, Lord, keep your hand on him, keep him safe. Bless each family represented here, Lord, you know the help that we need and we just look to you, Lord, to keep our families safe and healthy, Lord, give us wisdom so that we can resolve our problems.

We pray as we continue tonight, Lord, that you will just give us just what you want for each one, Lord, just that word that will help us on our way. We thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, all right, we're in Ezekiel. You've heard of that book. We've gotten this far now.

It's chapter 44 verses 2 and 3 of Ezekiel. Now, Ezekiel 44, 2 and 3. Now, we're talking about the image of Christ as portrayed symbolically in Ezekiel's temple is what we're about here. All right, now, for the benefit of those in Tape Land, the Lord said to me, this gate is to remain shut.

It must not be open. No one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the Lord, the God of Israel has entered through it.

The prince himself is the only one who may sit inside the gateway to eat in the presence of the Lord. He is to enter by way of the portico of the gateway. That's a covered walkway that leads to the gate and go out the same way.

Now, I believe what the Spirit of the Lord is talking about there is the special place that Christ is to have in our heart. Now, just because we are churchgoer doesn't necessarily mean that we're really in the one-on-one relationship that Jesus wants. It's very easy for church and religion to demand allegiance and we're following the rules and regulations and we know all the folkways and we know the words and the choruses and the mores and the values of our religion.

But knowing Jesus is something else again. And he wants to be in our heart in a more personal way than I think we have understood. I think the Lord showed me something that I'm not sure I can put it words.

It was a week or so ago. But the kingdom is being set up now. It's being set up.

And the kingdom is a rule of God through Christ to the individual and through the individual to others because we are being made a royal priesthood. And I remember when I came to the Lord, I had always believed in God. I mean, it just seemed, I guess, like everybody else, like the native in the bush.

You just know there's a God. And I can remember as a boy praying, but I didn't know about Jesus and I didn't know about the gospel. I wasn't raised in a Christian family and I didn't know about that, but I did believe in God.

And when I was introduced to the gospel, the problem I had was something that would never, I don't think, ever bother a person who was raised in a Christian home. And that was transferring my allegiance from God to Christ. I thought, who is this person? You know, I'm supposed to give the most sacred part of my life and worship him as God? And it gave me pause.

I surmounted it. I said, okay, if that's what God wants, I'm in. That's what Jesus said in John 14.1. You believe in God, believe in me.

And I had a problem with that. I didn't want to do that. I felt, you know, I didn't want anybody between me and God.

Well, I think we're going to find when the kingdom is set up, that there's going to be not only God and Jesus, not only Jesus is going to be between us and God, but depending where we are in the hierarchy, there's going to be other people. Now, I don't know how that all works out. But if you remember the verse, let no man take your crown, do you remember that? Well, my understanding of that verse has stopped with the idea of losing your crown.

But there's a flip side of the coin to that. And that is someone else gets the crown. I never thought of that.

And if we don't establish our place with Jesus, in a one-on-one relationship with him, we're going to find that he puts others over us who are more diligent. And let me tell you, this is a very real thing. I preached, and I've understood from the book of Daniel, that one of the horrors of the last days is going to be that Antichrist will be given the authority to reach into the heavens to the extent that he can interfere with the prayers of the saints.

Now, see, we don't know what that's like. We're simply used to, when we go to prayer, we're used to going right through Jesus to the Holy of Holies in heaven, and we know that God is so anxious to hear us pray, we go right on through. We better start taking advantage of that, because the day is coming when that won't be possible.

Antichrist will have the authority to reach up to the hosts that are established in heaven. And if any rebellion at all can be found in them, they will be torn down. Now, we're not used to this.

We're used to having an open heaven. When we go to Jesus, we don't expect any problems at all. But it's going to change.

The Lord showed me that, and I had a personal experience with that, and of someone coming between me and the Lord, and I said, Lord, and it was someone that I did not care to have between me and Christ. And it was someone who, at one time in my life, I had given too much authority to. And the Lord spoke to me about that many years ago.

He said, you're giving your authority to somebody else. He said, I don't want you to do that. I don't want them doing what you're doing.

And it wasn't difficult for me. I just never thought of it. And so I took steps to correct it.

He said, you're giving your authority to someone else. And I have an open-hearted nature. That's what I am.

In many ways, I'm childlike, if not childish. And it's, y'all come. That's the type of personality I have.

I don't grab things like authority. It doesn't mean that much to me. But the Lord, but there are other people to whom authority is extremely important, and they grasp it and have to have the preeminence.

Well, of my many, many sins, that isn't one of them. I don't care whether I'm noticed or not. That's fine.

That's off my back. Better for me. Let me curl up in bed with a book.

That suits me perfectly. Let people beat their drums all they want to. But that isn't the way it is with everybody.

And this particular person was much more into seeking authority and seeking power. And I was giving it to them. And the Lord spoke to me about that.

And so I had to change my ways. See, let no man take your crown. In other words, it's up to you to see that you don't give away the authority that God has given to you, because someday you're going to be ruled by people you don't want to be ruled by.

Whoa, that's heavy and it's deep. But it's very true, because the kingdom of God is a hierarchy of rank. And the overcomers will govern.

They will govern. And people will not have a say in the matter. If God inserts someone in there between you and Jesus to govern you there, I tell you from this brief experience I had, there is not a blessed thing you can do about it.

It panicked me for a minute. I thought, Lord, I don't want this. And then it was withdrawn, but the Lord showed me.

And that's the way he does so that I can teach and so that I can explain things. He shows me by personal experience. But it has to match the Bible.

And that's what it says, let no man take your crown. Because you'll find him ruling over you. So we know from the New Testament that the kingdom will go to the diligent.

Take the talent from him. Give it to the man that has ten. And those talents, the reward was ruling.

You'll rule over ten cities. How about this guy? Take his talent, put him in the outer darkness. He rules over nothing.

This guy is over eleven cities. There's much about that in the Gospels. It's about rulership.

