

The Body Is the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit

by James A. Stewart

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a New Testament church with a thrilling fellowship, a Christ-centered fellowship, and a Bible-loving fellowship to experience spiritual growth and revival.

Duration: 57:19

Scripture: Acts 2:33-34, Acts 2:41

Topics: "Body"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of knowing and loving the word of God in order to effectively teach and preach it. He uses the example of the Volga River to illustrate that without prior knowledge or interest, people would not be engaged in a discussion about it. The speaker also highlights the significance of doctrine and sacrificial fellowship in the church, emphasizing the need to prioritize spreading the gospel over accumulating wealth. He concludes by expressing his desire for the church to become a strong missionary center for worldwide evangelization.

Transcript

...for me to have fellowship with you here in the local church. I was thinking as I was driving down in our blizzard in North Carolina here, how good God has been to me as my loving Heavenly Father. You know, I lost possibly maybe 200, maybe 300,000 friends.

300,000 is a lot of friends to lose, isn't it? Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, because after I was sentenced to death by the Russians, I managed to escape, but I lost all my Christian friends behind the Iron Curtain. And I loved them. They were willing to die for me, and I was willing to die for them.

And when we left each other, we wept and wept. You know, we wept and wept and wept. And sometimes you would think we're going to offer 10 years.

We're just going to offer a day. But it's like my wife sometimes says to me, I don't know why I'm weeping because you're going away, I'm weeping because you love the Lord and I love the Lord. What is your husband-wife relationship? But she says, I sure miss you.

And it's like these believers, we left the homes. And outside, a sister would, maybe, and she would stand and say, and then she would say, let's sing Jesus Never Fails. And then we would sing it together, the whole family outside.

Then the husband would say, oh James, let's pray again. And we have got heaven below this morning. And how good God has been.

I was thinking, I never knew what God was going to do when I come home this time to give you as my friends. I knew he was going to do something down here, and I knew he was going to do something new for me this time I come back home. He promised to do it for me in missionary fellowship, in loving interest and prayers of the saints.

It was revealed to me, but not exactly just what it was going to be. And this is a bright and happy occasion that comforts my heart that I lost a lot of friends behind the iron curtain, but I'm getting a lot of friends here and here. And we need your friendship in the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, I want to speak to you tonight about the characteristics of a high spiritual church. The characteristics of a high spiritual church. Now, I'm reading from the second book of Acts.

And I have dealt with this subject in what I think is my best book, Open Windows. I prayed more in writing this book than any other book, Open Windows. And I have dealt with it in the chapter called The Local Church, The Center of Revival.

But just this morning, as I have been with you, I felt led to change the message completely from what I have written here in The Local Church and Revival in the book Open Windows. And so we're reading, first of all, in the second chapter of Acts. And we're reading from verse 41.

Let's begin maybe, I think just for the sake of reading sense, we better begin at verse 33. Verse 33 is a key verse throughout the book of Acts. And if you have your Bible, you mark it with red pencil or red ink or something.

Outline that to verse 33, will you? It's a key verse. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, The Lord sent unto my Lord, Therefore, the second therefore, therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. We were apart often the day of Pentecost, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify, and the exalt saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Then, they that gladly received his word were baptized. And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread in prayers.

And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man of need. And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and signals of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people.

And I can just hear that in between it just keeps on saying, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, right all the way it says. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved, or the Lord added to the church such as were being saved. Now, here in the second chapter of Acts, we have a thumbnail sketch for, I better keep my short little notes I've scribbled this morning.

You find it on a church fold of the Holy Ghost. And I believe, friends, that this is a picture of God's ideal church. Now, we believe from the very depths of our hearts, that the greatest need of Louisiana, the greatest need of Mississippi, and Arkansas, and Texas, and Alabama, the greatest need of this North American continent is local New Testament churches.

And that is why Jesus Christ was crucified, and why he was raised by the part of God and informed at the Father's right hand. That's why he lived and died, and that's why he was informed in order that there might be New Testament churches composed of men and women born again and washed in the blood of the Lamb who would praise the loving Heavenly Father. And my great heart's desire for you here at Milldale, in this Baptist church, is that you'll be a typical New Testament local assembly of the Lord's people.

And that preachers and evangelists everywhere can say, Do you know what I mean? Do you know what we mean? You go down to the Milldale and you will see what I mean. That is a New Testament church. I tell you that I'm always looking for illustrations of a life filled with the Holy Ghost.

And then they say, Oh, I know what you mean about being filled with the Holy Ghost. And what we want is examples today. And I'm praying, and I have been praying since leaving you in October, that this Milldale Baptist church indeed would be a real New Testament church.

Now, I know we're all human. And Mr. Spurgeon, you remember what he said? Now, he says, If you find the perfect church, don't join it, because it will be perfect no longer. But that's all right.

