

The Dove of Noah's Ark

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon highlights the corruption and violence of the world as seen by God, and the need for repentance and cleansing in the church.

Duration: 49:46

Scripture: Genesis 6:1-3, Genesis 6:7, Genesis 7:4, Genesis 8:9, John 3:16

Topics: "Noah's Ark"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses vivid imagery to describe the world as God saw and judged it. He compares it to a dark and desolate place, satisfied with its own corruption and evil. The preacher emphasizes that the world is alienated from God and without hope. He also mentions the story of Noah and the dove, highlighting the lack of rest for the soul in a world separated from God. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the need for spiritual awakening and the recognition of our sinful nature.

Transcript

The three chapters of Genesis that Dr. Koza refers to at the beginning of this tape are chapters 6, 7, and 8. My topic tonight will be The Delves of Noah's Ark. Is that justice? The Delves of Noah's Ark. And I want to read a few passages at random.

Not at random, it's collected from the three chapters, three chapters of Genesis. Don't try to follow me because you'll get lost, I just want to read. But we'll sustain the narrative.

It came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God called the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and the thought of his heart was only evil continually.

And he repented to the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and he screamed to him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, in preaching faith. But Noah found strength in the eyes of the Lord.

The earth also was corrupt before God, the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, and all flesh corrupted its way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The

end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them.

Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood. Room shall thou make in the ark, and shall pitcheth within, and without with pitch.

And in the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, the 17th day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great heat broken up. And the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both the fowl and the cattle and the beef, and every creeping thing that crept upon the earth, and every man, all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that lived in the dry land died.

And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days. And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was living in the ark. And God made a wing to pass over the earth, and the waters swayed.

The fountains all flowed beneath, and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters returned from off the earth continually. And after the end of a hundred and fifty days, the waters were abated.

It came to pass at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made, and he sent forth a raven which went forth to and fro until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also, he sent forth a dove coming to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot.

And she returned them to him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. And he put forth his hand and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. He stayed yet seven days, and again he sent forth the dove.

And the dove came into him in the evening, and low in her mouth was an olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet another seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more.

Now, out of this narrative, I would choose these words as a sort of text. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot. Now, I do not wish to wonder this strange, beautiful region of the Genesis world.

These early chapters of Genesis present a landscape that is as mysterious as it is lovely. And it seems they're not complete. They're sketchy and fragmentary.

And I don't need anything like close exegesis for the theologians who are better qualified than I. But I find here a wonder illustration. Full of mystic means for those who want and love God. Who rather know God than know interpretation.

Now, let's look at it. The world of God's heart. The judgment of the waters.

The going forth of the raven, and the going forth of the dove. And then the application to our day. Here is the world as God thought and judged it.

Gathering from the Scriptures the language to describe the world, God searched the hearts of men. And he saw that the hearts of men were corrupt, and wicked, and evil. Those are Bible words.

And that the thoughts and imaginations of the hearts of men were only evil, and that continually. And God saw the ways of men, that they were corrupt and vile. And that, in fact, this would be the worst of all.

They were, in quote, in transitory interest. You'll remember that later when Jesus described the Noachic world, the world of the flesh, he didn't say anything about corruption and violence. But he did say they were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving and marrying.

That is, they were completely satisfied with the world. And their interests were taken up with things that could only last for a short while. And it says here that it grieved God any heart.

Now, I can understand this, I think, because love, only love can grieve. Hate cannot grieve. Hate can feel other emotions, but hate cannot grieve.

Carelessness or indifference, they cannot grieve. Jealousy cannot grieve. In order for there to be grief present, there has to be love present.

And it grieved him at his heart, so love was there. The same love that later was expressed in the words, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. That love was here, brooding over the fallen world.

Brooding and grieving as an artist who had poured a lifetime into a masterpiece might come to find it be smeared and slashed and torn and ruined, so that it could never be restored again. For every mother who had tenderly and prayerfully thought of a boy and saw in him the image of his father, and sometimes fleeting images of herself, and when he becomes a teenager or older, he goes wild and goes out to the world and sins, and gives himself to sin, and finally is taken to prison and looks through the bars with angry eyes. His mother sees this and goes away too grieved to weep, for tears can only come to a certain degree and follow after that.

