

The Truth in Jesus (Part 2)

by Ron Bailey

The sermon emphasizes the need for a new start through regeneration, as humanity has become an incarnation of sin and reformation or improvement is impossible.

Duration: 45:08

Scripture: John 2:25, John 3:7, Romans 5:1, Romans 6:1-3, Romans 6:21

Topics: "Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of sin and its consequences, particularly death. He emphasizes that the scripture reveals the reality of sin and its impact on the world. The preacher also highlights the importance of understanding the interconnectedness of different Bible truths and how they shape our understanding of God's plan. He uses examples from the book of Romans and the story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea to illustrate these points. The sermon concludes with a reminder that it is through faith in Jesus Christ that we can find justification and peace with God.

Transcript

...didn't really know any, until he went to work as a servant at a large house. And there he met a coachman, also working at the large house, who was a believer. The coachman began to speak to him, and over a period of time he began to consider some of the things that this coachman had said.

And then one summer's day, when he had a day's holiday, he was walking down a country lane and felt constrained in his heart that he should pray. So, this is how the story runs. He turned from the path, went through a cornfield, went into a shady wood and prayed.

And his testimony is that when he returned to the road from the cornfield, he was a different man to the one who had gone in the opposite direction. He ran all the way home, and when he got home he burst into the house and he said, Mother, is there a bible in the house? And she said, whatever do you want with a bible? And he said, I want to find out what's happened to me. That's one of the main reasons that God has given us this book.

Not as a target, not as a goal, not as a blueprint, but so that we could begin to understand what happens to us. The scripture speaks of the full assurance of understanding. And maybe you recall that when Paul begins his letter to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, they're almost sister letters, in each one he prays, and his prayer is that there might be given to them the spirit of revelation, and in Ephesians he says

wisdom, and in Colossians he says spiritual understanding.

He was praying all the time that men and women would have revelation, that they would catch up in their understanding with things that God had done in their hearts. He works out, by the spirit of God, the implications of what God has done, and the way that those things impact upon our lives. Yesterday, we began to talk about the old man, and I finished up really by speaking a little bit about the fact that Paul refers to the old man as sin, and he uses the definite article which is almost equivalent to giving him a capital S. He personifies it, he gives it an identity so that, from that moment on, it begins to operate with its own life force, if that's what you want to call it.

There's another word you could call it instead of a life force, you could call it a adult force, because Paul says that when sin entered, basically it held open the door for death, and death followed. Not just the absence of life, but a death which, like a cold hand, holds everything down into a deadness. There is a terrible deadness upon the whole human race.

That doesn't mean the human race isn't magnificent, it doesn't mean it can't do wonderful things, it is a magnificent creation of God, and even the devil, the Archvandal, can't entirely ruin that. But what he has done is he has fed into it another spirit which has altered its character dramatically, so that nothing is the way it was intended to be. There's a story, one of C.F. Lewis's stories in his science fiction trilogy, and I won't try and tell you the whole story, but it's one I think it's called Voyage to Venus, and he tells the story of a creation that takes place on Venus, which has its own Adam, and its own Eve, and it has its own temper, and its own trials.

It's an interesting story, he handles some important issues in a very special way. And he tells the story of the trials that came, and the victories that came on Venus. At Venus, they did not yield to temptation.

At Venus, they did not open the door. And part of the reason for that is because they had a man from Earth helping them, whose name was Ransom. And, at the end of the story, you have a scene where all the creation of this Venus is bowing down to worship the man and the woman, the Adam and Eve of that creation.

And the Adam and Eve want Ransom, the man from Earth, to share in the celebrations, but he is down on his face on the Earth, if that's what you call Earth on Venus. I'm not quite sure what you call it. He's down on his face anyway, and he says this, he says, don't lift me up.

I've never seen a real man and a real woman before. I've lived all of my life amongst shadows and broken images. You and I have never seen a real man or a real woman.

