

Moving Out of Our Comfort Zone

by Bill McLeod

Getting out of our comfort zone is essential for spiritual growth and maturity, and it requires faith, prayer, and fasting.

Duration: 42:04

Topics: "Venture Of Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the tendency of many Christians to stay within their comfort zones and avoid getting involved or taking risks. He uses the analogy of a sealed fountain and a garden with high bars to describe how believers often keep their lives hidden from others. The speaker shares a personal story of a man who was curious about what made him tick and how he had to step out of his comfort zone to share the gospel with him. The main message is that Christians should not be afraid to break out of their comfort zones and allow God to be in control.

Transcript

Well, good morning. Thank you. In the scripture that was read, you might have noticed the 15th verse, the last verse in the reading, Moses was praying and God told him not to pray, but to move forward.

There's a saying that's sort of descriptive of the average evangelical today. It goes like this. Don't stick out your neck, don't rock the boat, and don't get involved.

And that sort of is the address at which many of God's children live today. We're afraid to get involved, but what it might cost in money, in time, and energy. We don't want to rock the boat because somebody might not like it.

And so we have a tendency to steer a middle course, no matter what the truth of God might happen to say. We have what we call our comfort zone. And in the Song of Solomon, chapter 4, it goes like this.

It says, a garden barred or a garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Many times as Christian believers, we are sealed fountains and we're like a garden that has the bars up so high that nobody else can ever have a look inside our life and see what makes us tick. When I pastored in Saskatoon, a man from my church told me a rather strange thing that happened one day.

A lady from next door came running over and said, please come and talk to my husband. I don't know what's wrong with him. He's sitting on the back lawn.

He's got a big knife in his hand and he's driving into the ground and he's muttering to himself. So this Christian from our church ran over, sat down beside him and said, what's wrong? He said the fellow looked at him for a minute and then said, what makes you tick? Then he hit the knife in the ground. What makes you tick? The problem was this.

He'd seen this man living a godly life. I mean, he was always helping people. But he'd never shared the gospel with his neighbor and his neighbor was trying to figure out what made him tick.

But you see the bars were up so high around his life, that comfort zone thing, that he'd never shared Christ with him. And of course he did. He really had no choice and the fellow got saved.

He found Christ. Our comfort zone. We're afraid to break out of that comfort zone.

The zone where we feel totally at home. Where nothing can really go wrong because we're in control. And we don't like to get out of the comfort zone where God is in control.

For fear he might do something that we don't agree with. Or he might do something that might cause me some personal embarrassment. We have many examples in the Bible of people, of groups of people sometimes, who did not want to get out of their comfort zone.

Israel would be a good example. You know, when they came to the borders of promised land at Kadesh Barnea, there was no excuse whatever for what they did. They had seen the power of God in Egypt as no nation had ever seen the power of God.

And when the ten spies came back with this bad report about the giants in the land of Canaan, and by the way, archaeologists tell us that those giants, some of them had a rib cage 14 feet around. Like they could eat you for breakfast and go home hungry. But Caleb and Joshua said, they are bread for us.

What did they mean by that? We'll eat them up. Let's go, we'll eat them up. But the others did not want to get out of that comfortable zone in which they had been moving into something unknown, forgetting that God would be with them, that there was really no problem here.

If they thought back to the power of God as they'd seen that power in Egypt and at the Red Sea and so on, that's why God was upset with his children at that particular time. And he said to Moses, how long, how long will these people provoke me? How long will it be ere they believe me for all the signs and wonders I've done among them? They didn't want to break out of their comfort zone. When Barak was the king and Deborah the prophetess, and they were facing Sisera with 900 chariots of iron, there was absolutely no way in which they could win.

And he was told to take soldiers from just two of the 12 tribes, Zebulun and Naphtali. And that was more than they needed because they were completely successful in routing the enemy. But there was a place called Meros, village, town, we're not really told.

And no soldiers came from that town, likely because they didn't want to get out of their comfort zone into something unknown, especially when they knew they would be facing 900 chariots of iron. I mean, what does 900 chariots of iron mean to God? Absolutely nothing. As it turned out, absolutely nothing.