The wells of the eyes dry up. But as this mother saw the image of her loved husband, marred by sin, and the artist saw the pictures that he labored over, spoiled by the vandalism, so God looked upon the race of men that he had made in his own image and after his own likeness and to whose creation even God hath put grave pains and tender loving care. And now he sees that race of men corrupt and wicked and vile and sinned in every way vicious and wicked beyond description.

And so God did the kind of thing that he could do. It would have been cruel for God to send a rotten race of men to exist. So God put a merciful end to all flesh, and said, I will destroy the man which I have made, not an act of anger, but an act of kindly tender love.

The most kindly thing God could do, I received. And so God sent the waters, and the waters from below, and in the dark floated yonder high and dry, with Noah and his family, which he found raised in God's height, and the edibles that Noah had taken into the earth, to prepare the seed to repopulate the earth again after the angry waters. And after scores of days, the water rose no higher, but everything living and dying, all living and dying yonder, climbed the high mountains, climbed still higher, and finally clawed at each other in a living, squalling, shouting, screaming, angry mass of human beings and beasts, trying to get a bit higher and a bit higher, until finally the waters had gone a gurgle of drowning, and all that had lived were dead.

They set the ark that floated there as an everlasting picture of the church of Christ. Then all alone separated that ark and all living things within it from the black waters of the flood. But he did separate, and

they were saved.

And after the passing of the time, and Noah not being able to see out the well, Noah looked to the deep inside the ark to find out whether the waters were abated. So he took a raven, he knew the raven was a bird of swift and strong flight, and so he put that raven out the window, and it flew out. And I want you to see this terrible picture of that bird slithering across the desolation, for there was the desolation.

There everywhere were the waters, the undulating, sloshing, dirty, brackish, turbid waters of the flood. And there were dead things now distended and bloated and shiny as they bobbed about and turned over idly, feet sticking up now and then just shining back as they rolled and tumbled in the waters of the flood. These carcasses bloated tight and shiny, wet under the sky, and all about there were the pieces that flopped them and gushed them and parts of what had been human habitation, and the floating corpse there and floating animals there.

They were all there, the great desolation. And across the desolation sailed a dark bird with a heart that was as dark as the desolation, for it fell at home there and it never came back to the ark. It was satisfied with what it saw, God's angry judgment in the dark waters and the floating carcasses and desolation and death.

But it was satisfied there, for you see it was a meat-eater and a carrion-eater. And so it closed its delight and spread its strong wings and sailed away from the ark to light upon a floating carcass. And there, with guttural sounds of delight, it tore at the flesh and ate itself full, and then bobbed and floated discreetly under the dead carcass until it had digested its rotten meal and then rolled out of cold and sailed away to repeat itself, for it was satisfied feeding upon floating death.

Now, my brethren, this describes the world in which we live. This describes it as God sees it. As we see each other, we're not so bad, and as we see all the beautiful world around us, it's lovely to see.

But this is as God sees the human race. For the human race is under the displeasure of God, alienated and without hope and without God in the world. Waiting for the hour when sweet judgment shall bring upon men the desolation that looms upon the world.

It is our world, and the dark spirit of the raven inhabits the souls of men. Who inhabits the soul of Kutat? Who, I say, and I'm serious and don't want any laughter, I ask you, who inhabits that man? Intelligent he is, an intelligent man, an educated man. Who makes him the sheer devil that he is? It's the dark spirit of the raven.

It's the spirit of the raven. Who makes the juvenile delinquents? Who makes the rapers and the mad-ass? Who makes the teachers and the crooked politicians? Who makes the evil that's everywhere? It's the dark spirit of the raven in the souls of fallen men. The dark spirit in the hearts of men finds itself at home amidst the desolation, accepting this world, enjoying this world, and defending this world, and putting down as the hopelessly old-fashioned, anyone who will dare to say as much as I have said tonight, until men rest on closing death and build their civilization there.