We've lived all of our life among shadows and broken images. You have never seen life as God intended it to be, not in the human race, with the exception of Jesus Christ. That's why you have this sense of discovery and excitement that comes through with John, that we've referred to earlier on, in our week together, when he writes in his letter and he says, the life was manifested and we've seen it.

He never recovered from that. I don't believe anyone ever recovers from a real revelation of the life that's in Jesus Christ. It is as different to what we know as the norm as life is from death.

Sin brought in death, the dead hand that spoils and makes everything ultimately vain and lifeless. I'm not a pessimist, I'm just telling you what the revelation of the scripture is. If you think this world is wonderful, if you think mankind is wonderful, if I may quote Mr. Reagan, you've seen nothing yet.

You've seen nothing yet. The life was manifested and we have seen it. Let me turn, and please turn with me, to Romans.

I said yesterday that Romans is the nearest thing we have in the scriptures to a systematic theology. The Bible is written in a very special and wonderful way, which means that you can't really examine one Bible truth in isolation. You have to face up to other Bible truths which are all around it.

Books aren't usually written like that. If you write a book of an automobile manual or a scientific textbook of some kind, you'll build it out in chapters and you'll put under one chapter everything relevant to that chapter. But the Bible isn't like that.

The Bible scatters truth to the whole, so that as you read it and as you trace a theme, you're forced to consider all kinds of other issues as well. That should keep us balanced. That's the idea of it, the purpose of it.

I said yesterday, here in Romans chapter 5, just drawing attention again, just to link with where we were yesterday for any who weren't with us, verse 2, he says this. He's building on the foundation of what he said in chapter 4. Therefore, he says, verse 1, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom also, and that also, although it's such a small word, is something which also wavers a flag to attract our attention. It's telling us that in addition to the experience that Abraham had and David had, there is now something else which is available.

There's now something else which we have access to through what Jesus Christ has done. It's only a small word, but it opens up a whole new chapter of God's purposes and dealings, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And then, in this next chapter, he emphasizes the riches, the abundance of the new thing that God has done, and for those of you who like numbers and see significance in them, five times in the Orphanized Version, he uses a little phrase, much more.

So, five times in Romans chapter 5, and you ought to be able to remember it, it's all about grace. It's about the abundance of grace that has come to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. And then, in verse 12, which is where we were at yesterday, he says, Wherefore, as by one man's sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death spread to all men, for they all have sinned.

Just as we carry on down to the end of this chapter, verse 19, he says, For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, that's to say, in addition to what I've already said, understand this. Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound.

I don't think it would be off our track just to say something about the purpose of the law. The people of Israel, in the main, completely misunderstood the purpose of the law. That's what Paul says later on in this letter to the Romans.

He says, I bear them record. They have a zeal of God, but it's not according to knowledge. They've not understood the righteousness of God.

They've not understood what God was doing. That period of law into which God brought the people of Israel lasted, I suppose, for the best part of 1500 years. It was only ever intended to be temporary.

It was never intended to be a permanent solution to anything. It was only ever intended to be temporary. That's why, in Galatians, Paul says, asks the question and answers it himself.

He says, well, what purpose then does the law serve? Much. And he goes on to say this, he says, the law was added because of transgressions. The law came in until the seed should come.

It was added because of transgressions. We have a Finnish sister who lives with us at the present time, and we were talking just the other day about the word snow. We're compiling a list of Finnish words for snow.

We're up to about ten, I think, at the present time, and I understand that there are lots more because the Finns have lots of experience of snow. All kinds of different sorts of snow. The Hebrews had 15 different words for sin.

15 different words for sin. It was because that purpose, the purpose of that period of the law, was to sensitize these people, to make them sin conscious. As Paul says here, in Romans chapter 5 of verse 20, he says, moreover the law entered that the offence might abound.

In other words, so that there would be a score, there would be something which quantified just how serious the problem was. That's why God gave the law. He gave the law to make it plain to men and women just exactly what their condition was.