But they didn't come, and then we have a curse pronounced upon these people. Curse ye Meros, saith the angel of the Lord, curse you bitterly, the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the

Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Does God need help? Well, apparently He does.

God has to work through you and through me. And sometimes we don't want to get out of our little zone, and so God can't work. In the last chapter of Mark's gospel, it says that the apostles, they preached everywhere, and then it says this, the Lord working with them.

God normally works when His people work. He doesn't normally, He can and sometimes does, He doesn't normally work independently of His children. So there was a problem for these people at the place called Meros.

And then you remember in Colossians chapter 4, Paul said a little note to a Christian worker named Octopus, who apparently was slowing down, cooling off, climbing back into his comfort zone. And he said, say to Octopus, take heed to the ministry which you have received of the Lord that you fulfill it. Sometimes God offers us a ministry which we do not take hold of because, I say because, we don't want to get out of our little zone.

We want to be in control. We want to stay where we are, do it the way we've always done it, into the old comfort zone. And so Paul had to say, Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world.

He went right back. And there's no evidence later on in the scripture that Demas ever got out again. Nothing more is ever said about him.

It's rather sad. But it's very sad that sometimes as a Christian believer, and please remember now, that every believer has at least one gift from God, something you can do in a very special way. Something that perhaps nobody else in your particular fellowship can do, at least as well as you can.

But so often there's no takers. We stay, we don't want to be bothered. And sometimes we have this thing called mock humility where we say, well you know, poor little me, you know, I can't do anything, I don't know anything, I'm very shy, and God can't use me.

And you're absolutely right, He can't. I mean if your attitude is like that, He can't. But if your attitude is, God can use me.

And you believe it. And you expect it. Then you'll see it.

I remember flying one time down the state somewhere. When I got on the plane, I saw four couples and they all had red suits on. I mean with a hood, a one-piece suit, a hood, over their shoes and everything, just their hands and their face sticking out.

I thought to myself, what's this? And you know what happened? I just happened to get a seat next to one of these guys. He was a great big fellow, about 250 pounds. And I said to him, hey man, what's with the red suit? And he laughed and he said, well, there's four or five of us couples on the plane here.

He said, you know, we're salesmen, we work for a certain company. We had to go down to St. Louis, Missouri to a sales conference of some kind. And he said, we were told that if we would wear one of these red suits, we would be eligible then to compete for some prizes.

And so I said, my suit cost \$28, my white suit cost \$28, and we won \$1,400. Don't you think that was a good deal? I said, hey man, that was a great deal. And then I said, now, I knew we weren't going to be flying together long, so I said, would you mind if I told you how I became a Christian? And he kind of shook

once and looked straight ahead.

And he said, well, I guess, you know, like, go ahead. It wasn't exactly encouraging. So I told him how I found Christ as my personal savior.

I mean, I had to get out of my comfort zone to do that. And then the plane landed and I got up and took my briefcase. I reached out my hand and he put his hand out.

Well, first of all, I offered him a gospel tract. I said, you might find this tract interesting. He grabbed it like that, zipped his bag open, put it inside, zipped the bag shut.

And then he sat there. I put my hand out, he grabbed my hand, and I thanked him that we could talk together a little and said, I hope we'll meet again sometime. I tried to get my hand free and I couldn't.

I looked at him and tears were streaming down his face. And he said, you will never know what you did for me today. He said, you will never know what you did for me today.

And you know, I couldn't get my hand loose and I was standing in the aisle sort of. And people were climbing up behind me. It was kind of difficult.

And finally I got my hand loose. I got about six rows down the plane. I turned away from him and he leaped to his feet and he hollered, you'll never know what you did for me today.

Whew, that was good. But if I had stayed in my little comfort zone, that would never have happened, right? I could have talked about the weather and this and that and everything else. But if we expect God to open doors, he'll do that for us.

But it's a faith thing after all. The problem with Kadesh Barnea was their unbelief. There was no faith there.

And so nothing happened. There are some very happy stories in the Bible of people who saw this and who got out of their comfort zone. And so God used them.

Abraham will be a good example. God said, I want you to leave your native land, your colonies. You need to go down to a certain place.

