

Books I Recommend With Comments - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill discusses essential books for spiritual growth and the importance of deep faith and worship in the Christian life.

Duration: 1:00:42

Scripture: Exodus 3:1-3, Exodus 31:18, Matthew 16:13-16, John 4:24, Acts 4:12, Hebrews 11:1, Revelation 21:1-4

Topics: "Book Reviews"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the life of John Wesley and his dedication to meeting with God every morning at 4 o'clock. The speaker recommends a book called 'A Treasury of Prayer' by Dr. E. Hudson Taylor, which explores the growth of the soul and the work of the China Inland Mission. The speaker emphasizes the importance of prayer and shares a poem by F.W.H. Meyer about the power of prayer. The speaker also criticizes some preaching practices, suggesting that some preachers simply reuse old sermons with different texts, while emphasizing the need for both sermon preparation and spiritual preparation through prayer.

Transcript

The thing is, find out which is the best book on, best writer on every book. Gouge, I would say, is the best on Hebrew. You could read, read Arthur Pink on, on quite a lot.

I don't know how many books he wrote. I may be out 20 of his, I don't know. But I, if I were given a tip on preaching, I'd say this, when you get a text in your mind, don't stack your desk up with, you know, Matthew, Henry here, and Barnes here, and Ellicott here, and somebody there.

Forget it. You'll stultify your own thinking. Go to them as a last resort, not as a first resort.

You know what's amazing? I look like my library, somebody's admiring it today. I said, well, it's not that big. I've given two, three libraries away.

The one I have isn't too big now. Not that I've read everything in it. But I'm challenged when I look at them and say, you know, all those men that wrote, they didn't write on, what were you saying you used today? You think you'd type with it? A word, no word processor.

You think of Barnes writing 40 volumes from Genesis to Revelation, longhand, and not even a ballpoint. Writing like my dad used to write sometimes with a quill, a goose feather. You have to split it, dip it in the

ink and lift it, and then you rub it all over the page and start it all over again.

I tried it a few times, they're horrible. Now guys sit down on a word processor. I know Winky was saying before he went to New Zealand, he went up to Last Days and he sat down in the office there and typed, and it came out on a machine up at Bethany.

Isn't that magic? It's evil, it must be. It must be evil, I can't use one. But you know, again, with all these gimmicks and gadgets, we're not producing anything better.

In fact, we're not producing anything near those guys. One book, I guess you got that book of Alexander White, did you, Bible Characters, Joe? You didn't? You naughty boy, I told you to get it last time you were out at that, out at that book place. Those are the greatest characters ever written, just fantastic.

Bible Characters by Alexander White, that's W-H-Y-T-E. He's an illegitimate child, nobody wanted him, he became the greatest preacher in Scotland, maybe they never surpassed him. This is the best summary.

I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister. How long does it take? Oh, I remember when I came from the River College, I went there, somebody said, you know, you need to read the Inbounds. So I got a copy of the Inbounds.

Famous American writer, read the first page, get up. Why do you throw him on one side? Because he said, it takes 20 years for God to make a minister. I said, that was the old way.

I mean, I've just come out of college, there are no Spurgeons risen from the dead as soon as I go and preach. Somebody will say, well, Spurgeons are supposed to be, here, look at this young fellow. But I found out he's right.

I think one of the most alert writers today, that is not on the shallow sensational stuff, but a deep writer, is that wonderful man of the Liabré Fellowship in Switzerland. And that gracious man said in his book, Death in the City, Schaeffer, God has given up on the cities of America. He's written Finnish on them.

That's why they're such hot beds of rebellion. That's why we've got cities, whole cities that are bankrupt. The whole world has been asking, why does the greatest country in the world, or the greatest city in the world, New York, why is it bankrupt? And the other mayors of different cities have said, we're keeping on the edge of bankruptcy.

But you see our greatest problem is we're morally bankrupt, we're spiritually bankrupt. And I remind you again that that gracious man says that for 40 years, he has watched America going down the drain, and that's not nice. He's like Jeremiah, he saw a nation alternating with fits of depression, and darkness, and devilry, and then coming around and trying to say they were the children of God, and then slumbering down in the mire again.