And we don't think too much about it maybe because we're in a democracy and we don't have problems with star chambers and the fiats of emperors or whatever. We're just not that much into who's governing who. It used to be important in England.

England had quite a caste system. And if you were not of the nobility, you had to, when you came in front of someone, you had to grab your forelock and bow and show your subservience. You didn't have any choice about it.

See, we're used to nobody's going to tell me what to do. That's a big problem in America, is this saying, nobody's going to tell me what to do. If you ever find that in your spirit, ask God to remove it.

That is not a godly spirit. That's a function of the American pursuit of happiness. And it is not realistic because you're always going to find people telling you what to do.

And if you can't be told what to do, I'm going to tell you where you're going to end up. It's walking down Quince, pushing a shopping cart with everything you own in the shopping cart. Because that's why a lot of those people are there is because nobody's going to tell me to take this job and shove it.

Well, in most of the world, for most of history, there was a rank. There were kings, there were nobles, there were the rich, there was the upper class, the middle class, the lower class, and things were strictly observed. It's only now in England that they're talking about getting rid of the monarchy.

And the House of Commons, I guess, as the House of Lords, is becoming more or less a figurehead. But you see, it goes back to the day when people accepted their role. They couldn't marry outside of it.

I'm just talking about England, let alone other societies that were more strictly governed, such as in India. But in England alone, you didn't marry out of your class. You know, some fellow coming from a land of the state met a girl whose father was way down.

There was no marriage. It caused such immense social problems, it just wasn't worth it for either one of them. So now with the idea, well, it doesn't matter who you marry, anybody you want.

We despise that sort of thing. But for most of history, for most of the world, people have lived in stratas of rank in society. And it's even that true in India today.

There is a lower class, there's the untouchables, and then it goes on up. I had a good chance to minister to those in the very lowest class, and they're very beautiful people. But they're not concerned about that.

They've accepted, they were born into it. They're not striving to establish a democracy. We've got this idea there's something wonderful about having no class.

Well, it creates as many problems as it solves, like so many things in the world. And we're going now into a kingdom, the kingdom of God. It is not a democracy.

And the order of the kingdom is being established now. And the word is very clear, you know, he who overcomes will rule with a rod of iron, and so on. It means just that.

It means that someone in the world will not be able to go directly to Jesus. They'll have to go to one of the victorious saints, and through him to Jesus, and through Jesus to God. And there isn't, you can't vote people in and out, because it's established in your spiritual environment, and when you go to pray, there's this guy.

There's no option. So it never dawned on me until I experienced it, and I said, well yeah, that's what the Bible is talking about. It's the establishing of a rule, a system of rule, that starts in the top and works its way down, with God the Father above all, and Jesus under him, and the victorious saints under Jesus, and the rest of the church under there, and then under the church is the world, and nobody has a say, so that's the way it's set up.

So today, you can do something about it. In the future, you won't be able to. Now you can do something about it.

You can maintain your crown. The crown means rulership. What else does a crown mean? In fact, it was conventional in England, and instead of referring to the government, they would refer to the crown.

The crown does this, the crown does that. There's just a way of speaking, because the crown, here's just somebody that is like you and me, breathing the air and metabolizing all the time, and trying to keep a temperature of 98.6, and that's all they are. They don't have any particular power.

Maybe they're not strong, you know, couldn't whip their weight in marshmallows, and you put that crown on their head, and they command armies and navies. All of a sudden, they have the power of life and death, but without that crown, they only have what they can establish with their ability to wrestle, or argue, or spend their money. So, when the Bible is talking about crown, it's not talking about a little rentals wrapped crown that your Sunday school teacher made, and put on your head because you put a dollar and a half in the offering.

It's not talking about it. It's talking about a genuine governmental authority that will command angels, will command great power, great power, and we miss it because the things that God does are so low-key. You know, here the king of all is born in a barn, and they're so low-key that you miss it, but it's going on today, but you can miss it in religion because religion has its own ranks, and files, and hierarchy, and we get used to that, and there's immense politics played, and nepotism, and every other thing that goes on in denominationalism, and we miss what God is doing because we're not on a one-to-one relationship with him.

We've got our religion, we've got our salvation, we hope, and we've got our church attendance, but God wants more than that. He wants you to know Jesus in a much greater way than you know him, and he is available to be known. The Lord is available to be known.

This is the day. This is the time. You remember we noticed in 1 Thessalonians 5, Sunday night, but brethren, you have no need that I write to you concerning the times and seasons, plural.

That same expression is in Acts 3.18.19, the times, plural, chrono, of opportunity, and the calendar time. There's times. God works in times, and there's a time for things in the times for things, and one of the differences between living in the flesh and living in the spirit is when you're in the spirit, you know God's times.

You're not just running around trying to do something. You know God's times, but that takes a lot of waiting on the Lord and a lot of trust in the Lord, but we are now in a time when the Lord is knocking at the door. That's the seventh church.

We're in that time now, and the Lord is saying, I want you to open up your heart. I want you to come in. I want to come into you in a much greater way than you have known.

See, that's what Ezekiel 44 is talking about. The prince wants to come in, and when he's in there, he doesn't want anybody else in there. Did you notice that? See, it remains shut because the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered through it, and we have lots of things in our hearts and lots of things that moves us.

Jesus wants to come in and be the one that does it. He wants a one-on-one relationship with you in your heart, not through the pastor, not through your parents, not through your fellow saints, but you, and these are the people who will rule with Christ, and the time is now, but it means an awful lot of letting go of idols because those idols are in our heart, and Christ is saying, I don't want any idols in your heart. Now, how many remember the flap of a few years ago on sensitivity training? Are any of you old enough to remember that? Oh, it's got to be, we've been here 25 years, so it's got to be 35 years ago.