Now he couldn't get a travel brochure and find out what it was like down there, what the average annual temperature was and all this kind of garbage. He had no idea what it was like down there. He just went because God said go.

Now Ur of the colonies, for those times, was a town almost ahead of its time. Do you know they even had flushing toilets in Abraham's day? I mean you didn't have a lever or a chain to pull, but there was a bucket of water and you just threw it down. I mean it was a flushing toilet, which most people didn't have in those times.

And he left all of this behind, relatives and all, and obeyed God and went down to Canaan. And people, it's one of the reasons that God speaks so often of Abraham in the Bible. Because he was willing to get out of his zone and get into God's zone, which was much larger than his.

And be the kind of person God would have him be. Of course, Moses is another. Hebrews chapter 11, it tells us how that Moses, when it had come to years, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's

daughter.

He was highly educated for those times. Wealthy, probably one of the wealthiest men in the known world. Everything going for him.

And then, God began to work in his heart. And he had to make a choice. To get out of his comfort zone with all he had, and get into God's zone.

And so it says, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

So by faith, he took that leap. And Moses, of course, is mentioned in Old Testament and New Testament, I think close to 800 times. Because he did this thing.

He did not have to. He could have remained in Egypt. I mean, a wealthy man all his days, we'd have never heard of him.

If somehow, by the grace of God, he had not gotten out of his personal comfort zone. By the grace of God and for the glory of God. Jonathan.

You remember David's friend? He and his armor bearer, the Philistines had come into the land, and they were marring the country. They used to throw rocks on fields, and do all kinds, cut down the trees, and stop fountains of water, do everything they could to make it embarrassing for the Israelites. And the Israelites were hiding, it says, in dens and caves and in holes.

Saul was the king. Jonathan's father. Saul was sitting with 600 men under a tree.

They didn't want to get involved. I mean, they never had enough. They could see that.

And somehow, they forgot God. And one day, Jonathan got sick and tired. Sitting there in his comfort zone, doing absolutely nothing.

So he said to his armor bearer, Are you with me? I'm going to go up. They had to go up a hill. I'm going to go up to those Philistines.

And the armor bearer said, I'm with you. So there was two of them now. Facing the Philistines.

And they went up. And God was with them. And they shook.

And then God confused the Philistines so that the Philistines began slaying one another. And there was a tremendous slaughter that particular day. But Saul was sitting under a tree.

And so God got a hold of Jonathan. And did a marvelous thing as far as deliverance is concerned. So a man was willing to risk things and get out of his zone and into God's own understanding.

God's field is the world. If God wants to move me here, or move me there, or change my job, or do something else, I'm willing to go with that. I just want to be where God wants me to be.

And God is looking constantly for people like that. Because basically and honestly, He doesn't have many people that live this way today in North America. Many of us don't know how to live for God.

How to venture for God. How to stick our neck out for God. How to rock the boat for God.

How to get involved for God's glory. We're afraid of the consequences. We want to know what the end will be.

We want to know what's going to happen down the road a mile from now. Or a day from now or a year from now. We don't want to launch out where things are uncertain and not sure.

And it's a great, it's a basic problem, a great problem among us as believers in Jesus Christ. There are many others, no more to chaos. When Haman, when Haman was given this great position, really next to the king, of the greatest kingdom in the world at the time, when Haman walked out, everybody bowed down except Mordecai.

Now, he was a Jew. And the first time this happened, he had to think in terms of getting out of his zone. This could be dangerous.

I mean, Haman is next to the king. And I'm just a poor Jew. He could have rationalized and said, well, I might just as well bow down because I can be sure then there won't be any problem.

You can be sure that there would not be any problem at the moment. But there may be greater problems down the road as a consequence of your conduct. And Mordecai was aware of this.

Now, it could have cost him his life. Instead, he was used by God to deliver an entire nation, not just the Jews where he lived, but to the whole empire at the time. Because Haman found out, and I'm not going to go into that in any detail today.

You read the story there. Mordecai was a very important link in God's chain to deliver his people at that time. And then Esther, queen, Mordecai was her uncle.

And she had to get out of her comfort zone, too. I mean, she was a queen to the king of the greatest kingdom in the world. And her initial thought was when her uncle faced her up with what she should do.

