

Be Holy in All Conversation

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the call to holiness and spiritual maturity in the Christian life, using Peter's transformation as a key example.

Duration: 1:26:36

Scripture: Romans 8:11, 1 Peter 1:2-3, 1 Peter 2:21-23

Topics: "Holiness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the power of God over sin and the world. He compares the power of sin to the law of gravity, stating that while sin may pull us down, the power of the risen son of God is greater. He highlights that believers are more than conquerors through Christ's love and are kept by the power of God. The preacher also mentions the story of Jesus' resurrection, explaining how the stone, wax, seal, and soldiers could not prevent the power of sin from being rolled against the tombstone. Overall, the sermon encourages believers to rely on the power of God and reminds them that there is always more to learn and possess in the Christian life.

Transcript

I think I should preach tonight, so I'm going to send you all home in about an hour. Because I thought we'd change, and instead of preaching, try and do a little teaching. And I hope be helpful about some of the issues in the Christian life.

There's no finality in the Christian life, this side of eternity. Nobody ever graduates. And however long we live, and however far we travel, and however much we know, there still remains much land ahead to be possessed.

I don't know why, but Martin Luther once said that the epistle of James is an epistle of straw. I find it has some teeth. Usually James is called the practical apostle.

But I get more practical help out of Peter. Maybe I'm a little like Peter. The first day I was born, my mind wasn't very clear that day.

But the first day I was born, my mother, you know, in the old-fashioned way, children were born at home. And that's where I was born. And the first day I was born, my mother told me years after that she put her hand on me in bed and said, don't let this boy live unless he's going to be a preacher.

I'm glad I didn't hear her say that, but it's a pretty severe handicap and yet a blessing because she believed like Mrs. Wesley. She didn't have as many children. Mrs. Wesley had 19.

She'd have done well on welfare, wouldn't she? But Mrs. Wesley had 19 children, and she taught them basically this, that there are two things to do with the Bible. Number one, believe it. Number two, behave it.

And we've been pretty good on the believing, and we haven't been too strong on the behaving. So tonight I want to share some thoughts from the first epistle of Peter and the first chapter, and taking as a kind of a hub in the wheel, verses 15 and 16. First Peter, first epistle, first chapter, verses 15 and 16.

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy. In all manner of conversation, which is really all manner of living, because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy. I think one of the weaknesses in our modern presentation of the truth or Christian living is that we're more afraid of holiness than we are of sinfulness.

The preachers have given us so many alibis for our weakness and our carnal nature, and heaven knows what. But when we talk about holiness, we get rather nervous and we want to back off. Supposing you change the words from holy to healthy, which is really its main meaning.

As he which hath called you is healthy, morally and spiritually, so you should be holy, I should be holy, healthy, spiritually and morally. There are alternate words for this word, holiness. You could say sanctification is the same thing, or perfection.

Well, that word scares us more than ever. You know, you hear people say, well, I'm not perfect. Well, don't be so proud of it.

It shows up, don't boast about it. I mean, why aren't you perfect? You said you expect me to be perfect? Sure, I do. I think Jesus did, didn't he, in the Sermon on the Mount? He talked about perfection there for us.

Well, we all have our little texts we can pull out for convenience, and you say, wait a minute, wait a minute, the Apostle Paul said, not as though I had already attained or were already perfect. That's what he said. Well, you say, if he said he wasn't perfect, do you expect me to be perfect? Yes, I do.

Because you quoted the perfection out of context. If you go two verses past that verse, in that verse he says, not as though I had already attained or were already perfect. Two verses further on he says, let us who are perfect.

Now what do you do with it? He's talking about two different things. In the first case, not as though I had already attained. He's talking there about the resurrection body.

I don't have one, do you? I'll be glad when I get it. I have a body that gives me a lot of problems due to some serious accident I had a few years ago. And I'll be delighted when I get, as it were, the last installment on my salvation.

Salvation is present, salvation is progressive, salvation will be finalized because one day we're going to have a body like unto his glorious body. And we're told, be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Now again, we can't have angelic perfection.

We can't have intellectual perfection. There are many perfections. We can't have Adamic perfection.

We can have spiritual perfection because God demands that we love him with a perfect heart and with a perfect mind. And we can be made perfect in love, the word of God says. You know, very often the preacher gets so generous he wants to give you everything in a package deal and say, well, there you are, you've arrived.

You know, there's a tremendous emphasis everywhere in the world right now on being filled with the Spirit. Well, that's quite scriptural. But if you present it as being filled and no room for anything else, it's entirely wrong.

You can be filled without being filled. You say, well, that's not very logical. All right, let me put it this way.

Supposing you had come to this room, say, an hour ago. You might have come and found the lights were off. You might have opened the door and found it was in total darkness.

And you just look in and say that room is empty. You walk in and say the room is empty. No, it wasn't empty.

If it was empty, if it had no air, you'd sure fall down. It was full of air. And then a janitor came in and he fills what is full.

Because it was full of air and he presses a switch and he fills it with light. It was already full of air. And right now it's reasonably full of people, though it was full of air and full of light.

And a few minutes ago it was filled with praise, filled with song. And let's see, if it was very cold, you could switch the thermostat up and fill it with heat. And what else? Oh, some lady comes down the aisle there and she bought something from the Avon lady this morning.

And as she comes down the aisle, you say, oh my, that's good. Of course, it may not be good, but on the other hand, there's something you can smell. Now, here's a room full of what? It's full of air, full of light, full of heat, full of people, full of praise.

And then it's filled with perfume. You're filling what is already full. Well, you've got lots of people filled with the Spirit, but on the other hand, the Word of God says that we can be filled with the knowledge of His will.

And there are many people filled with the Spirit who are still floundering around. They're still trying to find the will of God. He says that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will.

He says that you may be filled with joy in believing. You see, again, there are different areas, pardon me, or different elevations, if you like, in the spiritual life. Now, I want to deal with some problems tonight.

Well, what's better than dealing with Peter? He was the problem boy, wasn't he? The dropout? The first epistle of Peter, the first chapter, the first verse, the first word, Peter. Now, if, that was a repeater, but, if, if you carefully go through the Word of God, you'll discover this, that Jesus not only spoke to Peter more than He spoke to any other individual disciple, He spoke to Peter more than He spoke to all the disciples put together. And conversely, Peter always said something when everybody else was quiet.

So Jesus spoke to him more than He spoke to anyone else, and Peter spoke to Jesus more than any other disciple spoke. Now, when Jesus found Him, He was not Peter. Who was He? He was Simon.

The very name means shifty, irresponsible. You know, if you were to take a grain of sand and put it under a microscope, you'd discover that that one grain of sand has peaks on it like that and cavities like that. And, of course, sand is no good.

You can use it, mix it for stuff, but you don't build on sand. But if you go to Europe, you'll find some old cathedrals there. For instance, the city where we lived, in the city of Bath, the foundation of that abbey, a beautiful abbey, one of the best in England, it was laid in the year 444.

And it is a sandstone foundation. Now, what happened? Those grains of sand were pushed together, and those cavities and those peaks got locked in together and it became substantial, it became good, strong stone, and that stone has been there for about 1500 years. Jesus finds Peter and he says, Peter, thou art Simon.

But when I'm done with you, you won't be Simon, you'll be Peter. Oh, you know, the 16th of Matthew there, you know how people have taken that and said, well, when Jesus said, Peter, thou art Simon, in unlifted rock I build my church. But ask the Greek wizards about that.

The word there, Peter, is masculine and the word rock is feminine. Jesus did not build his church on Peter, pardon me, he built the church, established his church in the church. He himself took over the church.