Yeah, yeah, 35 because Mark is 41 now, so it's about 35 years ago. There's a big flap in sensitivity training, and the idea was that was a manipulation of people that the communists have used many times. You get people in a group, and you get them to confess, and confess, and confess, and to open up the deepest part of their personality, and the purpose of that is so that the leader of the group can rule you, can govern you.

Not so long ago, I was reproved by some people, not in this church, but other people that I knew in another place, and they said, the problem with you is you don't let anyone walk in the garden of your heart, and I said, you've got it. You've got it. I don't open up my heart to you or anybody else.

What's deep in there, nobody knows. Nobody but Jesus, but the communists do that, you know. They move the group by confession.

You get people, we want to know everything you're thinking. They did that up at Big Sur. They were into sensitivity training.

That was a big flap a few years ago, and you tell the group everything. The expression was, let it all hang out. Let it all hang out.

You confess everything. Let it all hang out. Confess everything, and people, their conscience bothers them, and they feel unholy.

You work on people's consciences that way, and when I heard that, there's something wrong here, but the group dynamics in that thing are awesome, awesome, and people being what they are, they're willing to do that, and if you have a strong leader, pretty soon he's got everybody under his thumb, and they do such things. I remember an example where a person had been trained up in Esalen in Big Sur, was dealing with a person, and he dropped something on the floor, and he said, pick it up. He was training them in this way.

They went down to pick it up. He said, stand up. He said, no, you bend over and pick that up, and they got almost there.

No, stand up. No, I want you to pick that up, and this person was doing that. See, the idea is to break down the inner individuality of the person until they become subject to the leader.

Everything is under the control of the leader. Now, whether this will return, I don't know. It was a big flap in public education when I was teaching, a big flap, and the dynamics on the children were sometimes very negative because they would subject the children in the group, especially if a child was having problems, they'd put the child in the center of the group and ask the group what they thought about him.

Can you imagine doing that? See, teachers very often are, let's say, half an understanding of psychology is worse than none because they were not competent to deal, but they had this smattering of psychological thing, and they were not trained in it, and they were exposing children to terrible emotional problems and self-image problems by having the other people, other children in the group say, well, this is how we feel about you. Teachers were doing that because they went to a seminar, and some hotshot making, you know, his hundred dollars an hour as a consultant was teaching them about how to control group behavior by using the pressure of the group. There's great pressure in a group to cause a person to conform to the median thoughts of the group, and anybody that wants to govern people will try to get them in a group.

I think that's why sometimes preachers, when they start off the meeting, say, now turn to the person next to you and say I love you, and it might be someone, you know, a total stranger, you know, I don't want to say that. Let me tell you something, don't say it. It's group control.

Now a little bit of that, you know, somebody comes to the church and says that, don't freeze on them, you know, but that is done for that reason because the man up in the pulpit knows that you break down that thing and you've got the group in your hand because you had them all interact that way. So it's a device, and I expect they learn it in Bible school. But the Lord wants individuals.

To him that overcomes, I'll give him a new name that no man knows, saving him who receives it. He wants you. He doesn't want you bringing anybody with you in that sense, in the garden of your heart.

Don't let anybody walk in the garden of your heart except Jesus. If you do, you're going to be very disappointed someday because people cannot possibly meet your expectations. Only Jesus.

Keep a place there for Jesus. Keep a place there for Jesus. Like it says, the prince is the only one who may sit inside the gateway to eat in the presence of the Lord.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will eat with him. You're eating in the presence of God.

You're feeding on the body and blood of Christ, and nobody but nobody is to be there but you and Jesus. Now, Antichrist is going to try to get in there because he knows you can rule the world by force, but that's not very satisfying to rule in a satisfactory way. You have to have the hearts of people.

And only Jesus. You remember where it says in Revelation that John wept because the book was sealed on the inside? The scroll was sealed inside and outside with seals. How many remember that? And John wept because no one was worthy to open that scroll.

That scroll is the human heart. And was it the lion or was it the lamb that came? And he says, rejoice because the lamb has prevailed to open that. See, because it's written, because our lives are written on the outside, and they're written on the inside.

And only Jesus has the authority before God to open your heart. So you can love anybody to pieces, that's fine. But keep a place in there for Jesus.

It's just you and him. If you do, he'll never let you down. You'll find there's somebody that sticks closer than a brother.

But anyone else you let into there eventually will let you down. God himself will see to that. Because that's an idol and it doesn't belong in there.

There's a place there for God that's been created in you and in me, and it's for God alone. And every marriage should be formed that way. It should be, if you're really going to love somebody and you want it to last, love them through Jesus.

If you don't, your love eventually will fail. Love them through Jesus. Because otherwise, no matter how intense your passion is, eventually that person will let you down.

God will see to that. Because he's jealous. And he wants your heart.

Am I coming across? Do you see it in Ezekiel? All right, let's take a look at Song of Solomon, chapter 2, verse 7. Now here is a question with a pronoun. And King James says he. But I think the NIV it is probably more to the point.

Song of Solomon, chapter 2, verse 7. I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field, do not arouse or awaken love. Isn't that an unusual expression? Until it so desires. Now a government or a religion will call for your love.

But Jesus waits God's time. And he lets the north wind blow on the garden of your heart and the south wind blow on the garden of your heart. And he very gently awakens love for himself.

He does not demand it. He says wait until it pleases. King James says he.

But I don't think that fits it. It's it. It's the love itself.

Wait until it pleases. Wait until that love comes voluntarily. Did you ever notice about Jesus that he's not harsh? Yeah, you know, he can get harsh.

Whoa. But you notice how gently he leads you? Did you ever notice that? He's much more gentle with people than we are. And people irritate us.

Eventually we give them a piece of our mind. And the Lord never gives us a piece of his mind. He very gently leads us awaiting for that love to awaken.

He wants your voluntary love. He doesn't want it commandeered. He doesn't want it forced.

He wants it to come of your own joy and your own choice. I sound like the Lord? That's the way he is. And see, the Song of Solomon is a contest between organized religion and the one-on-one relationship with Jesus.