She said, well, if I go in to see the king, he hasn't called me in for 30 days. And if anybody's called in, and he doesn't lower the scepter towards them so they can touch it, then they will be killed. And her uncle remonstrated with her and said, but if you think you're going to get away by not getting involved, you're going to be in trouble.

Deliverance will arise from another quarter because God is in this. And finally she said, we'll do it. So she got her maidens to fast and pray for three days.

That's a good program. Of course, in North America, we're lunch and brunch and crunch and munch. And we have, you know, eating plates on every corner.

I remember a fella said to me one time, a Christian worker, he said, every time I fast, all I can think about is food. And you know, really, he looked like it, too. I mean, he, you know.

Anyway, I said that to him. And then we had a wrestling match. So they fasted for three days and prayed.

And she said, if I perish, I perish. I mean, she got out of her comfort zone and said, all right, God, I'll go with you. I'll do what you want.

If I die, I don't care. And you know, it's all like the apostle Paul in Acts chapter 20, where it says, Paul said, everywhere I go, the Holy Spirit bears witness saying that bonds and afflictions are waiting for me. And then he said this, but none of these things move me.

Neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I might finish my course and testify and administer which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. In other words, I don't care what happens. That's not even important.

The only thing that's important is what is the will of God? What does God want me to do? What does he want me to be? And everything else will have to fall into line with the will of God. That's why God used Paul the way that he did. Because Paul was willing to do anything, to go anywhere, to face angry mobs.

And you read 2 Corinthians chapter 12, if you want to get a little shot in the arm sometime when you feel you're being persecuted. You see what happened to him. None, he said, none of these things move me.

In other words, nothing is going to get me back in the old comfort zone. Never. I'm in God's zone now and I'm staying there until I die.

I've got a ministry and I want to fulfill that ministry with joy, by the will of God. Charles Fuller, many years ago, the old-fashioned Revival Hour, and some of you older people will remember this. As a young Christian, I listened to him all the time.

He got a lot of good theology and teaching and some fire too from that particular man. Long Beach, California, he had an hour program and a half hour called the Pilgrim Hour or Pilgrim Half Hour or whatever as well. Anyway, he had about 500 stations at the time and he had an opportunity to run about 500 more stations.

It was a tremendous jump financially and he never had the money. So he prayed and God said, go for it. Now, he could have decided to stay in the comfort zone.

I mean, he had a big broadcast, thousands of people were listening, hundreds being converted. He decided to go for it. I trust God.

And they had their initial broadcast. He finally was on 13 or 1,400 stations. He had the largest religious broadcast hookup in the world in his day.

And 1,000 people a week were converted, like 52,000 a year. Every 10 years, half a million people. God really used him.

But he was willing to venture for God. And you know, the day they were to have the initial broadcast, there was a huge auditorium, I forget where it was, and it happened to have a galvanized tin roof. And a rain started.

And the noise was so awful inside the auditorium that the guy in charge of the controls said, Charlie, there's no way we can go on the air. He said, why not? Well, listen to it. It's like being inside a drum being beat to death.

There was no way they could broadcast. So what did Charlie do? He said, well, we'll just pray right now and ask the Lord to stop the rain. So they did.

And the rain stopped, and immediately he prayed. They had the broadcast for a sound hour, and the minute they had the closing prayer, the rain started again. I mean, God wanted people to understand this was a miracle.

This I did. It was not just some happening. It was something God did.

I was a grower in California when God called him to be a preacher. And one night traveling on a train, God told him that every household in America would eventually have a radio. That dates the story too.

And that he wanted him, Charles Fuller, to give up his business, get into the business of God, and God would show him what he could do. So people, he was willing to venture to stick his neck out and of course, we have to be careful here. We must pray, make positive sure that what we're doing is really the will of God.

Because sometimes we run ahead of God. That isn't too often among Christians. It's not that great a danger, but it sometimes happens.

Mostly we lag behind. We ask God, we put a fleece out, he puts some dew on the fleece. So we did what Gideon did and we're so confused, we give up.

Because basically, we're a fountain that's sealed, a garden that's barred, enclosed, and we like it the way it is. Because basically, we're afraid, we're selfish, and we forget that Jesus Christ said, all power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Therefore, God will have you go down the block where you live and start evangelizing.