But I believe in aspiring for God's best. I believe in aspiring for God's best. Now, here is a thumbnail sketch, or a short picture of a church that is God's ideal.

And our prayer should be, Oh God, make this a reality in my heart and life, and make this a reality in this New Testament assembly. Now, will you notice, first of all, that it was a church with a thrilling fellowship. A church with a thrilling fellowship.

You see, they were thrilled because they were saved by the sovereign grace of God. They were thrilled to the very deepest depths of their being, that they had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. And they were thrilled beyond all excitement and expression, that their bodies were the temples of the Holy Ghost.

And it was a church with the thrill of a holy fellowship. They could sing, Now I belong to Jesus. Jesus belongs to me.

Not for time alone, but for all eternity. I got the news just maybe two days ago, from my wife, that my mother went home to glory. And I just had to give my life over to God again.

And then I had to sing Amazing Grace. But you see, the verse that the Holy Ghost sang through me, was that when we've been there 10,000 years. And so I had to change it and say to the Lord, when she's been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, she's no less days to praise His name than when she first began.

Poor mother. You see, there's no end. You've been there 1,000 years and you haven't even begun to praise the Lord.

And she's glorifying. She's begun her cycle of interest. A cycle of prayer.

Not a prayer, but a... Now, I believe, friend, that if you had entered this church, meeting up in the upper room, or if you had entered some of these churches that were in fellowship with this church in the book of Acts, maybe met in a cave, or an old, old building, you would find there was nothing in the building. But oh, friend, when you went in, if you were an unbeliever even, you would have been convicted by the mighty power of God in the meeting. Why? A fellow of a holy fellowship.

They were redeemed by the blood of Christ and they were subjects of the sovereign grace of God. And they could sing amazing grace. How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

Now, I remember when I was first saved. And you know, I don't tell all about it, and I must tell, because I couldn't tell everything there, but you know, I ran the whole way home. From the football park.

And I hammered at the door, and as I was going up the street, you know, I was shouting everywhere. We lived in a busy thoroughfare. I'm saved! I'm saved! Yes, James, I could hear you down the block.

Yes, I said, I know you're saved. I told you you were going to be saved. And then, you see, I got into the group of believers who, Mother would say, don't forget, pray for Jimmy.

Pray for Jimmy. Pray for my boy, the footballer boy. And then when I went with my taxpayers into these places that were praying for me, they didn't want me.

They didn't want me. And they would come, and dear old brother would come and say, Jimmy, come out please. And they would take me outside my taxpayers, and they'd say, Jimmy, God bless you.

Now, there's a church just about down the road there. Not the third corner, the fourth corner. That's a good church.

You see? They didn't want me in the churches. Because, you see, when I got in, you see, you could hear me coming down the street with my taxpayers. And then I would come into the church, and then suddenly, I would just say, oh, hallelujah.

Now, they were all born again. Oh, yes. And then a brother would come along, and then he would whisper in my ear, and he says, you must be Jimmy Stewart.

I said, I am. He said, oh, we were told to expect you someday. Now, he said, keep a bit quiet.

You see? Quiet. And I was carrying my taxpayers once down the street. I've never told you before.

And it was after midnight. And there was a dear Bible teacher. And he had been away from a meeting late and got off the train and waiting on a night bus to get him home.

And I come down the street, you see, with a prostitute. Stewart. I said, yes, sir.

He said, they told me I would meet you sometime. He said, now listen. He said, it's true we're on the winning side, Sonny, but you mustn't let them know it.

Oh, bum. Bum come. Let everybody know we're on the winning side.

Let everybody know the devil's defeated. I don't believe in that. And they try to, you know, the older people, they've been saved for years, but last February meeting, I went in, you see, I was just shocked.

And that was enough, you see. Please, if you're going to shout, let me know. Give me some signal.

Yes, well, I said, they say that, and you know, we couldn't go home. And we would march down. I was the baby, 14 years of age.

And we would march down the street singing, you see, sweeping through the gates. And then we would march down the street to the next fella. And then it would usually happen, a fella would say, Jimmy, we're the two last ones.

And we'd go down singing down after midnight to them. And then he says, Jimmy, I'll march you, I'll walk you home. And then he walked me home.

And I said, oh, I think I'll walk you home. And so I walked him home, another two miles back to where he lived, you see. And then Mother would say, Jimmy, why are you so late, two o'clock in the morning? I said, Mother, you don't know what to wonder, what do you say? This was all, you see, and I believe, friend, that that's, and then there is what I call the, the, well, I wouldn't say it's a flow of a holy fellowship, but I say the second would be a, it was a, a company, or a fellowship, or a Bible-believing fellowship, or a Bible-loving fellowship.