That's what the Song of Solomon is about. That's why at the very last of it you'll see he says give Solomon his shekels. In other words, that's what he's after anyway.

Give him his shekels. Give organized religion their shekels. My beloved is mine.

I have her heart. Give organized religion its money. Give it whatever they ask for.

But their heart is for me, not for their church. Some nice church asks for it, doesn't it? They want the allegiance. They want to stand in the place of Christ.

Don't ever let that happen. Nobody stands in the place of Christ. Not at this time.

Okay, any questions about that? Let's take a quick look at the same book, chapter 3, verse 5. The watchman found me as they made their rounds in the city. See, that's referring to organized religion. 5. Daughters of Jerusalem.

Daughters of Jerusalem represent religion. And the Lord here is speaking to them about his bride. And he says, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field, do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.

I mean the second instance, same thing. You don't very often find in the Bible things repeated like that. Sometimes.

But when they are, it's because it's important. So the Lord is charging religion. Don't awaken that in people.

Leave it. Let it come up by itself. Don't try to force it.

They'll love me sooner or later. You don't have to beat them. Well, we've had enough of that.

Let's go to chapter 8, verse 4. My goodness! Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires. And then he goes on, then the Lord goes on talking about the intensity of his love. Ephesians, the third chapter, talks about the love of Christ that passes knowledge.

And here it is. Who is this that comes up from the desert leaning on her lover? That is the true bride. And she's been, and God has knocked every prop out from under her until she's no longer able to march.

She has to come up leaning. She learns to lean. Learning to lean, learning to lean.

Learning to lean on Jesus. God been knocking the props out from you, making you more dependent on himself. He does that with the bride.

Religion doesn't want that. Religion, religion acts best when it has plenty of money, plenty of people, plenty of publicity, plenty of this and plenty of that, and can do very well, thank you, whether the Lord shows up or not. But the bride is brought to the place where she can't move without Jesus.

That's what he wants. When her love is awakened the third time, that's where she is, and you come up out of the desert. Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm, for love is as strong as death.

It's jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. I want to scroll down a little bit.

Many waters cannot quench love. Rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned.

Back in verse 6, I believe, is the passage in Rotherham. I guess the interpreters of the text don't like to put one in there, but instead of a mighty flame, the Hebrew says that it's like the flash of Yah. In other words, it's like the love that burns in God himself.

And I guess they feel that's a little too gross to be speaking about God in that way. But the Hebrew is not nearly as delicate as some of the modern translations. And then it goes on.

Scroll down a little bit, would you? This is the three divisions of people you have in the church. We have a young sister and her breasts are not grown. In other words, she's immature.

She cannot bear fruit. But she is a sister of the bride. She's not grown enough.

She's not mature enough to nourish children. What shall we do for our sister in the day she's spoken for? If she is a wall, that is, that she has some defense against sin. Somewhere there, we're going to build towers of silver on her.

That is, battlements that in those days they used in warfare, like forts, will make her strong. She's already got some defense that will make her stronger yet. She still isn't able to bear children, but she can resist sin.

There's a lot of church people like that. Boy, this is a picture of church people who won't quit. If she is a door, and so many of God's people are doors, I mean, you just get them going and then Satan takes them off.

And then they're in, and then they're out. And then they're in, and then they're out. Well, what do you do about such a person? You don't try to make fortresses out of her.

You enclose her with panels of cedar. Well, in those days, cedar was greatly set by. It is today, too.

It's not the cheapest wood there is. Any of you have cedar in your closet to keep the moths out? Do you like the smell of cedar? Cedar has a smell all its own, doesn't it? Other woods don't have that smell like cedar does. But it was used for decorative purposes, and the Temple of Solomon was walled inside with cedar boards.

Cedar. So here you've got a relative of the bride. She's not a fortress, and she can't nourish children, but the Lord loves her, and so he protects her.

But notice that it says, we. And in my point of view, that we is the hundredfold of victorious saints. And I believe they will perform this work during the thousand-year kingdom age, and is the reason for the thousand-year kingdom age.

Is to bring the rest of the church into a place where it can descend as the holy city. You can't have people descend into the holy city if they're a door. Reminds me of the story of Aladdin.

Have any of you ever read the story of Aladdin and the magic lamp? Do you remember how the guy came by, he was after that lamp, and the girl was so dumb, she sold him the lamp. Have you ever read that? Aladdin and the magic lamp. Well, that's a great allegory, because it's so true.

It's telling you the story of Eve. See, she was a door. Satan comes, boom, off she goes.

Well, see, we don't picture that in the world to come. We think everything is going to be so there's no temptation. Forget it.

As long as angels and people have free wills, there's always a possibility of rebellion. And the Lord doesn't want a bride that is like that woman in Aladdin's lamp. That's a door.

He doesn't want anything like that. So he's saying you enclose her so that the devil can't get at her. I believe that's the reason for the thousand-year kingdom age.

Is to make the whole church ready to descend to the earth to be the government of God. Do it as you will. There's a lot of other scriptures that bear the same thing.

All right, now, see, you've got your 34, your 64, and you've got your hundredfold here. I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers. Now, what relationship do breasts have like towers? By the way, the name for God Almighty is El Shaddai.

The Almighty God means literally in Hebrews, the breasted one. Because you see, dominion comes from fruitfulness. See, the more kids you have, in those days, it says there's arrows in the quiver of a mighty man, so are the children of the youth.

And in those days, the more children you had, the more power you had to exercise dominion. And so, the last two parts of the divine fiat concerning Adam was that he would be fruitful and have dominion. And dominion is the result of fruitfulness.

Fruitfulness bears children. The children can wage war. Man's strength in his children.

And so, that's the relationship. It says, I have, my breasts are like towers of strength. El Shaddai, strength and fruitfulness.

I'm not a door, just a door, a wall. That's the firstborn. That's the Lord's, it says back in chapter 6 in the same book, there are a lot of virgins, there are a lot of concubines and queens and everything else, but my beloved is one.