It was part of his grace that he gave the law. That's what Moses says when he's summing things up in Deuteronomy. He puts it together like this.

He says, from his right hand there went forth a fiery law. Yea, he loved the people. It didn't go forth because he didn't love them.

It went forth from his fiery hand because he did love the people. Because this was the era of their childhood. This was the era when he was going to make things plain for them, where they would be under no illusion as to what the real nature of the problem was.

But what they did, instead of using the law in the way that God had intended it, they reared it up as a ladder by which they would attain to some level of righteousness above others and above one another, and completely frustrated the purpose that God had in his mind. Let's go on. In verse 21, he talks about sin reigning to death.

Let's go on into chapter six. This is where I really want to begin. In fact, in many ways, all I want to do is to add one or two footnotes to what Bernard was saying last night.

This is chapter six. What shall we say then? Another question. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Then the A.V. says, God forbid, or you may have.

By no means, or as Paul was writing today, I'm sure he would have said, no way. The thought is unthinkable. The idea cannot enter into the mind of someone who has begun to see what God is about, and what God has done.

That's why he says, how shall we who died to sin live any longer therein? Notice, how shall we? He's not talking about some universal thing. He's talking about a group of people. How shall we? He says this, do you not know that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, or Christ Jesus is the correct version,

were baptized into his death? What is he talking about? Those who are baptized into Christ Jesus.

Last night, Bernard referred to the praise of baptism in the name of Jesus. It does have significance as regards the nature of God. It has another significance, too.

Way back in the Old Testament, there was an occasion. It's round about the time of David's experience with Bathsheba, when David's field marshal, Joab, was at war at Ammon of the sons of Rabbat. And while he was there, those were the events that conspired, that brought so much pain and sorrow into David's family.

But, when that particular part was over, Joab, the field marshal, was still besieging Ammon of the sons of Rabbat. And he sent a message to David, and the message was this. He said, come.

He said, you come so that the city surrenders to you. Because, he says, you need to look at the margin to see it, he says, if it doesn't surrender to you, my name will be called upon it. That's to say, my name will be attached to this victory.

This city will then come under my name. It will come under my authority. Baptism into the name of Jesus Christ really means that you are bringing your life under the authority of the one who bears that name.

It's not a baptismal formula. Never was intended as that. It's a means of distinguishing between that baptism, Christian baptism in water, and other watery baptisms which were alive and kicking in those days.

The Jews baptized people in water. The disciples of John, of whom there were still numbers throughout the Roman Empire, baptized people in water. But, the Christian's baptism in water was in the name of Jesus Christ.

That's to say, they made plain to men and women that, in submitting to this watery grave, they were bringing their life under the authority of Jesus Christ. His name would be called over them. From this point on, they would be his.

They would be Christians. That's baptism in the name of Jesus. But, there are two occasions in the scripture where it refers not to baptism in the name of Jesus, but baptism into Christ Jesus.

Baptism not into the name of, but into the person of. Now, this is very important, because these are the people that Paul is speaking about when he goes on to explain what has really happened. And, he says this, do you not know, verse 3, that so many of us, notice how he limits it, how he qualifies it, so you know exactly who he's talking about.

Know you not that so many of us, as we're baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death? He's just said, how shall we that died to sin continue to live any longer in it? You may say, well when did Paul die to sin? How did that happen? How did that become part of his experience? And, he goes on to explain it. He says, do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Not your death. You can leave that on one side.

That's another issue that can be dealt with at another time. The important thing to understand is that this baptism immerses you into Christ's death. And, when Christ died upon the cross, he died to sin.

He died bearing sin. He died to the whole principle of sin. Someone said to me yesterday that they wanted me to clarify or qualify something that I've said, and I'll put it like this.

This may shock you, and you may not like the way I express it, but think about it. What has happened is the human race has become an incarnation of sin. That's what's happened.

It has become an incarnation of sin. It's not just that the human race sins. Those are the incidentals.