Now, a, I say maybe I'll go second, first, second better, a Christ-centered fellowship. A, the Lord Jesus Christ was so magnified by the Holy Ghost in the midst that he took first place over everything. Now, please remember, we've emphasized before the convention, the Holy Ghost can never be the figurehead ahead of any movement.

I believe that many of our dear Pentecostal friends make that mistake. Not all, but some of them. Trying to make the Holy Ghost the center of the meeting.

The Holy Ghost will never make himself the center of the meeting. He always will withdraw if you try to make him the center of the meeting. He shall glorify me, says the Lord Jesus.

And the business of the Holy Ghost is to make Christ real and very precious to you. And the more the Holy Ghost is manifested in the meeting, the more Christ will be the center of the attraction. And you see, this fellowship was that Christ-centered in that the Lord Jesus Christ stood in the midst.

And the people knew that the Lord Jesus Christ was there. And the unconverted people knew. It says, And they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

Now, I wrote, I have written down in open windows something, what they sang in these meetings. Something like this, Oh God, I love thee. Not that my poor love may win me entrance to thy heaven above.

Nor yet that strangers to thy love must know the bitterness of everlasting woe. But Jesus, thou art mine and I am thine. Classed to thy bosom by thy arms divine.

Who on the cruel cross for me has borne the nails, the spear, and man's un pitying scorn. No thought can fathom and no tongue express thy grief, thy trials, thy anguish measureless. Thy death, O Lamb of God,

the undefiled.

And all for me thy wayward sinful child. How can I choose but love thee, God's dear son? Oh Jesus, loveliest and most loving one. For there no heaven to gain, no hell to flee.

For what thou art alone, I must love thee. Not for the hope of glory or reward, but even as thyself has loved me, Lord. I love thee and will love thee and adore.

Who art my king, my God, forevermore. It was a church of a Christ-centered fellowship. Jesus Christ was the center of the attraction.

It was noised abroad that he was in the house. And when the unconverted people came in, and believers came into these early gatherings of this church, they knew right away that it was a... Now, that is, I believe, one of our greatest needs today. Do you know that you can go into evangelical meeting after evangelical meeting, fundamental church meeting after fundamental church meeting, and there is no sense of the living Christ in the midst of these people.

And when they leave the meeting, it's just as if they have left a baseball park, or a cinema, or a theater, or a... Why? Because Jesus Christ and all his reality has not been in the midst. Supposing some friend said to you, why are we in the middle of the old Baptist church this morning? What would you say? Would you say, I was there to meet with my Lord. Yes.

And did you meet with your Lord? Was he there? And tragedy is after tragedy that we have to see many times, no, our Lord wasn't there. Because, my dear friend, if Jesus Christ came into this meeting this morning physically, and he came in here, my dear friend, we would know it. And yet, where two or three are gathered together unto my name, he says, there am I in the midst.

And friend, we will never have revival, we will never see so say the power of God, until it's a church that is, as I say, Christ-centered. Now, I don't mean a sentimental Christ. Now, you dear ladies, you see, don't get a sentimental Christ.

I read the other day from a lady, and she writes quite a number of letters, and you know, she has a sentimental Christ. Now, we men, we want a masculine Christ. Yes.

But you see, the Christ that you have as a wife, and the Christ that you have as a husband, he's just the same. And we want a deep Christ, a big Christ, a majestic Christ. You understand what I mean? A Christ in all his beauty and all his matchless glory.

Not a superficial, sentimental love to Jesus Christ. No. Something that's deep.

It's like your marriage life. Your marriage life goes deeper and deeper and deeper as it proceeds. It may not be so emotional, but it's deeper and deeper, because you have known each other longer than you'd ever known before.

And you go on with Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, deepens and deepens your love for Christ. And, oh friend, the church is filled with the glory of the Lord. Then I hurry, and I notice that it was a church with a Bible-loving fellowship.

They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine. Now, I believe, friend, that if we're going to have a real New Testament church, there must be a church of doctrine. Now, may I say to you, dear sisters, it's

not easy for you to get down to Bible study, because you have the homework, taking care of your husband.

You have to take care of children. But you must try and get your Bible down and say, Blessed Holy Ghost, they teach me thy word. Open up the book to me, you say.

It's not easy to rise. My wife has to rise sometimes at five o'clock in the morning to get an hour alone with God before she starts the day. And you see, every one of you is going to fight for this time.

But we must have the word of God in our meetings. It's a church that is a Bible-loving church. Now, we've got to know what the Holy Ghost says in the book.

And we've got to be deep, intelligent Christians and know what's in the Bible from the end of Genesis to the end of Revelation. I can go to some denominational churches and I just exactly know, because they live in one book or one chapter. Now, the Holy Ghost wants us to live in all the chapters of the Bible.