We may get to that in a minute. I didn't mean to go this direction, but I'm on it. But notice in verse 11, when it gets back to Solomon, it's talking about organized religion, or any organized religion.

He has a vineyard in Balaam, and he led out his vineyard to tenants. Each one was to bring for its fruit a thousand shekels of silver. That's what churches are always doing, begging for money, begging for money.

A thousand shekels of silver, cough up, tithe, you know, here's the amount around the wall, look at it go up. Did you put in a thousand dollars today? You ever been in a church like that? My own vineyard is mine to give. The dwell in the gardens with friends and attendants.

Let me hear your voice. Come away, my lover, and be like a gazelle, or like a young stag on the spice lane. He said, that's what he said to Ephesus.

You've lost your first love. You're all bowed down with shekels. I don't want the church to turn into a business.

I want you to jump over the hills, get some romance in your system. This thing is a love story. It's not a business.

You know, if you have 10,000 children, people in a church, it seems to me you've got a business. How in the world could you even know the people? They have five services on Sunday, and they troop in and they troop out. Not for me.

I don't want to run no business. Doesn't look like I'm going to have to worry about it anyway. But I wouldn't want it if it was given to me.

The thing is supposed to be a romance. It's not supposed to be a business. See how much money you raise? You can get a bigger building, get more people, you can raise more money, get a bigger building, get more people, raise more money, and then you retire as pastor emeritus.

You didn't know 90% of the kids in the church. You couldn't call them by their first name to kill you. That's not my idea of anything.

I didn't leave the public school work. I enjoyed the kids there. I didn't do that to come in and start a business.

Well, anyway, that's extra. Let's go back to chapter 7 of the Song of Songs. What are you talking about, Thompson? I'm talking about a one-on-one relationship.

Getting the prince in there and shutting the door so you can eat and dine with him before God. That's for you alone. You can't bring anybody else in there.

You'll never be able to... Now listen, I'm going to give you a truism. Eddie, this is for the book two of the... What did I call that thing? I forgot. Gold tried in the fire.

You can't love anyone else successfully until first you've got Christ in there with no one else where he's supposed to be eating bread before God. That's the basis of all love. Then you're in good shape where you can love somebody else.

It doesn't work the other way. No, it doesn't work the other way. That's the way it works.

God first and everybody else second. And if that's not true, God will work until it is true. Oh, it's profound.

All right, I said to go to 7 so you could back up to the remaining verses of 6 is what I'm after. And I can never remember how many verses there are in 6, but what I'm after is 6, not sandaled feet. All right, here we go.

Perfect. You hit it on the button. My dove, my perfect one, is unique.

Now, that's the victorious thing. That's what God is calling for today. These are the people of the first resurrection.

All right? The only daughter of her mother. The favorite of the one who bore her. Well, if she was the favorite, then she wasn't the only one by all the laws of syntax.

So as far as the mother was concerned, she was the only one, but there was others there that didn't get quite as much approbation from mother. She played favorites. The maidens saw and called her blessed.

The queens and concubines praised her. Who is this that appears like the dawn, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, majestic as the stars in procession? You know who it is? Miss Universe. Yeah, the Lord's got this whole mass of believers, and He loves every one of them.

He loves every one of them. He loves all His churches, right down to the coldest thing. He loves all His churches.

He loves all His people. But out of this, He's getting something unique that He loves especially. Of course, we see that in Revelation 14.

The firstfruits unto God and the Lamb. Firstfruits. He's calling for firstfruits today.

So don't compare yourself with anybody else, because they may stumble and fall, but you go on, and everybody in the church backslides. You go on, and don't look back. Psalm 45.

He's talking to this unique one. He says, forget your father's house. Go on.

Go on, because the Prince is calling for you. Christ is calling for you. I will give Him a name that no one else knows.

He wants to deal with you. The overcomers are never addressed as a group. Always to Him.

To Him. To Him. To Him.

People can help you. People will help you. The elders will help you.

But if they all backslide, you go on. I don't know how many are going to be in this group, but as I told a sister last week, the only thing that will stop you is what? Unbelief. Because the One who has called you has the power to speak worlds into existence, and all you and I are is dust, and He, the Almighty God, the Almighty Christ, can speak to the dust and make it what He wants.

But you can shut it off with unbelief. That's the only thing that can stop you from being part of the unique one, is your unbelief. Consider yourself.

Consider your circumstances. Listen to people. Let them take your crown.

Flip and flop around. Or you can make sure every day you go into that secret place with Jesus, and brush up that relationship and keep it white hot. And then there'll never be anybody between you and Him.

Never. Never. Not for eternity.

That's what He's calling for today. While our life goes on in this way, I went down to the grove of the nut trees to look at the new growth in the valley. That's the Lord talking about.

He's looking, looking, like I said in the last service. He's looking, wondering, God, where is this, this universe? Is this hers? Is that hers? He's been doing this for 2,000 years. Before I realized it, my desire set me among the royal chariots of my people.

Come back, come back, O Shulamite. Now the Shulamite is a unique one. Come back that we may gaze on you.

Why would you gaze on the Shulamite? It's on the dance of Mahanaim. It's really in the Hebrew, Mahanaim. We can say Mahanaim.

Mahanaim. The dance of Mahanaim. Rotherham translates the dance of a double camp.

Mahanaim in the Hebrew means two armies or two camps. That's what it means. There's two camps.

It's the camp of the saints and the camp of the angels. The saints of the judges, the angels of the warriors. Amen? That's the unique one.

Never lose that vision. It's also in Revelation 14. We've gone over this so many times.

Stan says if he doesn't get something new going, I'll pass out here. Revelation 14. How many times have you heard this, Stan? I won't ask.

All right. Stan, on the spur of the moment, Sunday night, made up a song. You ought to hear it about the barren.

The barren woman has more children. Shout for joy. Stan had us all shouting for joy around here.