The real problem is that the human race has become an incarnation of sin. Sin entered. That's what we said yesterday.

Let me try and shock you a bit more. It's almost as though, and I know that where I'm taking the words from, it's almost as though on that occasion in the garden, a spirit came to Adam and said, behold I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I'll come in and I'll separate you and you with me.

You know where I'm taking that from, don't you? That is tantamount to what happened in the garden. Sin entered. It's exactly the same word that's used in the Greek.

Sin entered. And what happened is that man became part of a living fellowship with a wrong spirit. The human race became an incarnation of the evil spirit.

Now, if you understand that, or you begin to glimpse the truth of that, you'll understand why Jesus said, don't be surprised that I say to you, you must be born again. There's no way that this can be reformed, or improved, or tailored. There's no way you can paint this a different colour.

There's no way you can modify it slightly. This thing is rotten through to the core and from the core, and the only possible solution for it is a brand new start. You must be born again.

Let's leave Romans for a moment, we haven't been there for long, and go to John, and just see a little phrase that comes together here in John's Gospel. It's John chapter 2. In John chapter 2, and I'll read straight past the end of the chapter so that you can see the significance. This is verse 23 of chapter 2. Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did.

But Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man. Nobody else knew. No one else could have studied the revelation of knowing, but he knew.

He knew what was in man. When it says he made believed and he did not commit, it's using exactly the same word, the ordinary Greek word for believe. So, let me use a word that'll put the two things together.

What it says basically is this, that when many people saw the miracles that he did, they trusted him, but he did not trust them. He could not trust them, because he knew what was in them. And if you say, well, what's all that about? Well, just read on.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you're a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him. Jesus often, you know, when he answered the questions, he answered questions that maybe they hadn't even begun to frame.

Jesus answered and said to him, verily, verily, I say to you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time in his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say to thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is fresh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I say to you, you must be born again. I think we need to understand what the Lord Jesus is saying to Nicodemus. He isn't saying to Nicodemus, you need to get yourself born again.

He isn't putting the obligation for regeneration on Nicodemus. We sometimes do that, but he isn't doing that. He is simply declaring spiritual truth.

He's just simply saying this, there is no alternative, it is absolutely essential, you must be born again. That's because he knew what was in man. If you knew what's in man, if you begin to see what's in man, you know that you have to be born again.

You know that reformation won't do it, and anything else with re at the front of it won't do it, except regeneration. That will do it. That's the only thing.

There has to be a brand new start. Let's go back now to Romans. He says here that when people are baptized into the person of Jesus Christ, they are baptized into all that is true of Jesus.

So, this is the truth that's in Jesus. We saw that in Ephesians yesterday. This is what John is referring to when he says things are true in him and in you.

There is something which is true in Jesus, and when you are baptized into Christ Jesus, what's true in him becomes true in you. He is the new man. In fact, if you want to know what the old man is, the best way you can work it out is by taking a good look at the new man.

The new man is one who was an incarnation of the right spirit. One who, as he came into the world, came not with the intention of doing things his own way, and of being a god in his own right, and making his own choices, but as he comes into the world, that is his testimony. As he comes in, he says, Lo, a body you've prepared for me.

I come to do your will, O God. He came in direct opposition to everything that that other alien spirit had infected the human race with. He came to start all over again with a new, clean spirit, independent upon God, with an eye not to his own blessing and ultimate survival, but just simply to do the will of God.

I delight, he says, to do thy will. That's the new man. The new man is another kind of incarnation.

It's an incarnation again, in human beings, of the Holy Spirit. He comes, and he makes his own life real in us. Let me read on a little bit.

He says this, verse four, Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death. All baptism really is baptism into death. Shall I say that again? All baptism is really baptism into death.

There has to be an ending. If there's no ending, there can be no beginning. Things have to come to an absolute end, so there can be a clear start of something which is new.

Otherwise, the old would just simply leak into the new, and pollute it just as effectively as it was to begin with. We are buried with him by baptism into death. The blood of Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father.