You know, they tell us this doesn't work anymore. We started this in the church I attend in Winnipeg last December and we're finding it's working wonderfully well. Just ringing doorbells on Thursday night and talking to people about Christ, giving them an invitation to the church, giving them some gospel literature.

It's amazing some of the things they're doing to live. And make that their responsibility. Begin praying for these people.

Try and get to know them. Invite them into your house for coffee. Then do a little evangelizing.

I know when we talk this way that often Christians get rather scared. I don't know of a better word. We get frightened.

I can't do a thing like that. Yes, you can. It doesn't really matter who you are.

Why is it, dear people, we can talk about the weather and the politics and our kids and our jobs and the latest gospel and so on. We can talk about anything under the sun. But when it comes to Jesus, like a man said, and by the way, he was a preacher.

He said, when I go to say Jesus to somebody else the words stick in my throat. Now he was a gospel preacher. He could preach it from the pulpit but he found it very hard to say anything to anybody else on a personal level.

But you know, he got over that. We had a men's meeting one Saturday morning and God really touched his heart. And he told me, he said, you know what? This was down in Minneapolis.

He said, I can say Jesus to anybody now. It's no problem any longer. Why, I can even talk about him on the telephone.

Well, that was a victory. So God said, tell the people to go ahead. Go forward.

But he had constant problems because they were always uncertain. They wanted something. They wanted God they could see.

They wanted food different than this manna. You know in the Psalms it says, man ate angels food. God gave them of the corn of heaven.

But they wanted leeks and garlic and onions. I can understand why. They complained about everything.

They wanted to go back to Egypt where they had been slaves. They'd forgotten about that. But anything was better than where they were.

People, they didn't understand what God had in mind. That he was going to use this nation to give us the Bible. What advantage then does a Jew have, Paul asks in Romans chapter 3. What advantage, is it to circumcision, this religious rite they practice.

He's in much every way, chiefly because that unto them were commanded the oracles of God. And over a period of 1600 years, in spite of all the ups and downs and the vicissitudes of their national life, apostasy, declining, backsliding, and all the rest of it, and a few periods of revival, in spite of all that went on, God got the job done. And then it's evident, it says in Hebrews, that our Lord sprang out of Judah.

The nation was to give birth to the Son of God. They knew some of these things rather dimly, I guess. Maybe not as dimly as we think because it says of Abraham that he looked for a city which has foundations whose builder and maker is God.

Where did he get that from? God had been making revelations to his children, Abraham of course included. And that's how he knew this. We read about it in Hebrews chapter 11.

And I say, why father, I can give you a number of reasons. One, for the glory of God. People, listen.

The snakes and the rats have come out of their holes in the world today, especially here in North America. I do a lot of reading and I'm reading some things that would really frighten me if I didn't know who God was. Things that are happening in our world today.

Jesus said in Matthew chapter 10, what you've heard in here in closets, I want you to preach it on the housetops. And we're going to have to come to a place where we'll preach the gospel from the housetops. We'll do anything to make people aware of the gospel because Satan's minions have come out of their holes and they're hollering, they're evil.

Why? Have you read that book? It's a new book. It's called When the Wicked Seize the City. It's frightening to read.

A Presbyterian pastor in California with a small church of 100 members decided because down there in San Francisco the homosexuals are very powerful and they were getting a law passed and that law passed to favor them. He decided to go to court to challenge these things in court and he won every court case he had except one. He paid an awful price.

First thing that happened was 50 of his people left him. They didn't want to get involved in this kind of a thing. I mean he was trying to win these people to Christ.

That wasn't just a case of opposing him in court. None of the local evangelical churches would touch him, would have anything to do with him. They let him do it alone.

So what happened? Well he paid a price. He never gave up. He and his wife, godly people, they crashed his car, they burned his house down, they burned his church down.

He got dozens, scores and scores of threatening phone calls, threatening to get him, to get his kids. And the whole bit he'd say, now one of these days your kids are not coming home. We're going to get them, we'll sodomize them, we'll torture them, we'll kill them if you don't shut up your big mouth.