I'm a debtor to America. You know why? Because outside of the New Testament, the greatest thing I ever read was the life of David Brainerd. And I read that when he was about 18 years of age, he met God.

And I read that he died at the age of 28, the ripe old age of 28. And I read that he used to kneel in the snow when it was up to his chin, when he had to make a hole in it, and pray until he said, I prayed from sunrise till sunset, and I couldn't touch the snow with the tips of my fingers. The heat of my body melted the snow, and he had tuberculosis.

And when he spit, you'd have thought you'd broken flowers up. And if you pick one of those things up about an inch long, and got hold of it like that, it was a stretch like that, it was a piece of his lungs. And if you turned sideways, you'd say, who sprayed that? It was when he sneezed, he sprayed the snow with his blood.

And when other boys went to play ball, I climbed over the fence, over the golf links, and I went and prayed behind the trees like David Brainerd did. And if the kids weren't coming to pray Sunday morning, I went over the golf links again in the rain and the snow, and I got under those wild branches, and I prayed, and I prayed. And I found a hill, and I stood on the hill with my hands up like Jesus did over Jerusalem, and I prayed, and I wept over it.

Why? Because one day Jesus Christ showed me that just being a soul winner, and being a parent here for a second, the church wasn't everything. We've lost millions of money. We've reduced the poverty, reduced the suffering, we've tried our own.

And her faith. You can't live a Christian life without being tried. You can't live a Christian life without being tempted.

You can be filled with the spirit of death and be a tempted man. I've preached a number of times in the Bible school as well. How many of you have read the book Lee Powell? You haven't read that? It's the greatest book in modern... in modern... F. Powell.

Interceptor. Read it. He went to buy an estate.

He knew God wanted him to buy it. He got a promise from God. He said, now, now, Lord, this is a big thing.

And the Lord said, well, you look at captive so and so. And he looked at it. And the Lord said, I'll give you so many shekels.

And so he figured out how much a shekel weighed and how much a shekel was worth. And he figured it all out. He went to see the lawyer and he said, I want to buy a house.

Not to forget, I think it was Biruenwald. So the lawyer said, I'm sorry. That man just going out, he just bought it for the Catholic church.

Here the document isn't dry yet, see? Now look, let me show you some other pictures here. I've got some lovely pictures here. There's a beautiful mansion up the road there.

Do you see all the... Are you interested? No. No, what are you really interested in? Biruenwald. You can't have it.

It's being sold. No, he said the Lord has given it to me. What? The Lord has given it to me.

Now I've got to check. I've got to be perfect here for it. In the Bible School of Wales, read that book if you read no other.

Rees Howell's Intercessor, written by my good friend Norman Gover. A fabulous book on faith. That man did not become a mature man.

He did buy a vast estate with 14 cents in his pocket. He did say to the lawyer, I'll give you a balance of, I don't know, \$250,000 in so many days and all he had was 14 cents. Now you're either a fool or a fanatic or you've got faith.

When you do a thing like that, you make a legal document and say within 10 days I'll pay you \$250,000. And if the lawyer knew that he'd only 14 cents in his pocket, he'd never have let him sign it, I'm sure. But after I'd finished speaking about Bible School one day, Mrs. Howell said, Brother Amiel, would you talk a little while? Well, I usually like that.

And we went up on the terrace and as we looked over the sea there, over the English Channel, they might call it the Welsh Channel, she said, you see that room? I said, yes, Mrs. Howell, I see that door. My husband went in there at 6 o'clock in the morning and stayed till 6 o'clock at night. Every day for 11 months, except one day.

That was the day he went to bury his mother. You see, we think if you read a few books and I become, you know, and stick a few stickers on my automobile and all the rest of it, and I don't know if you've read any of Eric Saar's books. Anybody read Eric Saar? S-A-U-E-R.