Even so, also, we should walk in newness of life. For if we've been united together, or planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man, our collective old man, the old man of which we were part, our old man was crucified with him. And then he says this, that the body of sin might be made powerless.

And I want to suggest something to you that I can't find anyone who agrees with me with this suggestion, but I want to make it to you anyway, just to consider it. I don't think when it speaks of the body of sin, it is switched from the collective to the individual. I think it's still on the collective.

And, if you come to the end of the verse, it says this, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Now, you may say, what on earth are you talking about? I think the body of sin is a mystical body. It is the body of sin.

It is sin's body. It is the counterfeit of Christ's body. It is the old man.

And God has done something which, for those who partake of it, makes the old man, with the powers that are in it, utterly powerless. You are, in his death, crucified with him. The old man was crucified with Christ so that the body of sin would be rendered powerless, so that its control, its power, would no longer be able to exert itself upon you.

You would no longer be under the wrong head, under the wrong spirit, having to obey the wrong will. All right, well, you can think about it. Henceforth we should not serve sin.

He that's dead is freed from sin. He goes on to speak about knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more, death has no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died to sin once, but in that he lives, he lives to God.

And then he says this, likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. Not to sins, dead indeed to sins. That's to say, sin no longer has any control over you.

It no longer has any power over you. That's what you are to reckon. What does he mean by that? Just a little while ago, Margaret and I were in America, and I'd never gone through quite so many time zones at one time, and we were eight hours behind here, and because Margaret is very home-orientated and family orientated, she left her watch on English time.

So, the whole of the two weeks we were there, she was on one time schedule and I was on another time schedule. But I discovered this, that if, I've never experienced this before, maybe others are much more familiar with it, but if you keep on reminding yourself of what the real time is, that's to say English time, you, you suddenly find a desperate weariness comes on you at the strangest times of the day. You've, you've been fine, you know, you've just had breakfast or something like that, and yeah, then you look at the English time and you think, oh, it's time for bed.

And there's a kind of a weariness that sort of comes onto the body. The body, you see, is used to having its own way. It's used to living in a certain time zone, and if you remind it of what it's being used to, it'll say, oh yeah, this is, this is the one.

If you're not used to it, this is the way we'll go. But if you resolutely say, I'm in America, or wherever it is you are, and this is the time zone, look at the sun, it's eight o'clock in the morning, it's much easier to sort the whole thing out. It just depends what's your point of reference.

Now, what's your point of reference going to be? Is your point of reference going to be your current experience? Is your point of reference going to be what other people say, or is your point of reference going to be the revelation of God's Spirit to your heart, that Jesus Christ accomplished something upon the cross, that the baptism of the Spirit puts you into? Now, what are you going to believe? What's going to be your point of reference? I tell you, if you keep referring to the things that surround you, you will not live in faith in that way. Let me just, while we're in Romans, let's look at the arch example of faith. He's here, he's Abraham.

Chapter four, he says this, I'll read from verse 17. As it's written, I've made thee a father of many nations before him whom he believed, even God, who quickens the dead and calls those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope that he might become the father of many nations? According to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be.

And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. It brings us back to what I said yesterday, faith is response to revelation.

It's not defiance, it's not human strength of will, it's not you saying, well, I'm going to force myself to look at something differently, it is response to revelation. And that's why Paul says, when he says these things, he says, knowing. I said that the Finns have, I don't know how many words for snow, and the Hebrews have 15 for sin.

Well, the Greeks have about a dozen forethinking processes, because that was their speciality. The way things worked, and one of them means, not just a thinking process, but it means to perceive. You could translate it, see.

It's used when Paul says, for example, in Romans 8 and verse 28, the A.V. says, we know that all things work together for good. Behind it, it says, we see that all things work together for good. That isn't Paul holding on with his fingernails to the verse.

That is a revelation that's been made to Paul's heart. He sees it. He sees it.