This in Revelation 14, one is the unique one. This is the unique one. Here.

This is the one whose breasts are like towers. Fruitful dominion. This is the firstborn and it's the duty of the firstborn to help the younger of the family.

By Jewish tradition, Marian could tell you after service. It's the duty of the firstborn to help the rest of the family and for that reason, the firstborn is given the double portion of the inheritance. The idea is to help the younger boys and girls.

Okay. Then I looked and before me was the Lamb standing on Mount Zion because that's the place of war. That's where the Redeemer is going to come from.

Romans 11, to turn away ungodliness from Israel is out of Zion. Out of Zion will come the Redeemer and turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And here they are.

Now I told you, see, these are the ones, you say, we will build on her. We will build battlements of silver on her. We will enclose her.

Well, the we is these people here. So you get to help the other people in the which follows one of the basic laws of Christianity. The strong help the weak.

Simple as that. And with him 144,000, which I believe to be a symbolic number, who had his name and his father's name written on their foreheads because they belong to God and to Christ alone. See, antichrist people have his number in their forehead, but the unique people have God's name in their forehead.

Their mind, they've lost the carnal mind, their mind, they have the mind of Christ. So it says in Revelation 20, verse 4, they were decapitated. Their natural mind went.

The key is in your mind. They have the mind of Christ. God's name in their head.

And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters, like a loud feel of thunder. That's talking about power. Power.

Power. There's power in rushing water. It takes everything in its path.

If you get enough water going fast enough, it'll take everything in its path. It'll take mountains in its path. And thunder also in the Bible speaks of power.

Power. See, Christ, by the word of his power, spoke the worlds into existence. And he can speak your dust.

You don't have to worry. Can I make this? I don't know if I can make it. Maybe if I fast three days of the week.

That isn't where the action is. The action is in the word of Christ's power. He can transform you.

There's no sin in your life that he can't get rid of. There's no self-seeking in your life. There's nothing in your life that Christ Almighty cannot change.

But you've got to believe that he can do it. Faith in God that he has that kind of power, and he does. And the sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps, because there's music.

It's a romance. It doesn't operate. It isn't power like coming out of a generator.

It comes out of music. There's harmony to it. It's a dance.

It's the dance of marcha naim. It's the dance of a double camp. The angels are dancing.

I've seen them dancing in these half visions that I have. I look up sometimes and Stan's going at it, the musicians are going at it, and all the drums are going, everything. I can see the mighty men and the angels dancing.

You can see them dancing. They're dancing up there. When we're dancing down here, they're dancing up there.

Yeah. In the midst of the church while I sing praise unto thee, and when we're praising Christ is in the midst, he's praising God, and the whole thing's going on in heaven. Yeah.

You're already standing on the sea of glass laced with fire and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. We're already doing that. Moses and the Lamb.

In other words, there isn't this big gap between the Old Testament and the New. The song is from Moses and the Lamb. It's all one song.

There's no dispensation of grace. It's all one song. Moses and the Lamb.

We're already doing that. We just can't see it, but we are. We're on that sea of glass and it's laced with fire because we're going through judgment.

Well, I knew you'd appreciate that, right? No one could learn the song except 144,000. What's the matter? Didn't they have the sheet? Didn't they give them the lead sheet? Why isn't it? They can't learn the song. Why can't they learn the song? Can't they play by ear? What's the matter with them? You can't learn that song.

It's got to come from within. Hallelujah. There's some things that you earn by following the Lamb, and one of them is the music and the words to that song.

It's worth going after. Oh, yes. These things are very real, and they're not for some far distant future with the tinkling of bells.

They're for now. If you want it, you can have it. The time is now.

Okay. These are those who defile themselves with women. That's not talking about marriage because marriage, Hebrew says, marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled.

So, the Bible doesn't contradict itself. The women here is referring to the things that we marry, whether it's money or circumstances or whatever it is that we have to have. If God takes this from me, I'll quit.

Well, if that's the case with you, count yourself out of the unique. If there's something God can take from you and you're going to quit on God, you're not a member of the unique. You've got an idol going there.

You're married to something. It can be an idea. It can be a job.

It can be a location, something that you've got to have and you can't think of being without it. Watch it. Because these people are married to Jesus and Jesus alone and nothing else and no one else, no place else, nothing they can do without anything except God.

Hallelujah. Isn't that wonderful? It'll set you free. It'll set you free from things and relationships and everything else because they all ultimately will fail except Jesus.

He never fails. Never fails. You can rest in Christ.

He will not let you down. Hallelujah. Everything and everybody else will certainly.

All right. Ah, they kept themselves pure. You have to do that.

You have to make the effort to pray and seek God and keep asking him for a report card. Keith, did you ever ask God for a report card? Ask him for a report card. He'll give you one.

He'll see how you're doing. You get this in deportment and you get this in chivalry and this in kindness and this in whatever. Ask God for a report card.

He'll give you one. Say, how am I doing, Lord? He'll tell you. Why shouldn't he? He wants you to know how you're doing.

It's a sure bet. Just ask God, how am I doing? Not to walk around in ignorance. See, you have to keep yourself pure.

First Corinthians 11 says if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged. David in Psalms says, Lord, search me. See if there's any wicked way in me.

Way back in Psalms. Don't be scared. Go to the Lord and say, is there any wicked way in me? Lord, right now, is there any wicked way in me, Lord? I want to know it.

I don't want to be in the dark. You know, there's people that suspect they got cancer, they got something else, and they won't go to the doctor. You know why? They're scared, but they're going to hear.

Now, that is not notoriously bright, because there's many things today can be cured if you get them early enough. But that's the way people are. They're afraid to hear the bad news, so they don't go to the doctor.

Well, go to the doctor, and he'll tell you. If it's nothing, and if it's something, then there's something they can do about it unless you let it go so long that the thing is ossified in you and it's hopeless. But that's the way people are.