Well, you should get every book he's written. He has a marvelous book on Hebrews 11. It's called The Arena of Faith.

It gives a background of the days, the conditions that the people had to meet to whom this epistle was written. You see, unless we're careful, we start reading the New Testament through, you know, American lenses or British lenses, or seeing them through a jet age and all the rest. It's difficult to think back 2,000 years, isn't it? When I was in London a few years ago talking with Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones of Westminster, he said, Brother Ravenhill, you're going back to the States, I said, yes, sir.

He said, you'll see Dr. Tozer. I said, well, I'll spend as much time as I can with that marvelous man. He said, would you please thank him for writing that book, The Pursuit of God? When I saw Dr. Tozer, I thanked him, and he said, Len, and you know, Dr. Tozer had an office.

I don't think it was larger than from here to there, and the books were not on shelves like that. They were stacked up from the floor to the ceiling. He had the roughest old desk, and I teased him.

I'm sure the typewriter came out of the ark. And there was nothing about that office that looked like the modern office of so many preachers, you know. And I said, I was talking with Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones in London, and he sent his greetings and hopes to meet you in the flesh one day.

I don't think they ever did. And he says, your book, The Pursuit of God, will last when most of modern books are being thrown away. It is a classic.

I remember him doing something like this. He said, Len, I didn't go out of this office for 25 years. For 25 years, I didn't have a vacation.

It's my distilled wisdom. It's my distilled knowledge of God. I put it all together after periods of adoration and periods of worship.

And you see, again, I say this. You see, we've got an idea that the thing to do, you get saved and get involved. That's the worst thing you can do.

The best thing you can do after you're saved is get away for three months, as quiet as you can, or six months. He is the same today, yesterday, today, and forever. And to use another Nazarene phrase, a book, if you'll never find it, buy it, even if you have to have blackwall ties on your car.

It's called *The Possibilities of Grace* by Lowry. It's a big, thick book. The Nazarenes have an abridged edition, I think, if they still have it.

But isn't this what it's all about? You know, some people will die millionaires, and they go to our churches, and they'll die proper spiritually. Thomas Cook that wrote a book, *New Testament Holiness*. I hope we sell it.

If we don't, we'll get some. Can you imagine, Dr. Calder, a brilliant man like him? He was brilliant. Lying there, worshipping hour after hour after hour, two hours, three hours, four hours, five.

I never say a word of praise. It's all adoration, contemplation. It's in his glory.

Sometimes I stutter out. You can find all the Christians. Thank you, dear.

Christian's book of mystical verse cost you two dollars in softback. It's a marvelous book. He said, Len, I gaze upon his holiness, and I say to him how beautiful, how beautiful the sight of thee must be.

Thine endless wisdom, boundless power, and awful purity. Oh, Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord, forgive me if I say for very last thy sacred name a thousand times a day. Burn, burn within me, lover.

No earthly father loves like thee. No mother e'er so mild dares. And thy simple erring child.

The lives of many great men have been written in two volumes. He was half Jewish, half Gentile. He established the Salvation Army, the worldwide revival that began in 1865 and went into 70 countries in less than 90 years.

It's a very fascinating life of the founder of the China Inland Mission, Hudson Taylor, Dr. Hudson Taylor. The first volume is called *The Growth of a Soul*, which is the explanation of the life of the man. The second volume is called *The Growth of a Work*, which is the development of the China Inland Mission.

I don't think it's very difficult to write the life of a person in two volumes, if you have enough information and you have enough words. But I'm quite sure in my own mind that God alone could write it in two words. And this is what God does when he says, because it says here in the end of the Epistle of James, summarizes his life, verse 17, the middle of verse 17, he prayed.

That he has a fantastic poem on the Apostle Paul, and he says, Then with a rush the intolerable craving shivers throughout me like a trumpet roll. Oh, to save these, to perish for their, to die for their lives, intoxicated with Jesus Christ. You can't find me one man who has been a success in any particular sphere who has not been a disciplinarian.