He built the church. He was not building the church on Peter. Peter was shifty.

Peter was, again, irresponsible. Peter always had an answer. But you see, Jesus took him and he trained him for about three years and then he said to those disciples, going into all the world, hey, wait a minute before you go, tarry till ye be endued with power from on high.

And the shifty, irresponsible, volatile Peter, went there in the upper room and the fire of God came. You don't find him backsliding anymore. In fact, history tells us, or at least tradition tells us, that Peter was crucified upside down because he didn't want to be crucified like his master.

He said, I'm not worthy that I should be crucified like that. And so they turned the cross upside down and crucified him that way. Now, Peter's gone an awful long way.

It says Peter, an apostle. Isn't that something? That shifty, irresistible man, he cursed when he got under pressure, he denied his Lord, and he's made it, he's got it made. He's an apostle.

He wrote this epistle. I'm trying to make that clear in case you think an epistle is the wife of an apostle. No, the apostle was Peter, the epistle is the thing that he wrote and left to us.

People say these days, well, you know, our preacher's always telling us that all those gifts of the Spirit were not for the day. For instance, we don't have any more apostles and so forth. Okay.

Throw them out, but be very careful because I'll be after you. Throw the whole lot out. If we have no apostles, we have no evangelists.

And I sometimes wonder if we have, but the apostles, he gave somewhat, apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, you can't throw one out without throwing the other. There are apostles. The apostle is a man who goes ahead, he blazes a trail, he establishes a church and he passes on.

And there are many different parts of the world today who I believe are apostles. Not exactly, maybe, in the same category, but they still are apostles. Now Peter, he's some character.

Look, supposing tomorrow the mailman comes to your house and your name's John Brown, if you are, I didn't pick you out for fun, but let's use his name, John Brown. And the mailman comes up and he says to your wife, I've got six letters here, John Brown, John Brown, John Brown. And this one is, I never saw a letter like this.

It says, to Saint John Brown. Is your husband a saint? She said, no, he's just a deacon. You say, Mr. Ravenhill, you don't suggest there are saints.

When Paul writes his letter, his epistle to the Romans, what does he say? He says we're called to be saints, but to be is not in the original. We're called saints. One of the greatest pictures ever painted was painted by Raphael, Raphael.

It's a miraculous draft of fishes. It's been hanging in a church in Spain for at least, as far as I know, it's still there. It's been there for centuries.

And folk went from all over the world to see it. And every time they saw it, they kind of oohed and aahed and said, what a picture. Oh, it's amazing.

One day an Englishman went along, a man by the name of John Ruskin. Maybe you've read his two great volumes on modern painters. He wrote that a hundred years ago, modern painters.

But he went along to see the picture and he burst out laughing. He nearly lost his head. They were ready to kill him.

What are you laughing at? I'm laughing at the picture. Why? What's wrong with it? Well, he said, to be honest, I'm trying to find what's right with it. Well, nobody else has criticized it.

Now, come on, share your opposition to it. What's wrong? Well, it is a miraculous draft of fishes. Yes, it is.

Where did it take place? On the Sea of Galilee. Well, why has he painted the Dome of St. Peter's in the background? That's a thousand miles east. Or west.

It's a picture of the miraculous draft of fishes on the Sea of Galilee or the Lake of Gennesaret, if you're going to call it that. And yet in the background, he has the Dome of St. Peter's in Rome. That shouldn't be there at all.

How many men are there in the boat? Eleven. What does it say in the scripture? Oh, I don't know. Let's look.

There were only seven in the boat. Mistake number two. And then you've got a man there and he's got a halo and he's got lace cuffs and a lace collar.

Fishing. Did you ever fish like that? You fish like that, Ed? You don't have a collar. Your wife will have to crochet one for you.

He's got a crocheted collar, he's got crocheted cuffs. And what? He's got a halo. Man, he'd have to fish holding the halo and pushing it.

You couldn't think of anything more uncomfortable. But you see, our idea of sainthood is you've got to be dressed up, you've got to wear some specific thing of identification. That's exactly what the Lord doesn't want us to have.

The Pharisees tried that and the others. Peter is the same man except he has been purified. Oh, he was still very fiery.

He didn't get the disposition of John, he did not need the disposition of John. You know, we talk sometimes and people say you've got this in your life and that. Look, you haven't got anything in your life that isn't good, it's got perverted, then let God purify it.

You say I've got a bad temper, well, let God purify it. See, one of the terrible things about presenting the Spirit for life, it's such a sloppy thing, you hug each other, kiss each other and all that blimey. But if you really feel with the Spirit, the same scripture that says be filled with the Spirit says be angry and sin not.

If you can't get angry in your spirit over world affairs, you're pretty sick spiritually. In God's name, what has to happen before judgment comes? Do you want the Empire State Building to fall into the sea and a good old lady with a lamp there to collapse? What has to happen before we get disturbed about the moral or immoral condition of our nation? Sure, Peter was explosive. But remember this, he's come from the time when he was shifty and irresponsible and when a girl put up a finger and said, I know who you are.

What did he do? He cursed and swore. He ran away from the finger of a girl. But please, will you give him a little bonus? Not long after that, he puts his finger up to a whole nation and says, You crucified the Lord of Glory.

You know, we could do with a little bit of that Puritan start in our living these days. A little of that stuff they used to call holy boldness. Now, I can listen to Peter because I can see the processes God has used in his life and I know some of his weaknesses anyhow.

And I know how God leads him and I find him here, he's become a very wonderful teacher because he goes on in the next verse to talk about election. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Keep your Bible open tonight.

First Peter, first chapter, verse two. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Now, I'm not going to deal with that verse because you all know the answers about election.

So, let's go to verse three. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I think this is one of the greatest verses in the whole Bible.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope. Did you hear that? He has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I have a good mind to send you all home, you ungrateful bunch.

I said that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. Oh, thank you. Sir Ambrose Fleming says this is the best attested fact in history.

For every time we sing about the resurrection of Jesus, we sing a hundred hymns about the blood of Jesus. Now, we are not saved by the death of Christ. That's what the Scripture says.

We are justified by His death. We are saved by His life. If Jesus isn't living tonight, we're sunk.

We're finished. If I were to say to you, when was the first countdown? You'd say, let me see. It was at Cape Canaveral.

Oh, come on. You're two thousand years too late. Nobody ever beats God.

When was the first resurrection? Pardon me. When was the first countdown? On the resurrection morning. You know, one day Jesus went along to a house and when He got there, a rather depressed lady met Him and she said, Oh, so you've come, huh? And you're supposed to love my brother.

And my brother's dead. He's buried. By this time, this topical atmosphere, he stinks.

Jesus says, your brother's going to rise again. Well, she was a good fundamentalist. She knew that.

She said, I know my brother will rise in the last day. Now, what is the resurrection? A part of my theology? No. No, no, no.

No, the resurrection isn't part of my theology. Jesus says, I'm the resurrection. I'm the resurrection.

Can't you see Him going there? And He says to the disciples, or to the folk there, Roll away the stone. You see, God doesn't do it all. Jesus could have said, Have you run out of wine? Don't worry.

Watch this. And all the water pots are filled with wine. No, He didn't say that.

He said, You fill the water pots with wine and I'll change the wine into water. We want Him to do everything. Oh, no, no, no, no.

He says, You do your part. I want you to rend the heavens and send revival. He says, Get a broken heart before I break the heavens.

Do your part. I'll do my part. Roll away the stone.