And, you know, if we, friend, do not have an intelligent group of believers in the word of God, then we're going to backslide. I shall never forget Dr. Graham Scoggins saying to me, he said, James, when Dr. A.T. Pearson left the Welsh Revival in 1904 and came to London, he said to me, Dr. Scoggins says, there's a great danger in the Welsh Revival just petering out. Why? Because he said, there is very little Bible exposition.

You see, these dear believers in Wales, they were so enthused with the love of Jesus Christ. Their meetings were on day and night for two years. Can you imagine day and night for two years? If it was like Baton Rouge, every church in Baton Rouge would be filled for two years every night.

Can you imagine? And just the same, the same would be in the Shreveport, the same would be all over, you see. New Orleans, just the same. And the people were so filled with the glory of God.

For two years, there's almost no Bible teaching in any of these meetings. And, you know, after two years, it did die out. Now, I believe, I believe, my brother, my sister, that if we just live on our experiences, we will soon backslide, our hearts will grow cold.

And many of you may have lost something even since November. And you were sincere in everything you said, in everything you prayed, in everything you did. You were absolutely sincere.

You say, oh God, I'll do this 100%. And maybe you didn't go on deeper with God at all. Now, I can give you one reason.

You can't live on experiences, no matter how precious they are. Now, you may tell about them if the Holy Ghost releases you to do so. You know, I have to be careful the stories I tell, because I could tell you thousands.

But I must ask the Holy Ghost, now, do you want me to tell that story? I'm asked to write many of my stories, and the Holy Ghost says, no, don't you write about it, you see. Don't you write about it. But if you're released to tell your experience to another brother or in the church, that's all right.

But beware of living on experiences. We must live upon the Word of God. How can we abide in the vine? We abide in Christ the vine, by daily communion with the Lord Jesus.

And that is by the systematic reading of the Word of God. And you know, I've often longed, when I was a boy, I used to long that I could preach like Spurgeon. But when I grew older, I wished that I could get preached to Spurgeon's congregation.

Now, if you could get me Spurgeon's congregation, I think I could preach like Spurgeon. But you see, old I have Spurgeon's congregation. They were giants, you see, giants.

I was in meetings recently in Denmark, and you know, every one of the thousand believers, almost every one of the thousand believers could have stood up and expounded the Scriptures from Genesis. You see, that's easy to teach. It's easy for a pastor, easy for a Bible teacher to come in to teach the Word of God.

I started to tell you about Russia, and I'll tell you about the Volga. Now, I believe, friends, that this church, it continues steadfast in the Apostle's doctrine. Now, people say, we don't want doctrine.

We must have doctrine. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is what? Profitable. And I'm praying that God will make you a pastor, a Bible expositor more than ever.

I pray that you will take this book, my brother, my sister, on your knees and say, Oh, blessed Holy Ghost, reveal Thy Word to me. Now, you can see how the Apostle Paul and Philipians and Colossians and Ephesians praised. But the church eyes would be open that they would have what? These local churches would have a deep spiritual insight into the Holy Spirit.

And I could tell you of all the men and women who have been taught of the Holy Ghost alone without theological summary. And they are giants in the Word of God. Now, we need brothers and sisters in our churches.

Every believer taught of the Holy Ghost. It was, I say, a Bible-loving church. Oh, God make you a Bible-loving church.

And may God make you a Bible-intelligent church that you'll know this book intelligently. You ask the average Christian, you know what he believes. And you soon discover the only thing he knows is what his pastor told him.

That's all. But we need the ministry of the pastor. We need the ministry of the evangelist.

We need the ministry of the Bible teacher. These are all the sovereign gifts of the ascended Christ of the church. But my brother, don't be like a Roman Catholic.

You know, I asked a Roman Catholic once in Ireland, what do you believe? He says, I believe what the Pope believes. I said, what does the church believe? And I said, what does the church believe? He said, I believe what the Pope believes. And I said, what does the Pope believe? He says, what my father... He knew nothing except what the church told him.

What his priest told him. Now friend, don't be a spoon-fed Christian. Don't keep on being a bathing Christ.

Get down in the book and let the Holy Ghost speak to you. And say, I thank God for the ministry of my pastor. I thank God for the ministry of the Bible teacher evangelist.

But I know this is true because the Holy Ghost has revealed it to me. And how wonderful it is to come with this blessed book to another sister, another brother, and say, hallelujah, that Lord has revealed to me this

precious truth. And do you know what D.L. Moody used to do? I collect Bibles.

I have Hudson Taylor left two Bibles, I think. I've got one of them. I used to have Mr. Moody's Bible.