Not one. John Wesley was contemporary with some of the greatest figures in history. And one day, one evening, he took supper with Dr. Johnson, one of the most famous men in the kitchen.

They had what Wesley had a weakness for, partridge pie. And after they'd eaten and they talked a while, Wesley got a little disturbed and he said, Well, I just watched this old doctor lift out that great big turnip that he had, and looked and said, Why man, it's only a few minutes to nine o'clock. Fold your legs under the

table.

Take it easy. Let's talk. Oh, Wesley said, I have an appointment in the morning at four o'clock.

Four o'clock? Who are you going to meet in the morning at four o'clock? If you only buy one book. His daughter used to write to me, and she said, Brother Rayfield, my daddy normally rolls at four o'clock in the morning, or a night show or something else. Wesley rolls at four o'clock.

Ian Bones rolls at four o'clock. John Fletcher rolls at four o'clock. Robert Murray McShane, who is the unsurpassed man in American history, who died at the ripe old age of 29.

David Brainerd. Rolls before sunrise. The founder of the Chandler Inman Mission.

Dr. Hudson Taylor said, The sun never rolls before noon, though. Whichever you can find it. I didn't say, let me have it.

But there's a poem written somewhere in the 1800s by F. W. H. Myers. M-Y-E-R-S. It's pointless.

I thought I'd found a good version just recently. It has 72 stanzas, and it had the five stanzas I wanted were not in it. And all it's called is St. Paul.

It's one of the most dramatic things ever written outside of the Bible. One phrase of it says this, Then with a rush, the intolerable craving shivers throughout me like a trumpet call, all to save these and perish for their saving, to die for their life and be offered. He talks about the world gazing at the cross with an empty wonder.

Consumed with emptiness. When you think of the majesty of God, when you think of the enormity of the gospel, how in the world can we present a gospel that people can go to sleep while we preach it? If you haven't read it, read the character of George Fox, the founder of the Quakers. An amazing man, not only in scholarship.

He's notorious because he made himself a leather suit, because his suit wore out, and he made those leather bricks. And he had visions of God. In all kinds, he didn't measure up.

He came to the city of Lixfield. My dear wife and I have been to it many times. It had great queen's choirs outside of the cathedral.

And he said, as I got near the city, my feet burned, and I took my shoes off and put them under the head. And God said, you walk through this marketplace. They had a long, long marketplace.

And raise your hands. And Lixfield, whoa, until Lixfield. He said, I walked to a crowded place.

The constable was looking at me. People looked out of shock. And I walked down crying, whoa, until Lixfield, our bloody city.

Whoa, until Lixfield, our bloody city. Oh, was I glad when I got to it. My feet had cooled by that time.

A bunch of Christians had been slaughtered in the middle of that city. And he said, their blood was crying through me to that city. I notice a man has written a book.

It's called, um, Blueprints for Revival in America. It's the most nonsensical thing that's ever been written. It's a masterpiece of inaccuracy.

But like everything else, it sells good if it's wrong. Doesn't sell very good if it's right, usually. And that man says, the church began to deteriorate in America when we took politics out of the pulpit.

I think we began to deteriorate when we put politics in the pulpit. No, faith didn't deliver some of them from the sword and the lion. They died.

They died triumphant. A friend of mine wrote a book a few years ago. It sold rather well, mostly in England, not over here.

It's called Fair Sunshine, and you can get it through Banner of Truth. It's about the great saints that died in Scotland in 1660 to 1666, when the British were martyring them, killing those Presbyterians. There's a fellow there, he was the Apostle Paul of that group.

He was about 23 years of age. Tall, six feet something, big shoulders on him. They held him up before the magistrates.

They dragged him out to the grass markets. And people lined the streets of Edinburgh. Hughie McHale, Hughie McHale.

Oh, our Hughie, our Hughie. They sentenced him to death, to die. When Hughie came out, the main street was packed with thousands of people, and then this way he had to turn.

And thousands more were there. Here is the greatest man. The man who'd been celebrating communion at midnight in caves, gathering the saints, feeding them, inspiring them.