You know, Jesus had awful problems in His days. The most lovable, wonderful man that ever lived, and He had no opposition. You know, people say, If we had revival, it would be wonderful.

We'd all be united. Oh, no, we wouldn't. We'd all be divided.

The first thing that Jesus did before He could walk or talk was divide Jerusalem. Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with Him. And yet, there was a little old lady here and a few people here that were waiting for the consolation of Israel.

They expected the prophecy of Isaiah to be fulfilled, but Herod was troubled with all Jerusalem with Him. And Jesus couldn't walk or talk yet, but He divided the nation. The last thing He did on the cross was divide men.

Isn't it amazing? If you'd been crucified, you'd have been hollering your head off to testify, wouldn't you? Hey, you're going to hell. You'll perish. Jesus didn't say a word to them.

After all, He spent all His life preaching to them. He wasn't going to cast His pearls before swine. They knew the way.

They'd listen. The first thing before He could walk or talk, He divided Jerusalem. The last thing He did was divide men on the cross.

One went to heaven. The other went to the other place. He walked in the synagogue.

There was a division because of Him. All His life, He was hunted by the Pharisees and the Sadducees. You know the difference between them? Well, the Pharisees believed in a resurrection.

The Sadducees didn't. That's why they were Sadducees. They had no resurrection.

And Jesus says, Let's go see your brother. No good going. He says, I'm the resurrection.

And then He says with a loud voice, Roll the stone away. And they rolled the stone away. And then He said with a loud voice, Lazarus! Do you know why He said Lazarus? Because if He had said come forth, all the cemetery would have come.

And it wasn't time for them to come. That's going to be one of the most amazing days. The disciples got excited and said, Isn't it wonderful? You can unplug your deaf ears and cast the devil out of you and heal the sick and straighten your withered leg.

And Jesus says, Well, yes. And one day they said, Do you know what He did? He raised the dead man yesterday. And Jesus says, I've got news for you.

There's coming a day when from these lips I'm going to stand there right on the eve of time. And He's going to speak to everybody lying in the graves. They'll be like the stars of heaven for multitude.

And at the voice of the Son of God they're all going to rise. Won't that be great? I can't wait to see Julius Caesar and Genghis Khan and Philip of Macedon and all the others. J.F. Kennedy.

Boy, there's going to be some messes straightened up then, isn't there? We'll find out what happened with Teddy Kennedy and that girl that night. And one thing Mr. Nixon forgot when he, well, whatever they did with the eighteen minutes on the tapes, the Lord has the record. It's all coming out one day.

We just finished a six million dollar investigation for what, the third time on the death of J.F. Kennedy. That's the biggest moonshine you ever heard of in your life. After all, the Warren Commission and LBJ had a stack of evidence this height and this width and they put steel bands on it that way and this way and they sealed it with a government seal, LBJ did, and said it must not be opened until the year 2030.

It's up there in Washington. Why don't they open it? We don't need six million dollars. We know who killed Kennedy.

We know who was in the conspiracy. But by the year 2030 there'd be nobody living to blame. So we're going to open it then.

Well, if one president could say lock it up, this president should say open it up, I think. Oh, but let's get back to the scripture, anyhow. The voice of the Son of God, that silly world outside thinks it's finished with Jesus Christ.

It hasn't even started yet. Jesus stood there and cried, Lazarus come forth, and he came forth. As I say, bound hand and clothes like most of us.

He's alive, but he's gagged and his feet are bound and his hands, and he shuffles around like this and Jesus says, loosen! We've got about 95% of our church members who've been raised from the dead and they're still gagged. Except when you hurt the feelings, but apart from that, they're still bound hand and foot. The first count, listen, let me tell you something, this electrifies me.

It may not you, keep your seat, but this really excites me. What does it say? That you and I again are begotten unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Okay, here's the first count now.

What we call Easter Sunday morning and Satan says, I'm not feeling very comfortable. That man Jesus that they put to death, his disciples have forgotten it, you know, but I know that he was the truth and he said he dries from the dead and, you know, we don't have much time left. Go check.

A demon goes along and he says, Your Majesty, he's as cold as the stone he's lying on. He's dead. And he goes a little later and Satan says, you know, we've only got about 20 seconds, would you check on him? And he says, he's dead.

I don't feel comfortable. And one demon says, Your Majesty, why don't we roll the sin of the world against that tombstone? You see, they put the stone there and the wax and the seal and the soldiers. They were trying to make it airtight.

There's a big massive stone, nobody could move. And round the stone they put wax and then on the wax they put the Roman seal and then they put soldiers. So you've got the stone and the wax and the seal and the soldiers and then they roll the sin of the world against the stone.

And Satan says, I feel a bit more comfortable but not too comfortable. And one says, Your Majesty, supposing you rally every demon in hell to put his shoulder against that stone. Oh, that's great.

That's a good idea and I'll promote you after this. But, all right, we've got the stone and the wax and the seal and the soldiers and all the sin of the world. And he says, now hold it just 10 more seconds.

And if we can hold him there 10 more seconds, we can damn the human race. And so you've got the stone and the wax and the seal and the soldiers and the sin of the world and every demon holding it there. And Satan says, well, hold it tight now, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. And he's just going to say one and the Holy Ghost beat him to it.

He must have done because it says in Romans chapter, what does it say in Romans chapter 8? The spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead. You know, there's nothing in the Constitution of the Southern Baptist Church that says you can't sing in the middle of a service. So let's sing.

There's only one hymn we can sing. It's 118. Everybody stand and let's sing it.

118. And let's have just the ladies sing the first stanza and then this beautiful organ pull every stop you have out and split the roof, it isn't mine. And really sing the chorus.

Now, come on. Listen, let me say this. If Jesus isn't risen from the dead, we're sunk.

If he is, we can be more than conquerors. The Apostle Paul makes it clear. He builds a pyramid of 14 epistles if you give him Hebrews.

But remember this, after he's recited all those persons that saw Jesus rise from the dead. He says, last of all, he appeared to me also. He doesn't leave the redemptive work of Christ on the big basis of the cross.

He turns it all over and balances that pyramid on one thing. He says, if he's not risen, you're yet in your sins. But he is risen.

So ladies, sing the first stanza quietly. And you men, you can sing or holler or do what you like when it comes to the chorus. But what I want you to do, I want you to tell Jesus tonight you're rejoicing because he is risen from the dead.

Sing it quietly, ladies. Sing it. He arose.

He arose. Hallelujah. Well, if there isn't, if he wasn't resurrected, we're sure not going to be resurrected.

So that's very clear. But if he is risen, and he is, then again, praise the Lord, we're going to rise also. Alright, we have a lively hope, the end of verse 3 says, a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ to an inheritance.

Incorruptible. Three things about this inheritance. It's incorruptible, it's undefiled, it fadeth not away.

Now, that's very gorgeous. I've never had an inheritance, have you? Oh, over the years. I've been preaching about 56 years.

And I don't know, how many people said, you know, when I die, you're going to get a lot. You know, there must be some people in England about 150 or 60 years old. I'm not going to dine from anybody.

I've never had an inheritance, but I've got one coming. And there are three things about my inheritance. It's incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away.

Incorruptible, it's beyond the reach of death. Undefiled, it's beyond the reach of sin. And it fadeth not away, it's beyond the reach of time.

Well, that's good. But the next part is better. It's reserved in heaven for me.

And the good book says no thieves can break through and steal there. They'll steal anything you've got here. Man alive.

If your nose wasn't on your face, they'd have stolen that by now. They'd have nothing to hang your glasses on. But that's... It's getting worse and worse.