He said at one point his wife said, honey I think we better give up. This is too risky. And he said no honey we can't give up because god is with us.

You know what happened? There were three homosexuals who came to the people and tried to make amends for the rest of the community and used to warn them. Several times they said get out of San Francisco, they've got a plan to kill you. So they got out of San Francisco.

And the leader of these three men was found dead in his room one day. I guess the community found out he was the one that was snitching on them so they simply killed him. People, it's not just an alternative lifestyle.

But the strengthening of foundations are god's way of life here in North America. They are not numerous but they're politically organized like you wouldn't believe. There are hundreds of homosexual organizations.

And they know how to use a political arena to get what they want. Well by the way I should point out that this pastor in Southern California churches from all over the nation rally to his support. One court case cost him \$130,000.

He never had a dollar. But money came in from other churches and he managed to survive. But he's one example of a Christian who decided to get out of the comfort zone.

I mean he could still have a hundred members in his church and preach a couple little sermons on Sunday and get by fine. But he saw there was something going on that was evil and wrong and had to be challenged and so he did it as God led him. I didn't really even plan for this morning.

God just put it into my heart. Anyway speak unto the children of Israel. Tell them to go ahead.

To go forward. We're never to be satisfied with what has happened in the past. We're always to be thinking of enlarging our borders.

Reaching out to new people. Sending out more missionaries. Do you know that the Moravians their goal was to send a missionary on the foreign field for every two families in the church.

Now they never quite made it. But that was their goal. And do you know that there were many Moravians who sold themselves as slaves in a slave market so they could be taken to some they did not know where even.

They had no idea where they might end up in a slave colony somewhere in the West Indies or somewhere else. Never. They would never have a furlough every four years.

They wouldn't have a furlough in 40 years. But dear people they were willing to get out of their comfort zone and to live for the glory of God so that they might win some to Christ. They saw the possibilities and they forgot about their comfort zone the boundaries.

And they got out of that to the glory of God. A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse a spring shut up a fountain sealed. We've asked God to break that fountain loose.

He that believes on me shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spoke of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. In Deuteronomy chapter 32 and by the way nobody told me how long to preach this morning you never do that to a visiting speaker because I don't have my glasses on so I can't really see what the clock is saying.

Anyway I'm just about through. In Deuteronomy chapter 32 there's a beautiful thought there it says as an eagle stirs up her nest and flutters over her young and spreads about her wing and takes her young so God works with his people. What do the eagles do? Well here's a little nest comfort zone there's three eaglets in this nest and it's nice you know because Mother Eagle comes and she's got some worms or she's got some meat it's nice in the nest.

They don't want to get out but she knows they can't stay there because after a while if they don't get out of the nest the nest will be too small for three of them and one of them will have to fall out and the nest is up on a crag maybe 2,000 feet above the valley floor. So the mother she puts one of her eaglets on her wings and she launches out and the poor little guy you can imagine how he feels on his mother's wings 2,000 feet above the valley floor and just sailing along carefully and all of a sudden the mother pulls her wings and down she goes and the bird's on his own. He's got little wings so he's flapping like crazy he isn't doing anything but she's watching and she circles around comes down and picks him up again takes him dumps him off again and she keeps on doing this until they learn to fly.

She wants to get them out of that nest and dear people God is doing the same with you and me. He wants to get us out of our comfortable little nest so that we get involved in what's happening in our world today. There are enough evangelicals in North America to evangelize the world but I read something the other day a Christian school in the United States it was a Gallup poll and 48% of the students said that sex outside of marriage was fine was okay I mean don't they read their Bibles? That's one of our problems today we're living at such a low level they'll say you probably heard it maybe not we've been subnormal for so long that when the normal comes along we think it's abnormal are we willing to let God take us out of the nest so our life begins to count for the glory of God you can call it personal revival or anything you want to call it and Paul wrote to Timothy he sensed somehow that Timothy was cooling off and so he said Timothy stir up the gift of God which is in you one translation says stir in the flame one translation says rekindle the fire do you know what the Spanish Bible says? the Spanish Bible says revive the gift of God which is in you God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind be not thou there for shame of the testimony of our Lord nor of meanest prisoner but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God

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