Maybe I still have it. The one he used in the London campaigns. You know what Mr. Moody did? He used to... When he studied his Bible, he would write footnotes.

St. Romans or Ephesians or Ezekiel. And then he would say to your brother, here's my Bible. Would you lend me your Bible? And then the brother had his Bible all marked.

And Brother Moody would go through the notes of that brother. What the Holy Ghost had revealed to him in that book. Wouldn't that be precious? Now wouldn't that be lovely if you gathered that way some of you sisters? That you say, oh, I want to... I'd like to show you what the Lord has revealed to me there in the book.

Will you take my Bible and you read my margin? I'll take yours. Wouldn't we have a wonderful time together? Now, then I hurry. It was a church with a steadfast membership.

They continued steadfastly. Now this is practical. This is nothing about doctrine.

This is practical. They continued steadfastly. Now, the greatest leap today we have in our churches is for believers who are absolutely steadfast.

Now I believe in emotion. I believe in getting excited. My mother never got excited about anything at all.

She had a nice little hallelujah, that's all. But my mother loved the Lord Jesus in the deep, subterranean way. Deep, deep, deep, deep way.

You know? Many people like that can't express themselves. But they express them by their life. Now, you know, if you want to express yourself in faithfulness, come down to an early morning prayer meeting, if you want to express yourself in faithfulness, clean up the church, wash the dishes.

Now, it's strange how many believers that shout glory hallelujah admit that the noisest profession of loving the Lord and when it comes to steadfastness in the ministry of the local church, they're miles behind. Others who don't make any high-sounding profession at all. And you know that many Christian people during meetings will make alibis and excuses why they're not at the meetings.

When I first came to the States, I told you before, I couldn't understand what the pastor was always doing. It's often the people that turn up every night. In our meeting, you have to ask the believers to stay away every night because they'll keep you going every night.

And you'll say, well, let's have a break. You'll say, oh no, you're tired, Brother James. You'll just carry on yourself for the next week.

You'll meet with us the next week. And here we have motor cars, heaters in the car, and it gets a little bit cold and you'll find that the pastor gets discouraged and the evangelist gets discouraged, the Bible teacher gets discouraged. Why? Because the believers are not there.

Do you know that our believers in Russia and in Eastern Europe, they were walking icy roads, in blizzards. They had not even money for a bicycle. Of course, a bicycle couldn't even go in a blizzard, as you know.

And we would know, no matter what the blizzard was there, they would die in the attempt to get to the morning meeting. You see? Die in the attempt. And yet any little thing would keep us away.

I remember when people would come to our home in Glasgow and it was Wednesday night or any night, and there was meetings on in my mother's church. And she would just say, well, I'm so glad she stays here. We're going to have our meal.

And then she says, our service starts at half past seven and I know you'll enjoy the preaching tonight. And they said, oh, Mrs. Stewart, we just couldn't go. I said, my mother, six and I leave at seven o'clock because we have a prayer meeting before the evening service.

And she just left. She won't stay at home. And as the pastor said in his announcements, and I said, if there's nobody at the early morning prayer meeting, Mother Stewart, the oldest member of the church, she'll be there.

And I've seen my mother strike out in the blizzard to walk to her church, seven miles down the road. And she was about 70 years of age. In the ice.

And you know, every time I came to evangelize in my own city of Glasgow, my mother was never there. She was never there. Where was she? Oh, in her own church, of course.

And I said, Mother, you could come out sometime to hear me. She said, James, we have meetings every night in my own church and the Holy Ghost told me to remember that church and I'm there. But I said, Mother, I'd just like to recognize you one night and tell the people, you led me for Christ.

Oh, she says, we all know that. You say, no. Now, I believe, friend, that we need men and women of that caliber today.

They'll be as steady as a rock. They'll be unchangeable. You know, it's a terrible thing.

My wife sometimes says to me, oh, she says, I wonder when we go back now after three years if that brother will be still shouting Hallelujah. I wonder if we go back to this city, to this city, I wonder if that sister still has the same missionary enthusiasm. The sister has lost her passion for foreign missions.

That's a tragedy. God wants us to go right on. Therefore, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as you know that you're laboring.

And then you'll notice again it was a church with a sanctified membership. In verse 40, Peter says in the end of his Pentecostal sermon, save yourselves from this untoward generation. Separate yourselves from it.

It was a church of a sanctified membership. Now you know what sanctification simply means. The Sabbath was a sanctified day.

The Sabbath was a sanctified day. The sanctuary was a sanctified place. And a saint is a sanctified person.

Now, you know, the original meaning of a word is usually found, or the first meaning, or the meaning of a word is usually found in its first original mention. And the first original mention of sanctified as you know, God made the Sabbath day and he sanctified it. So the Sabbath was a sanctified day, a separated day.