But I have, through Jesus Christ, an inheritance. Now, you look as though you've got a death sentence, but I've got an inheritance. And it's incorruptible, and it's undefiled, and it's fadeth not away.

Reserved in heaven. 1952, when the Queen was crowned in England, I came into Chicago. Those were the old days.

I even came in on a train. And a famous artist met me there, and he took me to dinner at their lovely home. And when we got there, his wife said, Mr. Ravenhill, we've had an exciting day.

We've been to Westminster Abbey three times. I said, where? In England. Today? Yes.

How? Well, TV. The Queen was crowned. Oh, it was black and white then.

It still looked good. But she said, it was... If you'd been in England, would you have been at the coronation? I said, no, I don't think so. She said, why not? Well, I said, maybe because my name is Ravenhill and not Churchill.

That could be one thing, but what if you'd gone to the coronation? Well, a big guard at the door would say, who are you? And I say, Leonard Ravenhill. Are you on the social register? Are you a duke or a lord or something? I say, no, I'm a prince. And he says, you're a what? Well, I say, I'm royalty.

You're what? Well, I've got a certificate here that Saint Peter says I'm a royal priesthood and a holy nation, so I should get into the coronation. But he says, no, you're not on the register. You can't come in.

Come here a minute. And I look in Westminster Abbey. It seats 3,000 people.

There are 300 chairs down the aisle. And in the aisle, in the chairs in the aisle, there's a tag on every one. Now, when we were living in Ireland, we lived across a field from a very lovely castle in which Lord Belmore lived.

I went into his castle one day and he has a lovely library about the size of the library I would like. And there were two great big chairs and I noticed the tag on one tag it said Lord Belmore and on the other Lady Belmore. These were the chairs they bought after the coronation.

If you were sitting on a chair in the aisle, you could buy that chair and take it home. And so they brought the chair home and they show it off proudly and say, this is where we sat when we saw the Queen being crowned. Now, the guard says, if you got in there, sir, you couldn't sit down.

Your name is not on a seat. There's no place reserved for you. And I say, well, thank you.

Good day. And he says, aren't you discouraged? Don't you feel unhappy? I say, no. You mean to say you're not bothered that you're missing the coronation? No.

Why not? Well, sir, it's like this. I'm going to a coronation soon that will make this one look like the dishes in the kitchen sink. And you know what? I've got a seat reserved.

That's what it says right here. There's a place reserved in heaven for you. Why, you never ought to feel sad as long as you live after this.

A place reserved in heaven for you. Now, one reason you wouldn't move this week, you said, listen, I know myself too well. I've made decisions and never kept them.

And some people have made a move up and Satan's already opposing. Well, that's good. A lady said to me one day, I've just trusted God after forty years or thirty years being a Baptist and I really got filled with the Spirit.

But, oh, for the last month it's been the worst month I ever lived. What do you think? I said, I think you got the real thing. I guess it was so, but I don't know that Jesus was ever tempted until he was anointed with the Spirit and then he was led of the Spirit, not of the devil into the wilderness.

People today want a painless Pentecost. After they were filled with the upper room they were persecuted. They went to prison.

I think a lot of preachers should be in prison, but these were there for a very good cause. I mean, they were there for preaching the Word. Immediately you're filled with the Spirit.

It doesn't matter what area you yield in your life. The devil will fight like the devil he is to get back the ground he lost in your life. So you can expect a conflict.

But there's a place in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God. Isn't that great? If you want to know how big that God is, read the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. It'll do you good.

Well, you see, that's one reason because, you see, if you could live in an atmosphere like this when you praise and worship and shout, but I live in a lousy office, I hear dirty talk, I hear this, I hear that, I hear the other. And I don't think I could really keep up with that. We used to sing a hymn when we were children.

What did it say? Lord, for tomorrow and its need, I do not pray, but keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord, just for today. And somebody said, well, I don't live a day at a time. So they wrote another hymn.

I need the every hour most gracious Lord. And somebody said, I don't live an hour at a time. So they wrote another hymn.

Moment by moment, I'm kept in His love. Moment by moment, I've life from above. Jesus says, I'm not going to pray my Father will snatch you out of the world, but that you'll be kept from the evil that is in the world.

I don't do much fishing. Occasionally I fish. Sometimes I tease the pastors.

They don't have time to pray two or three days, but they do have time to go fishing for two or three days. And I've been speaking in a conference to preachers, and one of them came up pretty rough. He said, I want to tell you if I've got a weakness, it's fishing.

Not wrong to fish, is it? I said, no, Peter did when he was backslidden. But by the same token, I like to fish occasionally. And we were fishing in the Bahamas there with some friends.

They all have beautiful yachts, and we were out in a nice spot, and man, I caught a fish. It nearly pulled me out of the boat. It was about this length, you know, this length evangelically, this length properly.

But it did weigh 34 pounds. It was a nice one, nice size. And so we took it home, and they gave it to the cook, the house where we stay.

They have some servants. And they gave it to the cook, and the next day we had the thing for lunch. And they said, the preacher caught it, give him the first slice of fish.

So they gave me the first slice of the fish. I'd never eaten that type of fish. And when I ate it, I kind of went, and suddenly said, don't you like it? He said, no.

Did you put any salt on it? Any what? Salt. Salt. The water in the Caribbean is the saltiest water in the world.

That fish has skin on it about as thick as this paper, and it's been living in salt for 20 years, and I have to salt it when it gets on the table. Why doesn't the salt get through the skin into the fish? I still don't know the answer, but I know it doesn't. In my office, I have a little thing, an inch and a quarter by an inch and a quarter.

It came to me from the space agency in Houston. And I can just about make it here on this thing. It's that size.

There you are. There it is. And on that little piece of, I don't know what it is, plastic or cellophane or something, the whole of this Bible is mimeographed on it.

870,000 words all on a piece of stuff an inch and a quarter by an inch and a quarter. It was done by a national cash register. I have a little machine.

I can slot it in, and I can read. In the beginning, I can read it all. Oh, you can buy one of those for about three and a half dollars.

You couldn't buy mine for a hundred. If you offer me a thousand, I'll consider it. Well, what's the difference between the one you have and the one in the bookstore in town? Not a bit of difference, except if you notice underneath mine, it says, this is the first Bible carried from planet Earth onto the moon, another planet.

When Apollo 15 went up, a man put two or three of these in his pocket like that, and he walked on the surface of the moon, and when he came back, I had one mailed to me, and I keep it. It's a kind of interesting thing. People like to see, particularly children.

And I say, that was on the moon. The first Bible to go from planet Earth to go up to another planet. And then the space agency, they send me a stack of gorgeous pictures.

You know how they love to waste money. And as a matter of fact, you know, if the government had considered me the first time they sent a rocket, the taxes would be a lot lower. We wouldn't have spent all the millions we spent.

You say, what would you have done? Well, I'd have made the first one, and then I'd have sent it to Japan. After all, they can make everything else cheaper. If we let them make our rockets, we could fire them every weekend.

But the interesting thing about the pictures that were taken as that Apollo 15 went up to the sky, you know what? When you look at the moon, it hangs like that in space. And when they were up there, they sent me pictures of the world that hangs like that in space. It's got nothing underneath it.

And right down here is the southern Pacific Ocean. And right at the corner is Australia. And there's water there.

And ships going on. Why don't they drop off into space? There's nothing to hold them out. Now, if you think that isn't difficult, tomorrow, seeing you're not working, you'll get a handful of water and see if you can get it to stick on the bottom of a bucket.