For that is what we've done, ladies and gentlemen, and don't you allow yourself to be fooled by what we call progress. Don't allow yourself to be fooled by these gadgets that we call improved methods of communication. And don't you let yourself be fooled by these gadgets we ride through the sky called improved methods of transportation.

Don't you allow yourself to be fooled by the wonder drugs and the antibiotics and the space flights. It is all fallen man. I do not say that a Christian cannot take these things, which are not immoral in the suit on me here tonight and talking in a microphone, but I say that this has been accepted as the reason we don't meet God.

We don't want to go to heaven because we fixed the earth up so beautifully, and yet there is the desolation and the closing death and the extended darknesses and the raisins. They're here, and the raisin never came back. Civilization, our science-founded civilization, rests upon the dark brackish waters of God's angry disdainer.

And God is angry with the wicked every day, and God has not suddenly gotten converted so that now he is kindly and laughs at our dirty jokes and smiles indulgently at our fleshly deludes. He is the great God on high and lifted up whose pain fills the temple, and before whom they cry, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. And God can't take the black desolation any more than he ever could until the raisin never came back.

But after a few days, Noah opened the window again, and on his wrist there perched the lovely dove with the pink feet and the round eyes. And he put her to the window and shook her all and closed the window again, and there was a whirlwind as she went about everywhere searching, staying close to the ark and not going far, looking, looking, looking for something clean enough to light on, but she couldn't find it, and never found it. And never would her pink, clean feet ever rest down upon torn carcasses.

Never would her pink, clean feet ever rest down upon floating sloth and ingestion. Never would she rest upon the dead or be satisfied with desolation. And this dove is a lovely symbol of the Holy Spirit.

It came upon Christ as a dove, harmless and pure and meek and sensitive and loving. And the dove mourned the desolation and would not light. So a little while after the dove's wings had become tired, Noah, listening, heard the whirring, unmistakable whirring of the pigeon, the dove, and he opened the window and she leaped onto his wrist and he pulled her in.

She couldn't take it. She found no place for the sole of her foot. Now, my friends, the application of all this, I'm not saying it's a type.

I'm only saying that it is a picture so sharp, so vivid, that it can't be missed by intelligent or spiritual people. The spirit, the spirit of God, cannot settle upon the world, because Jesus said, He is whom the world cannot receive. It seeth him not, neither knoweth him.

And the most awful condemnation that can possibly be charged against the world is that there's a restless cluttering, the perpetual cluttering of the Holy Ghost that can find no place to life. He cannot find a place amidst the desolation. He cannot find it in politics, he cannot find it in business, he cannot find it in education, he cannot find it among the homes, he cannot find it for the world cannot receive him, and he will not light upon death and desolation.

The Holy Ghost cannot be received by the world. The unfaithful world that talks about the spirit is not talking about the spirit of the Son, nor of the Father. For the spirit of God will not rest upon the unregenerate and unclean world.

I could stop here, and we could all go away, patting ourselves on the back, but I have more to say to you. I say that the devil cannot settle upon the church, except on rare occasions. Now, I know that the spirit

inhabits the true believer in some nature.

I know that. Now, I don't know whether that's what he means out here or not. I used to be divided over that question, but I have never been divided.

I have always believed, and I never have a divided mind about it. The spirit inhabits the true believer, for if any man has not the spirit of Christ, he's none of this. That is one thing.

But it's quite another thing, for that same Holy Spirit has to double-go about with wide wings outspread to come happily down at once and be satisfied, and to say to all the world that the waters are abated and judgment is over and God be pleased. He wants to come down unhindered and unresisted with his broad, happy wings outspread and rest in holiness and power upon the church again. He wants to do it.

But Christians today have yet too many marks of judgment upon them. They're too much like the world around about them, and they're too much like the world of God's displeasure. They do too many things that sinners do, and they live too much like sinners, and they're too much in their spirit like sinners.

They accept Jesus, but it doesn't change them any. They have revivals, which is indication enough it wasn't a revival at all. Christians today have the marks of God's displeasure upon them.

I wish I didn't have to say this. I wish that I could come every day and talk to you about John 3.16 and Isaiah 53 and Psalm 23, but I dare not do it. I dare not do it.