Now, do you see what God has done? This is why I can't take you into, to use Norman's phrase, the new man. I can't even show it to you. All I can do is proclaim these truths, and believe that God, by his Spirit, will open hearts to see what Jesus Christ has done.

Let me illustrate it another way. Do you remember how, when God brought his people out of Egypt, and he brought them across the Red Sea, and there they lost their enemies? There, God brought a decisive, a baptism. That's the language he uses.

They were baptized into Moses in the clouds and in the sea, and the Egyptians suffered the downside of it, in that the whole army was wiped out. The next opportunity, the mothers of Israel were able to take their children to the waters of the Red Sea, and say, look, here they are. These are your enemies.

They are floating faced downwards in the water. They will never trouble you again. You're free.

Do you know what that means? Do you know the implications of that? They'd been in Egypt for four generations. That means the parents didn't know what it was like to be free. The grandparents didn't know what it was like to be free.

The great-grandparents didn't know what it was like to be free. Hardly anyone in living memory knew what it was like to be free. They had only ever known bondage.

They'd only ever known a cruel will working out in their lives. They'd only ever known fear of someone coming and bringing yet another vicious law upon them. That's all they'd ever known.

And then one day the mothers took them to the sea and said, now look, they're your enemies. They're faced down in the water. You'll never have to look over your shoulder again.

You'll never have to be afraid of a knock in the night again. It's gone. You've seen it.

Can you imagine what that must have meant to the children? They'd seen it. They'd seen that their enemy's power was broken and that they were free to be God's people. Now brothers and sisters, have you seen that the enemy's power is broken and that you're free to be God's people? I don't mean do you agree with it doctrinally.

I mean have you seen it, to use Paul's language in Ephesians, have you been taught by Jesus? Have you seen the truth that's in him? Has there been that, what do you want to call it, that intuition, that flash of revelation, something you've seen and you say, I see it. That was our old man that he dealt with. That was a new man that rose from the tomb.

That was a brand new beginning. That wasn't just, I'm not contradicting what Bernard said last night, it wasn't just a restoration back to Edenic conditions, it was something that's caught in that hymn of Isaac Watts when he says, in him the tribes of Adam boast more than their earthly father lost. The new man is not just being restored back to the original man, the new man is something brand new.

There never was anything like this before. This new man has passed through death. He's passed through a death to the old man, a death to sin, a death to everything.

He's passed through it. The life that has passed through it is the life that is in the new man. If you are in the new man, you have in you a life which has passed from death to life.

You have within you a life which has passed from the old into the new. You have it in you. Bernard was saying, and Derek was saying yesterday about this heart of reaching out.

There's a verse in the Old Testament, you know it, in the prophecy of Malachi, when Malachi speaks of Bethlehem being the place where the Lord Jesus would come from. And he adds this little phrase, and he says, out of you shall come forth he whose goings forth have been from everlasting. I'm sorry about the old English, but that's the way it is.

Whose goings forth have been from everlasting. Our God is a going forth God. He is not a shrinking back God.

He is not a hiding away in a hole God. He's not a wait here until some people come and find me God. He's a going forth God.

He is always moving out to people. Always. Always.

And where there are opportunities, he'll take the opportunity because that's instinctive to the nature of God. We're not always like that. I've got a little reference.

Well, a quote I've put into the back of my Bible. I've put very few things into my Bible, but this is a quotation from Anthony Norris Groves. I'd like to read it to you.

You see why I say this? It should just be footnotes to some of the things that Bernard was saying last night. This is what he says. I'll read it twice because you won't know the context the first time.

He says this, what a blessing it is that the Lord's heart is so large that he can help wherever he sees some good thing, whereas man withdraws because he sees some evil thing, which is generally found to mean something that wounds his own self-love in the little scheme he had set up as perfection. I'll read it again for you. What a blessing it is that the Lord's heart is so large that he can help wherever he sees some good thing, whereas man withdraws because he sees some evil thing, which is generally found to mean something that wounds his own self-love in the little scheme he had set up as perfection.

