

Ron Bailey - Part 4

by Ron Bailey

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Duration: 14:27

Description

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Transcript

I do not believe that any kind of broadband antibiotic will deal with every situation in every church in America, and in England, and in Scotland, and wherever else there are. What we will need from God is a specific word of his grace to the Church of Ephesus, or to the Church of Sardis, or to the Church in Pennsylvania, or to the Church in this place. This kind of generalization, I think, produces a kind of a woolly thing, and we begin to think, well, what are the problems of the Church in this? The writer of I Am Saint, when I spoke at Canterbury last year at this conference, I asked him about my topic, Psalm 51, and I talked about personal denial.

Remember what Psalm 51 is? Now I want to talk about the Church, the local Church, which is an alien profile. I want to talk about the local Church being responsible, and I'll tell you why. It has to do with accountability.

You see, no one is accountable for this thing that we call the Church of America, or the Church of Scotland. No one is accountable. No one is going to, on one day, stand before God and be required to give an account of the way that they care for the Church in Scotland.

The Church in Brent, or the Church in Reading, where I come from, or the Church in wherever it is, there are going to be people who are going to have to give an account. The letter to Heathens says, trust your

heathens, for they watch for yourselves, as though you have to give an account. I think we're going to have to take accountability.

What I'm really doing is this. I want to say, whose responsibility is it to do something about the Church? Whose responsibility is it? Is it your responsibility? I know when we're kind of very young Christians, we sometimes get some wonderful ideas, you know, we're going to raise the dead, and we're going to do all sorts of things, and I've been in a tribal community where you've got the youngsters, and many of them, they'll make teeth like this, and they're really clever, because they're cutting against the spirit of Israel. And I think, oh bless them.

It's not likely that this 17-year-old is going to be given authority to come against the spirit of Israel. But God knows where I'm at, and I'm not criticising, I'm not disparaging them. I'm just simply saying that in the Bible, you'll understand that God, when he gives responsibility, he expects accountability.

He expects people to say what they've done and what they've addressed in them. You are not responsible for what you've not done. It's required of a man, not that man gives it according to what he doesn't have.

In other words, what God has put into your hands, you are only responsible for it. You will have to give an account of it. But you will not have to give an account of it.

And the way in which the New Testament looks at the Church of God is not in some great kind of vandalism, but actually in church fracturing. There was a whole area called Galatia that had been sucked into what Paul called the bewitching. He says, you've been bewitched.

They had taken into their understanding a fake gospel. I'm not sure you know what the pleasant Galatian story is. But the interesting thing is that when Paul writes to it, he writes to the churches in Galatia.

He doesn't, because biblically there's no such thing as the church in Galatia. There's only the churches in Galatia. When Paul says, when he was first converted and he began, he went to Jerusalem and he said, people have seen him, but the churches in Judea have heard what had happened to him.

He didn't say the, he said the churches in Judea. Are you getting this? God's unit of responsibility from our church is, that is awesome. That's the American word.

That is, that is, that is amazing. You, yes, you are personally responsible for the things that God puts into your life and the way that you use them. But there's another level of accountability that goes with it.

This is why originally, why we're making the message, I think, is, as I'm going on Because the only, the ultimate level of authority and responsibility. And what John seeks now, is he seeks, the first thing he seeks, as he turns, he seeks these seven separate landscapes, building blocks. And of course, you would have known the pattern of Israel of old.

Israel of old had a separate branch of landscape. How old it was by what we call the candles. But there weren't actually candles.

There were no candles in the Bible. The candles were created by God. And they are very finite in their burning ability.

The lamps are divided into wood candles. They were lamps. And the reservoirs could be refreshed so that they could burn forever.

There's nothing limited in the way that God does things. So these were kind of lampstands. And on the seven little shelves, effectively, in the holy place, in Israel's tabernacle.

And on each one of those little shelves, there was a lamp. And although it was the responsibility of the people of Israel to bring every day fresh pressed olives, and the oil from them that was beaten out that day, it had to be when they brought it, if you read the scriptures carefully, you'll discover that they put it into their hands. Because Aaron was charged with a unique responsibility.

Aaron, not even sons. Aaron. It was Aaron's responsibility to trip the wood and to make sure that a clear testament would shine.

It was Aaron's responsibility to make sure that the little reservoir would fill with oil. That lamp was intended to burn forever. There should be no flickering in there.