Job says, God hangs the world on nothing. So he can hang the world on nothing. He can keep a fish in the ocean for twenty years without it getting contaminated, and the salt doesn't go through.

But he can't keep you in an office or a home or some other health spot. He can't keep you there without contamination. He can't keep you there without sin.

Where did his omnipotence break down? I remember a lady saying one day to Dr. R. L. Brown, when he said, What's your favorite scripture? Oh, she said, I have one I love, that scripture that says that when we sin, we have an advocate with the Father. Oh, he said, I never read that. You didn't? No.

Would you like to read it? Oh, yes. It's in John here. Let me find it.

He said, Go ahead. Read it. And she read it.

If we sin... What? Oh, I thought it said when we sin. No, no, no, no. It says if.

Sinning is not normal in the Christian life. People say, Well, you need a little bit of sin to keep you humble. Well, have a lot and be real humble then.

Sin is natural. Although, then Adam wasn't natural when God made him because he had no sin. A Christian does not habitually sin and if he sins, it's by accident.

What's the difference between the sin of a Christian and the sin of another man? There's no difference at all. The sin is the same. The reaction is different.

If a man is overtaken in a sin, supposing he lapsed horribly into adultery or if he stole something, suddenly he realizes what a mess and immediately he has a broken heart and he comes right and he confesses and he believes, again, if we confess our sins, it's written to believers, that he will forgive the blood of Jesus and Jesus cleanses us from all sin. He does not stay living in sin. He's not an habitual sinner.

He sins. If he sins at all, by accident. We're kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

I should think so too. That you can walk in the midst of all the adversity and calamity and tragedy of modern life and end the day as purely as you started it. Why? Because we're kept by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because we have exceeding great and precious promises. Because, believe it or not, I didn't write this, greater is he who's taken up residence in me than he that is in the world. I don't like flying.

I just detest planes. I think flying's for the birds. You know when those big jumbo jets go down the runway and you know you've got to a point of no return, it's either up or crash, you know, and then that big thing gets up there and you see the enormous size and weight of it.

Now look, this thing doesn't weigh anything. I throw that up, it won't stay up. Get up there.

Get up in the gallery there. It won't go. Oh dear, rebelling everywhere.

It, it, it just won't go. But I get in one of those jets with twelve seats right across and you wonder if you're in a jet or a football field and the thing goes vroom and then you look down at the earth. Oh boy, that's such a long way off.

Why does it do it? You notice when a plane is coming down now it takes all the, it takes as much energy to get it down as up almost and you see those engines blasting and all the smoke coming out. Why? Because the slower it gets, gravity pulls more and he's fighting gravity. Gravity, that's the hardest thing

about getting a plane down.

He's fighting gravity. Gravity's saying I'll smash it to the earth and the pilot's saying you're not, I'm going to control this thing and he brings it down. That's the miracle when you get down.

If you don't, it's all up. But anyhow, isn't it wonderful that a monstrous machine like that in which you can watch movies if you want or you can listen and hear all my, isn't amazing that thing which is, why it's the size of a small village. You get 350 people in a jet going up in the sky.

Why? Because it has a greater pull than the law of gravity. And Paul says you can talk about the power of sin if you like but I want to tell you something. That while sin would pull that way, there is another law in my member greater than the law of gravity or depravity and it's the power of the risen son of God.

And he gives me power. And greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. So we're more than conquered not by our mere willpower but we're more than conquered through him that loved us.

We're kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Alright, now the next verse. Wherein ye greatly rejoice Oh, you say, now you're going up my alley.

I like to be happy. I like to get excited. Wait a minute.

What does the scripture say? Wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptation. Oh boy, that spoils the verse doesn't it? Ye greatly rejoice though now for a season if need be ye are in happiness. Is happiness consistent with the spiritual life? It sure is.

We greatly rejoice. Great. Though now for a season.

Somebody said to an old colored lady years ago, they tell me that you never get under the weather. You never get up too high. You never get down too low.

Somehow you keep your balance. What's your secret? Do you have a special verse? And she said, Oh yeah, I have a special verse. What is it? She said, My special verse is, It came to pass.

The preacher said, What? That's your special verse? It came to pass. I don't understand. She said, Well, when I see trouble coming like the big mountain, I say, Susanna, hold it.

It came to pass. And she said, Sometimes when I get so ecstatic, I say, Listen, listen. Hold it.

This isn't going to last forever. It came to pass. You know, the trick with many Christians is this.

The trouble is, we want to live by feelings instead of faith. Your feelings will go up and down like a yo-yo. You know, it's getting pretty cold in some parts of the country, isn't it? Since David and I left home, everything's gone wrong at our house.

Just the devil always hits back that way. My son, my missionary son has been in terrible pain for about two weeks. They can't move a stone in his kidney.

They're afraid to move it and he's still in great pain. And when they tried to get him to hospital, they had an ice storm and they couldn't move on the freeway. They said, you can't go down 20, it's caked with ice.

And yesterday when his wife and my wife set off, the car spun round and round and they had to go back. And then last night my wife called to say that the heating conditioner had gone off and they're all shivering. And she's not young anymore.

She's younger than me. No, she's not. She's younger than I am, a little.

But, you know, now she's getting up in the middle of the night to take care of the baby of my son's wife and his baby. And everything's just gone as wrong, as wrong, as wrong since we left home. Well, that's the way the devil goes after things very often, isn't it? Tries to get your mind distracted.

And it says, Now ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season. For a season. You may be in heaviness through temptation.

It doesn't say that. What does it say? It says, Though now, if need be, for a season, you may be in heaviness through manifold temptation. You know, trials and troubles and tribulations.

You know, the Lord loves you so much he'll take you to the woodshed very often. Well, somebody had it. They said, Amen.

But anyhow, he sure will. Some days, the best way for him to do is to say to Satan, Are you busy? And he says, Not too busy. He says, Well, I've got a friend down there and he needs some help.

Would you go along and beat him up for me? You say, Satan doesn't say that. Are you sure? Do you remember the challenge of Job? Was it the challenge of God to Satan or the challenge of Satan to God? It was the challenge of God. Hast thou considered my servant Job? Where have you been? He said, Going to and from the earth.

Well, how did he get on? He said, Very well. There's just one man I can't mess up. I can't get him to doubt you, disbelieve you.

I can't cast a shadow. That man just somehow, he just gets victory everywhere. And do you know why he does it? He says, God, look, this is Job.

You've got a fence around him. You've got a hedge around him. You take that hedge away and I'll tell you what he'll do.

You see, Satan says, His piety is tied up with his prosperity. And if you get rid of his prosperity, he'll curse you to your face. Now, you just pull that fence away and let me get to him.

But you know, God never takes any advice from Satan. And the Lord says, I won't do that. Instead of taking the fence away, I'll pull it in a bit nearer.

I'll pull the hedge in. And you can destroy everything outside of the hedge. So Satan comes down as a great tyrant.

Job goes to bed. A multimillionaire, he wakes up broke. He hasn't got a thing.

Satan reports back to God. How did he get on? I didn't get anywhere at all. I just couldn't move him.

Will you take that hedge away? He says, no, I'll bring it a bit nearer. And Satan comes down again. The first stroke was bankruptcy.

The second stroke was bereavement. He killed all his children. How did he get on? Well, I killed all his children.

And what did he say? Oh, he just stood there and said, well, things have been going bad. I lost a hundred million dollars over the last two days. And I've lost all my family.

The Lord gave it and the devil took it all away. Does it say that? Not in the Amplified? What does it say? It says, the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Now, if you're a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ, you're not a football the devil can kick anywhere he likes.