Don't hide from the doctor. Go and see if the lump you've got is significant or not. Don't hide and hope it'll go away and torment yourself.

Go there and find out. If you're going to die, you're going to die. That's not the worst thing that'll ever happen to you, believe me.

Your heart is right with God. Dying is not the worst thing that's ever going to happen to you. If your heart is right with God, that's a blessed thing.

So don't fear death and don't fear the doctor. Go and find out. Instead of wondering every time you look in the mirror, wondering, oh, wow, it goes away.

It isn't there tomorrow. And then tomorrow it's there. Go and find out.

And it's the same way with the Lord. Ask Him. Search me, Lord.

See if there's any in me any wicked way. I want to know. Don't hide under the bed and say, boy, I sure hope God never finds out what's wrong.

And I never find out what's wrong, and I don't want to know what's wrong. Find out what's wrong. Go to God and find out.

Maybe you've got a bunch of stuff going wrong in your life. Maybe it isn't God's will. Say, Lord, is there something I'm doing that's causing this? Sometimes it is, sometimes it isn't.

But you'll never know unless you ask. Maybe it's something you're doing that's causing you to get sick or something. Say, Lord, am I doing something wrong? The Lord speaks to me about what I eat and drink.

Believe me, He's told me a lot of things. He said, if you keep drinking coffee, you're committing suicide. That was three years ago, so I quit drinking caffeinated coffee.

He told me, get off the sugar. Yeah, the Lord told me that. Get off the sugar.

I have dry skin, so He told me, when you get eruptions on your skin, if your skin is too dry to know how to handle it, so it erupts. So I started keeping skin cream on my hands. Yeah, the Lord will talk to you if you keep yourself in the place where you can hear.

Now, He doesn't talk with everybody the same way, but I'll tell you, He'll get there. One way or another, He'll get there. Search me.

See if there's something in me that's causing this problem and lead me in the way everlasting. And He'll do it. He'll show you.

You don't have to be afraid. Maybe you'll have to make restitution. If you do, He'll give you such grace, you'll be skipping on the mountains of spices while you're making restitution, believe me.

Don't charge off in your own strength. Follow Jesus, and you'll make it a delight. Yeah, people are scared to death to open themselves up to God for fear of what they're going to hear.

That's no way. That way you live in guilt all the time. There's no need for that.

Say, Lord, if I'm not doing what you want, tell me about it. If you don't tell me about it, I figure I'm perfect. Yes, He stands.

You don't have to say thee and thou. Just talk to Him like a person. Say, Lord, if there's something wrong, show me.

If you don't, I figure I'm okay. The ball's in His court. You go sneaking around, hoping God won't speak to you.

What kind of a Christian life is that? Afraid you'll hear the worst. Afraid you'll hear you've been wrong. I've been wrong all these years, and I didn't want to hear it, Lord.

There's no way to live. In the day to come, you'll find somebody between you and Christ. That's what'll happen.

Somebody that was more diligent. Yeah. Oh, yes.

Don't let anybody take around. They follow the lamb. Did you see that? They follow the lamb wherever he goes.

The lamb goes somewhere, they go right after him. We got a little dog home. She follows Audrey around like that.

Everywhere Audrey goes, that dog goes. Follows her right around the house. I guess she's protecting her from the kitty cats or something.

Follows Audrey right around the house. She goes, well, that's the way the Lord wants us. The Lord goes, oh, here we go.

Oh, you went over there. Okay, Lord. The problem with religion is it tries to get the lamb to follow them and their programs.

They got something they want to accomplish, so Lord, bless our program. Everybody pray. Fast and pray that God will bless our program.

That's not following the lamb wherever he goes. Maybe if they pray and find out where the lamb's going and then went that direction, they'd be happier. If you can't get God to go your way, go God's way.

Yeah. Follow the lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as first fruits to God and the lamb.

Now, that refers to a harvest. That means that when you've got a whole harvest out there of wheat, you just you just reap part of it. First fruits.

I've often used the expression of string beans because I had experience farming string beans. And the first beans on the vine are the best. But string bean vines will keep on bearing string beans, but they keep getting woodier and woodier.

But the first ones are not woody at all. They're very tender and they're very nice. And that's what the idea of the first fruits is.

God is going to have a first harvest of the earth. There's going to be some that are harvested first. They won't be woody at all.

Just what God wants. These are first fruits unto God and the lamb. Unique.

The only one of her mother. And now is the day. And if you don't go for it, you're going to have eternity to regret it and you're going to have other people ruling you.

Now, hear me. If you don't go for it, your talent will be taken from you. That is your thing by which the Lord assigns rulership.

It will be taken from you and given to another. And you may not like that person and you may not appreciate it, but there won't be one thing you can do about it because they earned it by their diligence. That parable of the talents in Matthew 25 is a parable about diligence.

And the guy that messed up, he didn't say he was an adulterer and a thief and whatever, wouldn't forgive people. He said you're lazy. Lazy, wicked servant.

Laziness. Well, what did he do? He didn't use the things that God had given him in the kingdom the way that God wanted it used. And here he only had one thing.

You know, he wasn't the chief apostle. He just had one thing, whatever it was that God wanted him to do. Maybe let his light shine on the job or give or whatever it was.

He wasn't supposed to be a bishop of the church, but he did have something to do. And the Lord wanted that thing done. He said, I don't want to hear any excuses.

I'm a hard man and I do business and I want that thing bearing interest. I want it used. Well, he didn't use it.

He didn't lose it, but he didn't use it. And so when the Lord came, the Lord demanded he gave it back to the Lord and the Lord gave it to somebody that was diligent. He lost his rulership.

His crown was given to another. Where does he go? Out in the outer darkness. What's he doing out there? I don't know.

You never find the unsaved in the outer darkness. That place is only for the Lord's servants. And they have a long time to watch in the distance, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sitting down in the kingdom and all the children playing and everybody having a wonderful time.