I commented to somebody here, two or three people I commented, and I thought, what was the racial strain through this area? You're such good-looking people. And I mean that. No, I'm not kidding.

The people around me, the good-looking people, they're fine-looking people. You come from good stock, and that all is well. But, my friends, let's not forget that you're born of the lines of Adam.

And upon you, however, gone and fine, until as you may be, there rests the angriest traitor of a God who can't stand sin, until there's been a cleansing and a repentance and a deliverance. But the church itself has upon it the displeasure of God, and the spirit seeks among us a rest for the soul at its foot. But he will not run for the dirt.

He will not rise among the corruption. There are churches where the Holy Ghost can never be present. I dare not believe this.

Now listen. I'm 62 years old, and I began to preach when I was 19. And I preach consistently with scarcity of a week off from that hour to this hour.

I had a month in Florida five, six years ago when I thought I had a heart attack, and I didn't. And I fooled them. But outside of that, I preach consistently straight along.

And I can say to you that there are churches where God has not been present for many long months, if not many years. Key men, key men, have fought or sinned and failed to repent, and God has put his law over the door. And pastor after pastor comes in and goes and breaks his spirit and goes and comes in and breaks another spirit and goes.

And the poor frantic superintendent prayerfully sends a man hoping for the best, but the Holy Ghost can't like him in that church. He can't come down. There's no place for the fall of his scope.

So there's dirt in that church. There's dirt in the choir, and there's dirt on the board, and there's dirt in the pastor's home, and there's dirt among the members. And there's gossip, and there's envy, and there's lying, and there's worldliness, and there's sin.

And we try to hide behind the robes of A.D. Simpson and say, well, he was the founder, our beloved founder. Our beloved founder never founded dirt. He founded a church that was clean, and he meant it to be clean.

So Jesus Christ the Lord founded the great church to be clean. And there are churches where the Holy Ghost can never come down. Somebody says, that's defeatism.

That's not defeatism. That's realism. And that's Bible.

And if I knew where there was such a church as that, you couldn't get me there by whiplash. You couldn't pull me to such a church. I won't go where God can go.

And there are churches where God isn't welcome. You can have our church machinery, and our young Sunday school picnics, and our morning worship, and our missionary convention, and everything looks as if it was all right. A floating death is there, and corruption.

And God won't bless, and will not bless. The raven is there, and the dark spirit of the raven finds himself at home. They'll come and join the church like it.

But the dove cannot find a place for the soul of its foot. And I think the most awful thing today is not liberalism. I think even the most awful thing today is not communism.

Terrible, terrible, and devilish as it is. But I think the most ominous and awful thing today in this wide world is the whirling of the wings of the God-bidden flock. The whirling of the wings of the heavenly dove, and he can't light for he cannot find a place for the soul of his foot.

The fluttering, mourning dove that looks and waits for repentance, and waits for signs of a losing judgment, and waits for the brackish waters to awake, and waits for the dry ground to appear, and waits for people to get right with God, and to confess, and to straighten themselves out, and to pay their debts, and to clean up their lives, and stop their evil. Waiting, I say, and waiting. And the absence of the melting down of the Holy Ghost is perpetual condemnation.

In the year 1725, 75 German Christians met in Düsseldorf, Germany. Seventy-five of them there were that Wednesday morning. They had communion that morning, and there were 75 of them there, I repeat.

And they sat around and they sang. And they sang, O sacred head, how now wounded, white sin and grief bowed down. And each one felt that he was more wicked than the other one, and each one felt that he had personally crucified Christ.

And while they waited there at the communion table, suddenly there came that which was described later as an instantaneous bestowment of a loving nearness of the Savior. He came down upon them, this dove, and rested upon them. And they went out from that building not knowing this, nor, he said, hardly knowing whether they had died and were in heaven, or whether they were still on earth, the happiest people.

And the historian says, in twenty years they did more for Christian missions than had been done by the whole Church of Christ in two hundred years. And out of the Moravian Church came the Nephritic Church.

For John Wesley and Charles Wesley were converted to Peter Bowler, the Moravian, and Moravian theology of Teresitian and Zinzendorf and others were translated and were put into hymns, and we sing the members from them.