You're not a dead leaf that the winds of adversity can blow the other way. Listen, if the Lord is your God, if he caused you to prosper so you had three branches to your shop and then they went down, well, then he caused it. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.

He says, blessed be the name of the Lord. Now, will you do this thing for me? Will you just take that hedge away and let me get at him? Because if I touch his body he'll curse you. What was the first stroke? Bereavement.

What was the second? The first stroke, bankruptcy. Second, bereavement. What was the third? Boils.

He can't stand, he can't sit down, he itches, he scratches. And then, that delightful thing, you know, when you've got friends like these you don't need enemies. His friends came along.

Boy, they were some friends. Eliphaz, the Temanite. Vildad, a shoe height.

He was very small, he was just a shoe height. And then there were two or three other guys and they all sat round and then just like the devil he took everything that Job had and left him with a nagging wife. Isn't that like the devil? And there he is sitting on his ash heap.

He's lost his millions, he's lost his family, he's lost his health. And they point the finger and his wife says, curse God and die. Do you know what the Hebrew says? Blaspheme God and commit suicide.

And he says, listen, you just sit there a minute, I want to tell you something. I lost my millions, I lost my son, I've lost my health. Listen, if it gets worse than this even if worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God.

I know that my Redeemer lives. Boy, he was a headache to the devil. Though now for a season if need be we're in heaviness through manifold temptations.

Oh, I could spend all night here, I won't. But you know there are all kinds of temptations. There are temptations to the body, to the mind, to the spirit.

There are temptations to teenagers that you don't know much about and there are temptations to all the people the teenagers don't know about and there are temptations to children. When I was a little boy I had a besetting sin. I stole jelly.

My mother made the best jelly and jam that was ever made in England I think. And then I come home from school and I'd say, oh, strawberry jam. Oh, another day, raspberry jam.

And she'd pack it all and put it on the shelf and when she was out one day I got a big chair and I climbed up on it and I, oh, I was smart. I took one right from the back of the shelf and I opened it and I, mmm, oh boy, that's good. And I thought, yes, it'll be bad before long but I'm going to get a tanning and I may as well take another and I took another and I thought, well, I'm going to get beaten up.

I may as well get beaten up properly so I took another one and I licked the spoon and smoothed the jelly and all the jam and I put it back on the shelf. And, a few weeks after my mother called and she said, Len, and I said, Mummy, I'm busy in the garden. She said, alright.

She called a bit later and she said, Len, I said, Mother, I am busy. She said, alright, it will do till when Daddy comes. Oh, oh, mmm, I'd better watch my step here.

My daddy was a real old saint of God. He believed the Bible. He believed in laying on of hands and he could lay them on, I'll tell you that.

And I can remember when I got turned over and boy, did I get a beating for stealing that jam. Oh, brother, I got beaten up so many times. But, you know, just the other week I stayed in the house a whole week and they had the most wonderful display of jam and you know what? I never stole it once.

Isn't that victory? Well, you say temptation to a little boy is one thing. Well, that's the point I'm trying to get over. The temptation to a child is one.

The temptation to a full-blooded man is something else. The temptation to an older person is something else. There's nothing wrong with temptation.

The holiest man that ever lived was tempted in all points like as we are. So he was tempted sexually too. He must have been otherwise he wasn't tempted in all points.

But he was tempted at every point and yet he triumphed in every situation. The biggest temptation to most of us is to want to live without temptation. But temptation has a wonderful effect upon us.

We used to sing in the old days when they sang so many good old hymns. Each victory will help you some other to win. That's good psychology anyhow.

We're kept by the power of God. We'll have seasons when it looks as though there's no end to the tunnel. We'll have seasons of joy when it looks as though, well, you could never get out of this euphoria.

It seems as though heaven is so marvelous and God so near and then suddenly it all goes down to the bottom. But wait a minute. We're in heaviness.

I read about Jesus going into the garden of Gethsemane. What does it say? He says he was in great heaviness and he was spirit-filled and he was in the will of God and he was obedient in heaviness through manifold temptations. You know, we sing a hymn sometimes I need thee every hour stay thou nearby.

Temptations lose their power they're not moved. Very often we pray about a thing and God doesn't move the obstacle he gives us strength to move it or strength to get over it. He isn't going to pull down every hill and fill in every valley and make every cookie play straight.

Otherwise, I'll never develop the character he wants me to develop. And I may go through a period of darkness, a period of gloominess. I went through one not too long ago.

It looked as though all hell was going to break loose and did break loose. It was about the darkest patch it had ever been through but it was right after one of the most amazing periods of preaching I've ever had in my life. But you see, Satan came back.

He came to retaliate. He came to bruise. Yeah, you stand here people say sign my autographs I want you to sign one of my books and you're a bit of a hero and you get out there and nobody knows that much about you.

You don't live without what people do. But the fact is again that we can be tempted mentally, spiritually, physically, sexually, all other ways. And yet in every one of these temptations we can be more than comfortable.

Do you think that you can get to a place where you won't be tempted? Well, let me put it this way. I think you can get to a place where you become a bit of a despair to the devil and he doesn't bother to tempt you. You say, well, what does he do? Well, he switches to what's mentioned in the next verse.

Though now for a season if need be you're in heaviness through manifold temptations that the trial of your faith. Oh, the trial of your faith. Again, have you thought about the people in that gulag archipelago today? The people captive in Russia? We're asking the people in China or at least in Taiwan to accept the people who murdered about 40 million of their fathers and grandfathers and uncles and it's a bit hard for them to swallow.

They think it's a bit of American expediency to get some oil and keep clothes made out there or something. It's pretty tough. It's always easy, Shakespeare said, to bear the other man's toothache.

But boy, when you get the toothache it's something else. What about the trial of your faith? Being much more precious than a gold that perishes. You know, I like to read Peter because Peter's the man that one day was going down the road and Jesus met him and he said to him, listen Peter, right round the corner Satan's there, he's going to jump on you, beat you up, he's going to have the worst time you've ever had in your life.

Now, I prayed for him. Wouldn't it sound a lot better if Jesus says, I saw Satan there and I said, you go back to hell and leave Peter alone. But Jesus didn't say that.

He said, keep going, he's going to get on you, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not. See, that's the treasure you and I have, not your Bible knowledge, not how smart you are, your faith. Does it waver? Is it bedrock? Yes, we've got some cold weather.

And while we were in Baton Rouge area or the other area, I'd look out of the window and we had a thermometer there and I'd look it up for a thermometer. Some days it would register 100, 101 and then winter came and it's down to 23, 24 and it goes up and it goes down and it goes up and it goes down. That's the thermometer.

But inside the door I have a thermostat and I set the thermostat there and then I let the cold weather in. That thermostat doesn't go down and up. It says, listen, I'm in control here, not you.

Well, here's a simple thing. Are you a thermometer or a thermostat? Well, all the thermometers raise their hands. No, don't bother right here.

But, are you pushed around by every circumstance when somebody meets you and says, oh, I just saw Sue there. Something's wrong. Her face was a mile long and she was running around the road.

You know, you see another day she's a smile as broad as Texas nearly. Now, are you controlled by those circumstances? I mean, or do you control the circumstances? Do you react? Do you get pushed around? Do you get depressed? Do you get dark? There may be a sense of happiness, but the paradox is there's a great sense of joy too. It's only for a season or now for a season if need be.

You know, one day we're going to a place, well, I don't know whether we're going or not. Oh, let me change that. Yeah, we are going.

Cheer up. Where are we going? I don't know. You say, well, I'm going to heaven.