A sanctuary, a separated place. A saint, a separated person. Now, this was a church of a sanctified membership.

They were separated from the present evil age. They were separated from sin. They were holy people.

I wonder now, is everybody here this morning separated from sin? From doubtful indulgences? Are you completely separated from this unholy world? Then I hide. It was a church with a worshipful service, or say, a worshipful fellowship. Now, I believe the most precious meeting in the church, and the most important meeting in the church, is the hour of worship.

Now, you know, if I had my way, I would have a worship meeting every Sunday morning, I would have a break and a bread every Sunday morning. I hope that it would be, I think it would be lovely if this coming, this week, God willing, that we could have a break and a bread service on Friday night, or some day before we all separate. Wouldn't that be wonderful? Now, I believe, friend, that around the gathering of the Lord, the Lord's table, that's where you can really worship.

And I am told that, that those who knew Mr. Spurgeon best, the preachers and everybody said, most of the preachers said, Spurgeon never stood so solitary alone. He never seemed so far removed from all of us, as when he stood at the Lord's table, and staffed with talk about his blessed Lord. Now, I believe, friend, it's at the break and a bread.

On the first day of the week, they came together to break bread. And I believe, friend, that we shouldn't hurry the communion. I've been in so many churches, and being tacked on to the end of the preacher's sermon, that's a sin.

That's a sin. Sin against the Holy Ghost. The Lord's Supper is far more important than the preacher's sermon.

And how wonderful it would be to have the Lord's Supper and gather around the blessed table as great high priests to partake of the emblems of our Lord's death, and all together worship the Lord inside the veil. And I believe that's the most important service of all in the local church, the ministry of worship, the service of worship. And, oh, friend, it would be wonderful if we could only have meetings sometime for a week for worship only.

We're not coming to beg. Not coming as beggars. You see, Mary, she was the first to worship the Lord.

Others, of course, had fallen on their feet before. But they were all beggars. Give me, give me, give me something.

But Mary was the first to fall at the feet of the Lord Jesus and give Him something. She gave Him her heart's affections. Now, we need worshipers.

And you'll discover sometime, you know, that when you're going to pray, your heart's just dry. I don't understand the illustration about, my wife often gives about a pump. I'm not a southerner.

You've got to put something in the pump to get it out or something? Jesus, I don't know. I don't know. I've gone in the city.

I don't know the southern talk. Anyhow, you know, just the other morning when I was praying, I was going to start interceding, you see, the ministry of intercession. And I was dry.

And I knew just exactly what was wrong with me. And so I started to worship the Lord. And then the devil came along.

You know, the devil is very religious sometimes. He sometimes comes as an evangelical fundamental, you know, pastor or leader. Oh, yes.

And he's saying, now James, he said, forget about that. You need money for your missionary work. And these missionaries need your prayers.

And the Christians around the world need your prayers. India needs your prayers. You better get busy.

And I knew it was the old devil. And I said, I'm just going to spend the morning without rushing at anything, just worshiping the Lord. See? And we worship the Father.

Now, be careful not to forget the Father. My children, I think I told you before, all had the terrible habit of growing up talking to the Lord Jesus only. Dear Lord Jesus, never saying, oh God, our loving heavenly Father, anything.

And I would always whisper, our loving heavenly Father, our loving heavenly Father. Nothing. I couldn't get them out.

And even Sharon now, fifteen, and she starts off her prayers, dear Lord Jesus. But that's all right. She'll get to understand more.

But I find that it's God the Father, you see, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the energizing power of the Holy Ghost, you see. Because we have it in Mr. New's beautiful hymn, all the grace that drew salvation's plan, all the love that brought it down to man, all the mighty gulf that God did span, God the Father did span at Calvary. And it was God the Father that devised this plan of salvation.

And it was executed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and applied to all hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. And you know, when I began to worship the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus, by the power of the Holy Ghost, then my heart warmed and warmed. I just worshipped the Lord.

And then you see, afterwards, my heart was warm and I was ready to pray, to intercede, and the power to intercede for the salvation of souls and revival in the church, and that God would drive back the forces of hell. Now, this was a company, because when you read there, you can discover right away that Christ was in the midst and they worshipped the Lord. They worshipped the living God.

It was a fellowship of holy worshippers. And then, will you notice again, it was a church with a soul-winning fellowship. There was only 120 and 3,000 souls.

As I said before, if we had a fellowship of 3,000 members and we won 120 in one day, we would call that a revival. But we had only 120 souls and 3,000 were run for the Lord. It was a church of a soul-winning fellowship.

Now, please remember this. You can magnify every truth out of proper proportion until it is error. But there is one truth you cannot magnify out of proportion, and that is the awful truth that men and women without Jesus Christ are eternally damned.