And Charles Wesley took Moravian theology of Teresitian and Zinzendorf and others, were translated and were put into hymns, and we sing them every Sunday. And Charles Wesley took Moravian theology that had come down as the wings of the dove, and wrote our great hymns, and we sung to these hundreds of years. And out of this kind of thing came the Christian and missionary alliance.

My brethren, we are not in lineal descent from the Persephiric. We are in lineal descent from the Moravians, by the Holy Ghost. And we had our beginnings in 1725 in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Look it up, look it up, and you'll agree with me. And so we have the Wesley Methodists, the Free Methodists, the Salvation Army, and all these groups that one time had fire and sometimes still do. And they all trace back to that hour when there was a loving nearness of the Savior instantaneously bestowed.

That's what we need, and that's what we can't have, and that's what nobody's looking for much anymore, except in a very theoretical kind of way. Now, why doesn't it come down? I'll tell you why. Because of the marks of disgrace, because of the desolation, plain sins that we can't deny, sins of action and of habit, sins such as reveling in wealth while the world starves, sins we Christians such as living like kings while millions perish, and insisting on a new big car every year while millions perish, and sins of the heart such as lust that crawls like a serpent through the soles of our feet, and spite, and resentment, and jealousy, and envy, and pride, pride of person, and pride of creed, and pride of denomination, and pride of race, and pride of these things.

You can have them and still be an evangelical Christian. You can have them and still be a member of the Alliance. You can have them and still be on the board in the Alliance Church.

You can have them and still be a big shot in the Alliance. Brethren, the devil doesn't pick bombs. He picks the cleanest people he can find, and dirties them up in fire, and that's all he has to do.

Clean rivers that you can't find fault with their external lines, but the grassy swallows of judgment lie in desolation upon their riding side. The deep, deep, inward, what the old writers called the penetralia. That's so far in that you penetrate to it, so far your friends can't come there in the deep of your spirit.

There these things are, and the Holy Ghost flies about and extends its wings. Tonight I believe I can hear, and have been hearing, the whirr of the dove wanting to life, but he can't, and for the languishing church we have seen. Because we're teasing Zion while the church goes her way, little by little, and evangelicalism is losing its sharp edge, and its solid creed, and little by little we're going over.

And coldness of heart, oh, the coldness of heart. Where have you seen the last happy Christmas? Oh yeah, have you seen the last dove feathering? Yeah, you don't have to look far. And the last dove that can, yes, yes, you're there every place, you know.

You're there everywhere. But the happy Christmas can hardly hold himself down. It's, Murray Frehley will remember, old Father Lore back home in Akron, Ohio.

Father Lore, a little German man with a beard, and his was his own, and it stayed on. And he knew he did not, it had to, and little Father Lore, he pushed out into the aisle because he couldn't testify bothered by

the limitation of seats. So he'd get out in the aisle, and he'd stand there, and pretty soon he'd begin to pounce up and down on the balls of his feet, and praise God.

And he'd say, I'm God's God, I'm God's God, and nobody can hurt God's God. He said, I won't take care of myself, God takes care of me. And he insisted that nobody could harm him, and the devil couldn't make him sick.

He got very, very old, but he was so happy that he couldn't stay down. Where are we? I don't know, there aren't many. There's a coldness of heart, and in order to try to cover our coldness of heart, we'll write choppy, bouncy, rockin' belly choruses.

And after a poor psalm reader is like this, you know, I mean poor in the sense that I sing, tries to get people's opinion, or tries to get an opinion. They won't sing because they're not happy, you see. A happy child would sing anything, and sing it well, and make the windows rattle.

But the coldness of heart, oh, the coldness of heart. I can only say this. If there was as much coldness between the average husband and wife as there is between God and the average Christian, there would be five times as many divorces as there are now, and there are already now three times too many.

Coldness. Coldness towards the Godhead. We sing and pray and worship, but it's cold.

And the poor church goes on its way, and God can't find anybody that cares enough to block the way. I've sought for a man, and I couldn't find one. And oh, God is going to have to find somebody that loves the church enough to please for it.