No, no, no stuttering, no filtering candles. This was to be a constant, steady light. And it was Aaron's responsibility.

Let me give you a kind of code and you'll see where I'm going. That's to say, it was the responsibility of the high priest. It is the high priest's responsibility to keep the light clean and shining.

It is still the responsibility of the high priest to keep the light. What John sees is that he sees the high priest, not Israel's high priest. Israel's high priest had the name of Israel written across their chest and on their shoulders.

This high priest had the golden banner around him. But this isn't like Israel's high priest. This is a different kind of high priest.

But he's still functioning as a high priest. And the amazing thing is that when John sees him, he sees him in the midst of the lampstands. And if we go to the next chapter and we look at what is said to the Church of Ephesus, we'll see that a very description of Jesus is given to the Church of Ephesus that they need to focus in on, to hear what God has said to them specifically, as He guaranteed to God's people.

And the way to interpret it like this, verse 2, to the messenger of the Church of Ephesus write, These things says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks in the midst of the seven golden mountains. And you see this information here in chapter 1. In chapter 1 you are just in the midst of the lampstands. Now in chapter 2 we've got to make a confirmation.

He's actually walking in the midst of the lampstands. So if you think about a ferry patio, it means to walk around. Patio is to walk around.

And peripeter is around, and ferry patio is to walk around. What John sees is he sees Him. He sees our great overseer, our great vision.

He sees the one who is scrutinizing the lamps. He's watching. He's walking in the midst of the seven lampstands.

He's looking in each one. And if you know how this goes on in the next two chapters, you know that to every single one of those churches he begins it fundamentally in the same way. The first thing he says to them, I know.

That's his first statement every single time. I know. And he knows it because he's walking.

He is not an absentee man. And he's walking in the midst of the lampstands. The church in Chilok Mata, the high priest takes responsibility for the testimony.

The light of his character is to shine in that place. He takes personal responsibility. He will carry your trip, your wealth, and he will supply your wealth below.

It's his responsibility. It's not yours. It's your responsibility as an individual to respond to him and to bring your offerings to him, to have your quiet time with him, to beat hands as you wait upon him, the oil will start to boil when you present it.

You put it into the hands of the high priest and you say, there is the oil. But it's not my job to strengthen these lamps. It's the job of the high priest.

Now why do you think Jesus would give such a reverential job? He runs on an island, he's far away from these things. Maybe he begins to think, if only I could get to Ephesus, if only I could get to Sardis, and I've got a woman that helps that woman. Sometimes when people are given places of responsibility and honour in the Church of God, it can happen to a man that he begins to think that it speaks up on someone.

You know, it's the Elijah syndrome. And I only I have left. And if anything happens to me, then I'll have other things to sign, to finish with.

There's a little phrase in Hebrew where Elijah actually calls upon God to take his life away. And if Elijah said this, he's got a purely sense of humour, no doubt, he kind of sees this. But Elijah says to God, take away my life, I'm no better than my fathers, I'm happier than anyone who's taken my life.

Who said you were better than me? When God puts responsibility to a person's life, it's very easy to move to this level, you think, nobody's seen it quite the way I see it. No one's got the power, no one's got the responsibility. I only I have left.

Well, yes, it would be, and it only took a week for there to be a church in that town. Daily visits from the high priest to see how he's doing, to see what's needed, to see if it's begun to snow, and if it's been trimmed, to take away things that have burned and had their haze, and leave it to clean away so the light can be absolutely clear and unclogged. It's his responsibility to continue to supply the oil.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, and he, what was his name? When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he begged for their prayers, and he said, I will that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer and the continuing supply of the spirit of God. Not just one baptism, it's a continuing supply. Praise the Lord for one baptism, but the high priest helps to make the supply continue.

Let me go to some of these parts. He talks about, he talks about at least seven men, seven messengers, who are in the right hand. They're his messengers.

As to say, he will charge these people with words of grace to bring him to the churches. And it's not necessarily big, wild, old sermons. It may just be a simple word of prophecy, a revelation.

It may be some truth. It may come from someone who's never brought a word like that before. It might be one of the others who says, can we sing this hymn? And there's some truth in that hymn that somehow catches the heart of the saints.

And what's happening is that Jesus is bringing the messengers. He's bringing his word to his church. He's bound to do it.

He is committed to do it. He is on the bound to continue to care for the poor and the sick.

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