And we can get off a tangent this way. We can off-balance that way by over-emphasizing some particular doctrine. Never exaggerate.

That's the awfulness of a lost soul damned in hell. And as I look back over my 43 years, I could tell you of leading preachers and others who backslid. And do you know why they backslid? If they did not backslide because of sin, or if it was doctrine, it was because they got off-balance over some doctrine.

You know, they just emphasized one particular doctrine, and they got out of all proportion to the whole truth of the Word of God. But the men, friend, who kept the evangelism, the salvation of souls, and the front line of the ladder, of the platform, they went right on with the Lord to the very end with a keen passion for lost souls. Now, it was a church of a soul-saving fellowship.

I believe, as I say again and again, when we are full of the Holy Ghost, when we have revival, automatically sinners will be saved. Now, what about the district of Milldale here? What about all these homes? Now, let's pray. You visit them this afternoon.

But, you know, I was feeling this morning that we ought to say to those who come to the conference, when you drive by these different homes all round about during this week, would you not drop them and stop at a home and say, I'm the so and so and I'm from Baton Rouge. I wonder, I'm at Milldale just now. Would you come to our conference meeting tonight? You know, last summer we had a Bible conference in Ireland and so many hundreds of unconverted people started to come to the Bible, the camp meeting at night time that I had to stop preaching and start teaching the gospel, stop Bible teaching.

Because, there's so many hundreds came, leading businessmen in the district and the preacher says, we never saw this for 40 years. So many, these people have never been near a gospel meeting in their life. And now they're coming.

So preach the gospel. Wouldn't that be nice to have happen here this week? Different pastors would have to preach instead of Bible teaching to us in the evening. Wouldn't that be blessed? Now let's pray, friend, for the salvation of souls around here.

And then, will you notice also, it was a church with a sacrificial fellowship. They sold the possessions. And they later defeated the apostles for the distribution, for the good of the church and the evangelization of the lost.

Now it said with all things common. Now, you know, friend, I believe that communism would not have grown so fast if there had been a real exhibition of true Christianity. You know that? I believe, friend, that if there's any members, if there's any people in this community in sorrow and trouble, the people of Millville Baptist Church should be the first in the doorstep.

You know that? First in the doorstep. And I believe, friend, that we should have such love to each other because we have such love to Jesus Christ. And then, we'll be sacrificial in our giving for the spread of the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Now, if in the first sea of the church's history they needed to sell their lands to spread the gospel and their property, how much more in the last seas of the church's history when there's hundreds of millions who have never heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I want to thank, Pastor, and I want to thank you. All of you who are helping in this book ministry.

This is a tremendous help because the profits from these books enable us to pay bills. We have a \$3,000 bill just now to pay. And by selling these books, the profits that we make goes right into selling these books out free to the mission of the native Christians around the world.

Now, friend, this is a church of a sacrificial fellowship. They sacrifice and sacrifice in order to get the gospel out. And, you know, I have put here in my little book *Open Windows* this word.

I warn you, said A.J. Gordon, that it will go hard with you at the judgment seat if he finds your wealth hoarded up in needless accumulations instead of being sacredly devoted to giving the gospel to the lost. I say that again. I warn you, that it will go hard with you at the judgment seat if he finds your wealth hoarded up in needless accumulations instead of being sacredly devoted to giving the gospel to the lost.

O God, make this a mighty missionary church. I pray God will make this a Millville Conference grounds a mighty missionary center for worldwide evangelization. And then, will you notice I'm about closing, it was a church with an interceding fellowship.

They continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and prayers. Now, I said before to you at the convention in November, or if I didn't say it publicly, I said it to many of you privately. Don't you think it's an amazing thing that we know that the greatest ministry that we can perform here on earth is the ministry of intercession.

We know it's the greatest ministry. And yet, if God had looking down this morning from heaven on North America, I believe when he looks down in wonder and amazement at the few places of intercession, you could travel the length and breadth of North American continent and you'll hardly find one place given over to the ministry of intercession. And we read in Hebrews 7.25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

And when the Lord Jesus went up to heaven, he looked all around at heaven and then he looked down and asked great need and then he came to this conclusion. The greatest ministry I can perform for the church is the ministry of intercession. And my Redeemer ever lives to make intercession for us.

He ever lives to make intercession for me. And you see, I want to be like Christ. Well, friend, you can be like Christ by praying and it's wonderful to think that when you're on your knees you're doing down here just exactly what the Lord Jesus is doing up there.

And that's the Holy Ghost springing through you with groanings which cannot be uttered. Isn't that wonderful? Now, this is what I pray. I have prayed since I came here in November that walk these roads and pray, O God, make this Milldale community a community of intercession.