That man isn't on the horizon yet. He isn't around. I don't claim to be the man.

He's going to have to find the man. And it's my prayer and hope, and I'm writing and praying to that end, that God will send a prophet or two to the world. I don't care where they come from, in or out of this movement.

A prophet or two to the world that are willing to be sacrificed, that are willing to love the church until they wound the church and wound themselves. If you don't draw blood, reverend, you're no good. If you're afraid to draw blood from your congregation, you're no good.

You're a soft cloud. And in the great day of God Almighty judgment, when the blazing eyes of the man who walks in the midst of the golden candlestick looks through your service, your face will be red with shame that you'd rather be liked by the people than tell them the truth. Somebody's going to have to suffer before the church finds herself.

But you know, I've hoped over the last ten years, I've been hoping that at least we could find an olive leaf. And for a while I was looking for an olive leaf, and I'd hoped the waters might be bathing a little, and perhaps God's smile coming out a little upon the evangelical church. But I don't know today, but I hear the rustle of the holy wind.

You want the light down. The sun breaks out, and all the world knows God's judgments are over, and God has found the case for the soul of the church. When your heart is wholly right toward God, wholly right toward God, there are no tricks, no easy steps, no little book that tells you how to get into the deeper life.

Uh-uh. The Holy Ghost will come when he can find our hearts clean enough to laugh, clean enough to entertain. There must be cleanness before there can be fullness.

In the Old Testament, they put blood on the thumbs, on the ears, and on the big toe. Blood first. And do you know what they put next? Oil, another type of a spirit.

Always there must be blood for cleansing before the spirit can come and fulfill it. And it isn't a question of not understanding, my friends. You see, I've heard five different explanations of this.

If you hadn't heard five, or if you hadn't heard five times five, it wouldn't make a bit of difference, because God isn't going to argue over interpretation. He'll come when the heart is clean enough to receive it. And we're clean enough when we've cleaned up the mess, when we've put away iniquity, when we've stopped our evil ways, when we've repented until it hurts, when we've been sorry enough to stop.

When we have determined we will not be common Christians, but that we will be spirit-filled, godly-cleansed, delighted Christians, no matter what it costs. When that time comes, you won't have to debate. When that time comes, you won't have to coach.

God doesn't have to be coached. He's the one to put the idea in your head in the first place. He's there first with the suggestion, and if you're hungry for him, it's because he made you so.

And why should he make you hungry and then not feed you? Ah, if you're here, and if you've heard. Now, isn't everybody the one God can speak? He says, he that hath ears, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Plainly, there are religious people that have no ears to hear.

They know doctrine, but they don't know the voice of the Lord. So, if you can't hear, then I have no quarrel with you. We can be friends, and we'll walk around and chat together over the grounds for the next week, and then I'll go home.

You'll go back home. But, oh, the defeat, the tragedy, the loss of fruit, the cold of the heart, and the sound of the worrying wind, if you can't hear. But if you can hear, and you're ready to do something about it tonight, and you're ready to forgive that person right now, and go home and write a letter back to your cabin to pretend you didn't write a letter.

Mail it tomorrow morning, and ask that person to forgive you for the way you treated them. Straighten that business deal out there, fella. It was legal, but it wasn't normal.

You tried to get by with it. You still tried to be happy, but your heart rattles like a bell that's cracked. No happiness there.

No doubt, no power, no joy, no purity. And that's the reason. Dear Heavenly Father, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hear us this night.

Oh, how we need the lightning down of his power. How we need it. What I'm afraid of is we're going to settle for that.

We're going to remember last year and the year before, and if it's as good as it was last year, we'll be content. Forgetting the whirring of the wings, the sound of the greedy morning holy ghost. He can't fight because he can't find a clean place to fight.

So we try to struggle on without him, get by with our doctrines, but not having any experience. We beseech thee tonight, oh Lord and head of the church, speak to the people. Thy name's Jesus.

Amen. And Moravian theology of Tereskegian and Zinzendorf and others were translated and were put into hymns that we sing on every Sunday. And Charles Wesley took Moravian theology that had come down at the wings of the dove and wrote our great hymns that we've sung for these hundreds of years.