And here they are out in the darkness, looking at all that just like the rich man could see Lazarus and see right across from hell into where all the joy was. That makes it bad. I mean, you're thinking why in the world? What was wrong with me that I didn't use my talent? And now look at all those people.

They'll be ruling over me and I don't like half of them because they always thought they were hot stuff and I don't want them ruling over me. You don't have any voice in the thing. That's the way it goes.

That's not a very happy thought. That's what the Bible says. It's what God said.

So God has something for you to do. God has given you whatever he has given you. And it's unique to you.

And God doesn't want reasons why you didn't use it. You're too young, too old, it's near Thanksgiving and all the relatives are coming or whatever. He doesn't want to hear about it.

He wants it used. And if you don't use it, you're going to find in the day to come that there's going to be other people ruling where you should be, where you should have been. But the Lord will give them that rulership and you'll have to submit to it.

And if you don't want to, now's the time to do something about it. Don't wait until the structure is set and then try to change it because it isn't going to change like those virgins. That's what we learned from the parable of the virgins.

You run out of oil, it has serious consequences. And there's no grace enters in, there's no mercy enters in. There's nothing.

The door is shut. They're in the outside with their lamps without any oil. That's what the Lord is telling his church today.

This is the time. This is the time of greatest opportunity and greatest danger. Right now.

It says no lie was found in their mouths. Now, why did he pick out that one thing? Because a lie, you want to know what the people that lose their talent and are put out in the outer darkness, you want to know what they spend their time doing. You want me to tell you right now? They spend their time blaming other

people for being there.

I've seen that in human nature. A guy told me a wonderful thing one time. I was so wise.

He was a reformed drunk. He's been 13 years now without the stuff. Reformed drunk and drug addict.

And he said, I had to come to the place where I stopped blaming other people for my habit. And started blaming myself. He said, it's my fault.

And he said, the minute that he did that, he got the power to begin to resist alcohol. And he said, to this day, 13 years later, he said, every day, he is tested, tempted with going back and drinking. And he said, every day I have to deny it.

This is an unsaved man. He's not a Christian. Unsaved man.

He said, I'm tested every day. I just have to say no. But see, before he didn't have the strength.

And the reason he didn't have the strength was what? He was blaming others. I know a young man who never got the victory over the bottle as far as I know. And he was blaming his father because his father committed suicide.

Every time he'd get right down, he wanted to be freed from alcohol. But when push came to shove, he'd think, my father let me down and he'd drink. And it's my father's fault because he committed suicide.

Let me tell you something. Nothing that you're doing or I'm doing is anybody's fault. Nothing.

I don't know. Maybe there's somebody in here that needs to hear this. If there's something wrong in your life, it's not somebody else's fault.

It's no one's fault but your own. If you'll do that, the Lord will help you. As long as you blame other people and say, well, if it wasn't for her, it wasn't for him, it wasn't for my boss, it wasn't for the Democrats, it wasn't for these, it wasn't for that, you'll get nowhere with Christ.

He does not want to hear that. Nobody can take you out of the rest of God but yourself. Nobody.

I don't care what happens. Nobody can take you out of the rest of God, your abiding place in Christ. If they were to take you tonight when you went out this door and captured you and put you in prison and it was filled with homosexuals, there's nobody can take away your peace unless you give it.

Think about that. We're talking about the almighty Christ and the power that he has. And he says, you ask anything in my name, what does he say? I will do it.

So no matter what problem that you're in, and usually people cause our problems, don't they? Do you remember when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead? He came out wrapped like a mummy, around his face, around his arms, wrapped like a mummy. Jesus didn't speak and say, grave clothes be gone. What did he do? The people around him had to unwrap him, loose him and let him go.

That's what people are doing to you and me. You don't realize it but they're taking off the grave clothes. So quit complaining.

You're alive and when people hurt you, let it press you into Jesus. They're doing you good. Before they did all this stuff you were foolish, you had a lot of loose talk, you're careless, you're not nearly as professional as you wanted to be.

And somebody gave you a bad time and instead of blaming them, oh look what he did, go straight to Jesus. Lord, look what they did to me. What about it, Lord? You'll come up, you'll be more professional than you ever were in your life.

Less foolish talk, less apt to say things that you didn't mean, talk before you think. How many talk before they think? You get kicked in the head long enough and as many times and you will think before you speak and act. That's a sign of maturity, Hal.

Of not acting or speaking before you think and consider the consequences. Any fool can rush off half copped because his emotions got stirred because he heard one half of a story. Any fool can do that.

The wise man waits until he knows what he's doing and he's brought it before the Lord and he's got God's peace. As I hear I judge, Jesus said, and my judgment is just because I don't seek my own will but the will of him who sent me. All right, I can't go on.

We've run out of time. The burden tonight, he wants you and me to know him personally. The prince wants to enter into that place in your heart.

He wants that door shut and he wants to eat and drink with you in the presence of God at all times. How's that sound to you? Let's stand. Are we strong enough to praise the Lord? Oh, God, make us part of the unique one.

Lord, hallelujah that we can help others and rejoice your heart, Lord. So many are weak, so many are doors, so many are walls. Oh, God, they need your help.

Help us to help them, Lord. Help us to be among your special one, Lord. The only one to gladden your heart, to go with you wherever you go, to be counterpoint to your point, Lord.

A perfect compliment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, grant that, Lord. Remove the blemishes, Lord.

Remove the self-will. Remove the idols. Remove that which hinders perfect communion.

Praise your name, Lord. We want you above all, above all, above all. Thank you, Lord.

You alone, you Christ, you alone are the God of our heart, the idol of our heart, the prince of glory. Hallelujah. Oh, hallelujah.

Take from us all that is unworthy of your presence. Take it from us, Lord, that we may eat and drink with you in the secret place of our heart without hindrance, without blemish. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you for the word tonight. Thank you for everyone who attended. Keep our families in your presence.

Cause us to go in your presence under the shadow of the Almighty. We ask that, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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