Aren't you? I don't know. What do you mean you don't know? Well, I, God never wastes anything and he says there's going to be a new heaven and a new earth. And Revelation says we shall reign on the earth with him.

It'll be like the Garden of Eden. There'll be no poisonous snakes, there'll be no weeds, there'll be no briars, there'll be nothing that will hurt us. But anyhow, whether you're going to live up there or here, maybe we'll switch all that.

But anyhow, the fact is this, that it's not for a season. It's forever and ever. We're going to reign with him.

My, I like to hear people sing Handel's Messiah. I've got some records of that that I play. I can't play anything else.

Everything I play is by Handel, anyhow. But, I like Handel's Messiah and I like it when those sopranos start climbing up, you know, through the Hallelujah Chorus and he shall reign forever and ever. King of kings, Lord of lords, and they go up and you wonder if they're going to make it.

Well, you sang pretty good tonight. I wouldn't say perfect, but it was quite good. Can you think of the day when we get into his glorified presence and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb? You know, a lot of the modern songs I don't like because the songs are not hymns.

There's one I like, maybe there's a few, and one is this. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus. We'll be so embarrassed that we ever doubted him, that we ever went running to him like children who had been whipped, that we ever thought, Lord, you could have given me a better deal than this after all.

Huh? You say, well, of course, I'm not one of the rich people. Oh, yes, you are. Oh, yes, you are.

Oh, I don't think there's anybody here worth less than a quarter of a million dollars. Say, what do you mean? Well, you've got two good eyes. Did you thank God for them today? When did you last thank God for your sight? You may not be too smart, you don't really look smart, but, I mean, you may not be geniuses, but at least you have some intelligence.

When did you last thank God for your senses? After all, a quarter of a million, more than that, people blind, they get up tomorrow morning, feel everywhere, can't get on a bus, can't drive a car. You've had that all your years. Now, when did you last thank God? This week? Last year? When? When did you last thank God for your sight? Why don't you sell your eyes? You can sell them these days, that's no problem.

You can get twenty thousand for one eye and fifty thousand for the other one, I'll get rid of them. You say, well, that's foolish. Well, sure it is.

But don't say you haven't got much. You can sell members of your body now. You can find medical journals where they'll advertise for a right kidney, a left kidney, a right eye, a blue eye, a green eye, whatever in the world it is.

You see, we never sit down and really count our blessings, do we? We accept them as a status quo. But what about the other side of the coin? God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. The prayer of your faith, though it be, it's precious, though it be tried by fire.

My, I wonder how some of those saints have been able to stand up for years in Russian prisons and prisons in China or West Germany or somewhere. How in the world have they been able to fortify themselves? Well, there's only one answer I know of and that is because this book is so precious because they believe that God is, that he's faithful, that you and I just live on a little island called time surrounded by a vast ocean called eternity and we're all going to go into it. We've got no option about it at all.

The trial of your faith. Here's a problem lots of young people have. They'll come and whisper and say, Mr. Raven, as far as I know, I'm a Christian and as far as I know, I'm filled with the Spirit and I enjoy my Bible and I do this and I do that.

I've got one problem and I say, I know what it is. What? Your thought life. Right.

Satan is the accuser of the brethren. He comes along and says, hey, I want to tell you something. If you are really the Christian, you say, why do you get those dirty thoughts in your mind? Well, let's try and find an answer.

Do you know the difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil? Well, it's the same thing. Evil thoughts, turn it around, thoughts of evil. Let me ask you this very kindly.

Do you know the difference between a negro spiritual and a spiritual negro? Do you know the difference between a houseboat and a boathouse? What's the difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil? Well, evil thoughts come out of an evil heart. As a man thinketh in his heart, even so he is. And if you have an evil heart, those evil thoughts come out from your evil heart.

If the Lord has cleansed your heart in his dwelling, instead of evil thoughts coming out of an evil heart, there are thoughts of evil that come from Satan. Well, you say, how do you know the difference? Oh, you know the difference. Because when he comes, you say, listen, I'm not interested in that kind of stuff.

Oh, you persist. Now, don't put yourself in the way of temptation, because Paul says to Timothy, Timothy, flee youthful lust. Get out of the way of them.

Don't look at a girly magazine or a playboy or something with nudes in, and then say, I have problems. Well, show your heart. You walked into it.

That's not the devil. Don't blame him. He's enough trouble of his own.

Alexander White had a lady in his church, and he said, she never said anything wrong about anybody. And he was a bit gripey one day, and he said something to her, and, ah, she said, oh, he said, woman, Jenny, you have a good word for everybody. I think you'd have a good word for the devil.

She said, well, he's very industrious. He sure is. Don't blame him for some things you put yourself into.

Flee youthful lust. Get out of the way of them. Evil thoughts come from an evil heart.

Thoughts of evil come from the enemy. How do I know the difference that when he tries to bring pressure, say, listen, I've lost all interest in that kind of stuff? Another way is to keep your mind busy. The scripture says, thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.

If your mind is vacant, then you make, you leave a place for the enemy to come in. Didn't Jesus say, if you have a room with evil spirits, and you put them all out, and nobody occupies that ground, other worse spirits will try to come in. My mother was a, really was a wonderful woman.

She's very beautiful. I take after my father. But, she really was a beautiful woman, and she sang beautifully, had a wonderful voice.

I remember one day she said to me, Len, look, if you keep your mind busy, Satan can't get in. And I use the illustration this way for young people. Here's a phonograph.

I put a disc on it. There's somebody's voice. And then I take some sugar, and I put the sugar on there, and there's a stack of sugar.

I take the sugar and throw it off, and I clean the disc, and I put it back, and I press a button, and it goes round and round, and then I pour sugar on it. What happens? It goes in a hundred different directions. Why? When that thing wasn't engaged, I could put what I liked on it.

But once it got moving, whatever I put on flies off in so many areas. Now, if my mind is busy, Satan can't get in the same. If you keep singing in your spirit, that's what I try to do.

I've got a lovely voice. On the inside, it gets spoiled coming out. But, all the Lord asks of me is singing and making melody unto the Lord in your heart.

You may sing like a frog. That's not too bad. I know some of you do, but that doesn't make any odds.

It's singing and making melody unto the Lord in your heart, in harmony with Him. Why do you get under the weather? You get under the weather because a problem comes, and you start brooding over it, and before long, it gets in your mind, in your spirit, you're heavy, and you not only have it, you look like it. Somebody says, I saw someone say, Oh, she looks so under the weather.

He looks so under the weather. Some little problem. You think about it, and before long, you worry about it, and you get anxious about it.

Well, why don't we do the same about good things? Why don't we ponder, watch whether things are good, and lovely, and of good report? Do you not even look? It'll lift your spirit like that. If meditation can drag me down, meditation and pondering on this thing can lift me up. Isn't it wonderful, a man in prison with lousy water coming down, and bugs on the floor, and he hasn't had a decent meal, hasn't had a bath for months maybe, and in prison there, he says to some Christians, he says, Rejoice, and again I say, Rejoice.

You know, I kind of figure that the day that Paul died, the devil gave every demon a day off. He said, Listen, we can slow down a bit. That man has died, and there's not going to be anybody like Paul around for a long while.

Well, what do you mean, Your Majesty? He said, You know, I used everything I had in hell. Everything I had in hell, I tried on him, and not one of them ever, ever succeeded. I gave him tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sorrow, perils of the deep, perils of his own countrymen.

I tied him to a whipping post and lashed his back a hundred and ninety-five times. He hung on a piece of wood in the Mediterranean for thirty-six hours. In weariness, fastings, painfulness, distress, perils of the country, perils of my non-countrymen, perils of the deep.