And out of this kind of thing came the Christian and missionary alliance. My brethren, we are not into a millennial descent from the present period. We are a millennial descent from the Moravians by the holy ghost.

And we had our beginnings in 1725 in Zinzendorf, Germany. And you'll agree with me. And so we have the Wesley Methodists, the Free Methodists, the Salvation Army, and all these groups that one time had fire and sometimes still do.

And they all trace back to that hour when there was a loving nearness of the Savior instantaneously bestowed. That's what we need, and that's what we can't have, and that's what nobody's looking for much anymore, except in a very theoretical kind of way. Now, why doesn't it come down? I'll tell you why.

Because of the marks of disgrace. Because of the desolation. Plain sins that we can't deny.

Sins of action and of habit. Sins such as revelry in wealth while the world stars. Sins, we Christians, such as leading like kings while millions perish.

And investing on a new big car every year while millions perish. And sins of the heart, such as lust that crawls like a serpent through the cells of our spirits. And spite and resentment and jealousy and envy and pride.

Pride of person and pride of creed and pride of denomination and pride of race and pride of place and pride of accomplishment. These things, you can have them and still be an evangelical Christian. You can have them and still be a member of the Alliance.

You can have them and still be on the board in the Alliance Church. You can have them and still be a big shot in the Alliance. Brethren, the devil doesn't pick bombs.

He picks the cleanest people he can find, and dirties them up inside. And that's all he has to do. Clean their nerves.

If you can't find fault with their external lives, but the righteous waters of judgment lie in desolation upon their riding side. The deep, deep, inward, what the old writers called the penetralia. That that's so far in that you penetrate to it, so far your friends can't come there in the deep of your spirit.

There these things are, and the Holy Ghost flies about in extended wings. Tonight I believe I can hear and have been hearing the whirr of the dove, wandering the life of intent. And toward the languishing church we have seen.

Because we're at ease in Zion while the church goes her way a little by little. And evangelicalism is losing its sharp edge and its solid creed. And a little by little we're going over to... And coldness of heart, oh, the coldness of heart.

Where have you seen the last happy Christmas? Oh yeah, have you seen the last joke that was on that little car? And the lad told it, yes, yes, you're there every place, you know. You're there everywhere. But the happy Christmas can hardly hold himself down.

It's... Marie Creeley will remember this. Old Father Lohr back home in Akron, Ohio. Father Lohr, a little German man with a beard.

And his was his own, and it stayed on. And he used to get up, it had to... And little Father Lohr, he'd push out into the aisle because he couldn't testify, bothered by the limitation of seats. So he'd get out in the aisle, and he'd stand there until he soon he'd begin to pound something down on the walls of his suit.

And pray to God. And he'd say, I'm got gotten, I'm got gotten, and nobody can hurt got gotten. Said, I don't take care of myself, God takes care of me.

And he insisted that nobody could harm him, and the devil couldn't make him sick. He got very, very old. But he was so happy that he couldn't sit down.

Where are we? I don't know. There aren't many. There's a coldness of heart.

And in order to try to cover our coldness of heart, we'll write choppy, bouncy, rockin' billy choruses to keep up a little bit of delight. And after a poor song leader likes it, they won't sing because they're not happy, you see. A happy crowd will sing anything, and sing it well, and make the wind unravel.

But the coldness of heart, oh, the coldness of heart. I can only say this. If there was as much coldness between the average husband and wife as there is between God and the average Christian, there would be five times as many divorces as there are now, and there are already now three times too many.

Coldness. Cold is in God's head. We sing and pray and worship, but it's cold.

And the poor church goes on its way, and God can't find anybody that cares enough to block the way. I've sought for a man, and I couldn't find one. You know, God is going to have to find somebody that loves the church enough to plead for it.

That man isn't on the horizon yet. He isn't around. I don't claim to be the man.

He's going to have to find the man. And it's my prayer, and hope, and I'm writing and praying to that end, that God will send a prophet or two to the world. I don't care where they come from, in or out of this movement.

A prophet or two to the world that are willing to be sacrificed.

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