I pray God to bring in even families to live in this community. You know that? To live in this community you can get a trailer, you can build a house, you can work in Baton Rouge, live here. You must have more believers.

And to have a minister of intercession every hour in the 24 hours. Do you have a schedule? Talk among yourself and put it up in the church and everybody has the schedule. The time that minister is going to be carried on so that it won't be forgotten.

Some will say, well, oh, I forgot it was my turn or I couldn't do it. And I believe, friend, that that could be carried on. And you know, I have been praying that for these minister of intercession for prayer meetings

all around this countryside.

Why not, for example, you've already begun it. You had a prayer meeting Friday night here. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have another prayer meeting in another church, another prayer meeting in another church, and all come, 20, 30 churches all gather just for the minister of prayer.

Just a little message in prayer first and then all get down to spend that day in prayer. Morning, afternoon, evening. You can't come in the morning, afternoon.

You can drive out in the evening. And five or 20 churches praying together. And I've been praying that there could be a convention, an intercession convention, where 1,000 for four or five days, 1,000.

I've asked the Lord for 1,000 already. 1,000 believers would come from the different states just to pray for a week here on these grounds. To pray for the Holy, pray for the Revival of America and for worldwide evangelization.

Where Mitchison prayed, we ought to be giants in prayer. And why not have an intercession conference in Baton Rouge? Why not one in Shreveport? Why not one in New Orleans? Why couldn't we have 3,000 believers to come for one day just to pray morning and evening, morning, afternoon, evening? Why not? 3,000 believers come together, not for preaching but for praying. Why not? They had it in the early church and we want to get back to Pentecostal days again.

Now, I could give you illustration after illustration of places in my ministry that were intercession places. And you knew the very part of God was there. You knew it.

You didn't need a prayer, God bless me, you knew you would get blessed. Why? Because they carried on this ministry of intercession day and night. Now, if you have any resolutions for 1966, make this your biggest one.

Oh God, make me an intercessor. Make me a mighty intercessor. Teach me how to pray.

Holy Ghost, pray through me with groanings which cannot be uttered. Pray through me. Now, let us pray for this for Mildale.

This is not something that is just a dream. This is something that must become a reality. The need is desperate.

The need is desperate. And so, let us pray for this. And let us pray that all hindrances will be removed.

Animosities, jealousies, backbiting, sin, indulgences, anything. And there'll be so one in Jesus Christ that the Holy Ghost can walk through us and He can pray through us. Oh, the pure delight of a single hour as before Thy throne I spend, as I kneel in prayer and with Thee, my God, I commune as friend to friend.

Let us bow in prayer. Now, what I would like to pray for this morning is that God would send in the money for more buildings here. You see, if these things are going to come to pass, they'll have to be more buildings for accommodation.

Not just one dormitory, several dormitories. There's nothing for God to send \$5,000 from somebody that you don't even know about. The Holy Ghost could lay it in the heart of someone in another state to say, here is \$5,000 for the Milldale Bible Conference.

God's able. And if these believers are going to come from all over America here, they've got to be housed accommodated. And let us pray for these buildings.

And you know, let our faith be so great it would just be as if we see these buildings actually standing all round about us. Eh? Just as if that these buildings were actually standing all round about us. Eh? Just let us cry to the Lord round about, will you? It's only quarter past twelve.

Just a cry to the Lord. No long prayers. Just a cry to the Lord.

Could somebody claim these buildings from the Lord? Claim this ministry of intercession from the Lord? Our Father, we are playing with toys when we ought to be conquering kingdoms for Thee. Deliver us from our impoverished concept of Thee. And give us a bigger Lord, Jesus.

Keep us from worshipping just a mere symptom and give us a great dependence on the Holy Ghost. To honor Him and obey Him. Oh God, we cry to Thee.

Lord, give us faith for these buildings. Oh Father, give us faith. Father, we've been looking into Acts 2. And Lord, the church with this holy fellowship of people who were thrilled because they were saved.

This company of worshipable saints sacrificing all they had for the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Carrying on this mighty ministry of intercession. Oh God, make it a reality here.

Raise up a mighty band of intercessors. Lord, we cry to Thee. Make this a mighty day of intercession.

Make this a week, a mighty week of intercession. Bless all the pastors and the dear wives and family. Oh move in Baton Rouge.

Move in, even in Shreveport and all over Lord. In New Orleans. You can send them from all over Lord.

Remember those who are not concerned about coming cold and hard and saying, I don't need a blessing. God send them in. And oh God, Father, will you raise up the ministry this week.

Oh Holy Spirit, you can take control. You be the chairman. And you give the messages through Thy dear people.

Through Thy servants and handmaidens all the time Lord. In ministry of Word and Son and in faith. This message was preserved and made available by Revival Literature in Nashville, North Carolina.

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