Derek commented yesterday morning that I said that wherever he goes I will come, and I'll stand with him. I will. My days of separating from people are over.

I'm leaving the reservations for the Indians, and I commit my heart to God's men and women who have the Spirit of God in them. It's so easy to be so comfortable just preserving our own petty reservations about this, that, and the other, but it's not God's heart. It's not the way God works.

God has taught me this patiently for a long time, and I'm very slow in learning. I remember being with Norman on one occasion in India, and I'd been invited to speak at the Loreto convent. I may have told some of you this before, and I have a particular sort of attitude towards Catholics, which Catholicism rather than Catholics, which made it difficult for me to be at the Loreto convent, but I went there with gritted teeth and thought, well, we'll see what happens.

And I got there, and they gave me a chorus book, and I opened the chorus book, and on one side of the page it said, all over the world the Spirit is moving, and on the other side it said, hail to the Virgin of Lourdes. And um, some of you have probably heard me say this before, this is when I quote Hardy. Not Thomas Hardy, the other one who said, this is another fine mess you've got me into.

So, I looked at this chorus book, and I thought, what am I doing here? And God spoke so clearly to my heart, and this is what he said. He said, can you love these people? And I said, oh yes, no problem. He said, do you want to be a blessing to these people? And I said, yes, no problem.

He said, that's how I feel. End of conversation. No confirming or endorsing of practices that this group did, or that group didn't do.

He just simply said, if you want to know every word, I'm an opportunist. If people will open the door, I'll come. I'm a going forth God.

That's the way I am. My goings forth are from everlasting. Give me an opportunity, and I'll move to it.

Men aren't like that, but God's like that. And God gives us a Spirit, which is the Spirit of God, and in that Spirit there is something in us which instinctively must reach out. I know there are all kinds of reservations that you may have about your own ability, but you'll just have to step over them.

Someone said to me this morning, they were talking about the heat, it's very warm up here because everyone's breathing at you. And someone said to me this morning, they said, what's it like on the platform? I said, it's terrifying. It doesn't get any easier, and I'm not saying that because I want sympathy, I'm just telling you that if you're going to go on following that Spirit that God has put in your heart, and I'm quilting a sister when I say this, you'll have to step over yourself.

You'll have to step over your reservations, you'll have to step over your shynesses, you'll have to step over all kinds of things in order to move with the instinctive Spirit of God that's in your heart that says, I'm on the move, I'm reaching out. You have to do it, reckon yourself, count on it, base your action, the pattern of your life upon that that God has accomplished in Jesus Christ. If you have, I'm just kind of phrasing call, if you have been baptized into Jesus Christ, if you have been immersed into and united with the life that is in Him by the Spirit of God, you have been immersed into a life that has passed out of death into life.

You have been immersed into a life that has left the old behind. Our old man has been crucified, it's over. You have been immersed into a life that is brand new, which is instant with all the life of God.

Reckon on it. In a couple of days we'll ask the question, what next? All the questions, what about this, or what about that? Let's just pray. Lord, all I can do, all we can do again, is just call upon you for revelation, for your Spirit to open to our inward eyes what you have done, so that we may say, I see it.

Hallelujah, I see it. I see what He's done. I see He's brought all that to an end.

I see He has inaugurated this new, glorious potential. Oh Lord Jesus, again we lift our hearts to you. We thank you for all that you've accomplished for us.

We thank you Lord for taking our place. We thank you Lord for bearing the brunt of it all, for taking it all down into death with you, for rising victorious from the grave in the power of a new life which is irrepressible. Glory to God.

Thank you Lord, there is something in us by your Spirit which is irrepressible. Teach us how to cooperate with that that you have done within us. Teach us how to walk in the Spirit so that we do not fulfill the rest of the flesh.

Teach us Lord day by day for glorifying you. Amen.

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