I got nothing left. And instead of me exhausting him, he exhausted me. And do you know what he said when I'd tried everything I had? He sat back in his prison and said, Our light affliction which is but for a moment.

Isn't that rough? I mean, rough on the devil. And Paul says at the end of Romans 8, doesn't he? Well, come on now. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, so on.

Well, you can't go much further, can you? After all, you can't put a sword through my spirit. That goes through my body. Nakedness, you can split my body.

And he says, you can try on the outside and the inside, in my mind, in my spirit. It makes no odds. He said, you know, I have it as rough as anybody.

The Lord isn't very good to me. The other Christians are having three-course dinners and I have tribulation and distress and famine. And I get it all.

Some days I wonder if I'll make it through. It almost gets me down. People testify like that sometimes.

You know, this week I nearly went under. Do you know what Paul says? He says, I thank God at the end of every day for grace to get through. No, he didn't say that.

Do you know what he says? It's funny. He really is hilarious. He says, I glory in tribulation.

How do you like that? I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in reproaches. The things of earth have become strangely dim to him all right, haven't they? All right, what did he say? He said that we're to have a pure heart, we're to be holy. And yet temptation is consistent with a holy spirit for life.

Trial is consistent. Darkness is consistent. Oppression from the enemy is consistent.

Two things. Paul says in, pardon me, Peter says in the second chapter of this first epistle and verse 19, this is thankful that if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. Did you ever endure grief, suffering wrongfully? You know, I made a discovery a few years ago.

I wish I'd made it when I was 20 years of age. Do you know what it was? It's this. That the only person in the whole world who can change God's opinion of me, is me.

You can't change God's opinion of me. You can slander me, lie about me, say Rabe Neal's an adulterer, he's a thief, he's the other. So what, do you think I'm going to worry? Put it on the front page of the New York Times and send me a copy so I can laugh too.

God won't take any notice of your opinion about me. If you both are the greatest Christian in the world, the Lord won't say, well I was so busy holding the universe up I didn't notice that. I'll put Rabe Neal's name up here, number one Christian in the world.

And then five years after you say, well we found this, that and the other, he's not really a good Christian. And the Lord says, I'll rub his name out there and put it down here. How can I do that? You can't change God's mind about me.

I've changed God's mind about me, by my obedience, by my disobedience, by the way I live. You can't change His mind about me. Or you can be misunderstood.

You can be misrepresented. I went down the street in, I forget the town right now, in Pennsylvania in 1950. There was a man coming, his shoulders were a bit stupid and the preacher said to me, take a look at this man quickly.

The man came past and he had an amazing face He hadn't got a wrinkle, he had red cheeks, beautiful bright eyes, he smiled as he went past. He was a man about six feet two I think, and he just walked measured pace down the street. And the pastor said to me, that man's a tragedy.

I said, why? Well about 25 years ago he was courting a girl in this town, she was a beauty queen, she was lovely. And they'd fixed the date to get married and they weren't really saved. But they got saved.

And a few weeks afterwards he felt the call to the ministry and he said to her, well look sweetheart, I'm going to marry you but not for a couple of years. I've got to go to school, I need the money and I've got another girl in mind and so forth and so on. And she said, no! We're going to get married.

I've told all my friends, I've told them about the date and everything, we're going to get married. He said, my dear, we're not. Six months after, the whole town, it was a small town, said, you hear the news I suppose, do you know why he didn't want to marry her? She's pregnant.

He backed out of it. Well, there were no tests in those days in 1950, no tests were made. She clung to the story that they'd had sex relations, she was expecting a baby by him.

And everybody in town believed her story. But Peter said, three or four years ago, that woman who had had the baby and the child had grown up was in an automobile accident. And there was no hope.

She was terribly crushed. And as soon as she came conscious, she said, bring me a preacher, bring so and so, bring so and so. And there on her deathbed she said, it wasn't his baby.

I was so determined to get him that I got some other man to get me pregnant. And I put the blame on him. And for twenty odd years that man had lived in that village as pure and innocent that not a soul believed him.

He'd been in heaven, I'm sure enough. There'd been the trial of his faith that God vindicated him. What glory is it if when you're buffeted for your faults you take it patiently but if you do well and suffer for it and take this patiently then are you acceptable to God? Now, here's the thing.

If I were to stand here tonight, at one time I did, I used to sing, I could sing a bit I guess. And I travelled with a revival party as a singer. And there were certain songs I loved.

And if I were to stand here tonight and sing, what's the song I was thinking of? I walk today where Jesus walked. Nobody would bat an eye. Everybody sings that.

I walk today where Jesus walked. But if I sang I walk today as Jesus walked would that raise any questions? And yet that's why we're set, Peter says, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation that we may live in this world as Jesus lived. Because it says in this verse, Hear unto what ye call.

Because Christ suffered leaving us an example that ye, listen, should follow in his steps. What are the steps? Notice there's no period there. What are the steps? We have to follow in his steps.

Number one, he did no sin. Number two, there was no guile in his mouth. Number three, when he was revived he reviled not again.

Number four, when he suffered he threatened not. But committed himself to him that judges righteously. So there's God's standard for your life and mine.

He did no sin. He did not practice sin. You and I are not to live habitually as sin.

If you sin, confess it and get out of it. The other night we sang a hymn, what was it, we sang two stanzas and I thought we were going to sing the third one, which I don't like to sing. Because in that stanza we say something like this to the Lord, Prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it.

Prone to leave the God I love. I don't feel like leaving him. Why don't you go to your wife tonight and say, you know, sweetheart, I want to sing something to you.

Prone to wonder, wife, I feel it. And she says, hey, who's the other woman? I say, no, no, no, it's a kind of a feeling I get now and again. You know, you're getting a bit old and washed up and you say, no, you wouldn't sing that to your wife.

Prone to wonder, wife, I feel it. Look, if you can sing that honestly, prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it, you'd better get back to the cross. The world doesn't attract me.

The world, prone to wonder, I don't want anything the world has. There's death on it. Everything in the world has death.

Everything in the kingdom has life. Another thing, then I'm sure you want to go home. You know, one of the best known things that the world knows about the Bible is this, when you get into a situation and they come out with the same thing.

Judge not that you be not judged. Why don't you read the 7th of John? There it says, judge righteous judgment. The trouble is, we judge unrighteously.

We judge so often by hearsay. We judge often with what our eyes just see. We try and put two and two together and it doesn't always work out.

People will misunderstand you. Well, don't worry, as long as your conscience is clear before God. Your faith may be tried.

Everybody else's faith has been tried. There'll be seasons when you have heaviness and everybody in the church seems to be hilarious and you're in heaviness. So what? God's dealing with you, not with them.

So you can have a spiritual life, be tempted, be tested, be tried, be misunderstood, be rejected by people, have a fierce onslaught of the devil. That's great. That's God's confidence in you.

He's trying to prove that he's worked something in you and this is the only way to work it out. After all, when you look back, think how many millions of people have made the grade. Well, if they made it, can't you and I make it? We've all the resources that we need in Jesus Christ.

He's able to save us and cleanse us and fill us and use us and show forth his praise in our lives. He only has one standard for his people. He wants a holy people.

His word says, without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. So, if your heart isn't cleansed and the spirit isn't abiding, well, take care of it tonight. We're going to sing a verse of a hymn and then we're going to have a, what time is the prayer meeting? Half past ten? Somewhere around there so you can go off and have some coffee and then the prayer meeting is across in the chapel there.

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