And they got the leader of that church, that group. And when Hughie went down the road, and as he turned right, he looked, and there was another man, Hughie, and he was greeting. That's a Gaelic word for crying, he was weeping.

And tall, handsome Hughie went down with a radiant face like Stephen. And as he turned, he saw the other Hughie, and Hughie bent his head and sobbed, and the young Hughie raised his hand. Ah, Hughie, Christ, did you hear the news? Man, don't do it, hmm? Boy, not many folk die like that.

What did Abel do? He built an altar. He shed blood, alright, he made sacrifice. No, an altar is for two things.

For sacrifice, and for worship. As I said Sunday night, it's a lost art. We don't worship.

You go to a meeting, somebody says, will you stand up, raise your hands like this, and let's all worship. That's not worship, it's praise. Worship is speechless adoration.

Worship again is like my friend Dr. Tozer telling me, he could get, as he used the old English word, I can get down on my belly at 8 o'clock in the morning and say till 9, 10, 11, 12, and never say a word of prayer, and never say a word of praise. And for four hours I can pour out my adoration as I see him on his throne. Now come on, how many people do you know who can do it for an hour, never mind four hours? He was in a bookstore one day, and somebody asked for Tozer's books.

They didn't have them. Somebody said, you can get them down the road in another bookstore. And the lady phoned through very quickly and said, hey would you tell that man that wants those Tozer's books that Tozer was a kind of a very wonderful teacher, but you know he didn't have the baptism.

How stupid can you get? I challenge you to bring me the top, you can go to the top ten spiritual preachers in this country, and not one of them could write a book like *The Knowledge of the Holy* or *The Pursuit of God*. Show me one that can. You see everybody must get the baptism the way I got it.

Years and years and years ago, when I was a boy, and that's a long while, no I wasn't, I was a young preacher at that time, and a very famous American executive wrote a book. Bruce Barton wrote a book, *The Man Nobody Knows*. Now that book has been republished and it's well worth reading, although there are areas in it you won't agree with.

But as I said last night or the night before, I would like to rescue Jesus Christ from stained glass windows and children's cramming books. I think they're vulgar, I think they're almost blasphemous very often, they're certainly grotesque and they're not right. And I think Bruce Barton was doing that in words, but he wrote this book that became a bestseller and thirty years after it's still selling very well.

It was *The Life of Jesus*, *The Man Nobody Knows*. And then he followed that with another book about the Bible, *The Book Nobody Knows*. And I've been very tempted to write a, another book on the life nobody lives.

Because I could easily prove to you I think this morning that there are no Christians anymore. No Christians anywhere. Anybody here doesn't have two coats, raise your hand.

Well you're not Christians because Christians don't have two coats do they? And you carry neither purse nor script and if you push too far enough most heresy that we have is truth that is pushed too far. I believe in sanctification, the Bible teaches it. I do not believe in sinless perfection.

Dispensationalism is error actually. There was no dispensationalism until a hundred years ago. The world didn't know a thing about it then somebody brought it up and everybody fell for it.

Strangely enough I'm not trying to sabotage your theology, you say I believe in the imminent return of Jesus. He could come before we get home which I don't believe. And that theory was never propagated until 1834 and it was started by a woman.

Now that's rough on the Baptists but that's really true. It was started by a woman. And it became very popular.

You know lots of people would like Jesus to come today for two reasons. One they're afraid to die and the other they don't want to go through any tribulation. And if Jesus came today well that would be great because we wouldn't have to face death maybe very coldly and the other thing is well we wouldn't have to go through what I'm sure the church is going to go through.

Somebody wrote a stupid book and you can buy it if you're silly enough on 64 different ways to make an altar call. It's not putrid. There isn't an altar call in the New Testament.

The altar call is a modern invention. When the Holy Ghost departed men stepped in and made altar calls. Now I do it sometimes sometimes I don't.

Maybe because the psychology of people is they expect the gates to be open and you invite them to come in. But that or not Damascus law the apostle met Jesus Christ. And you know again it wasn't a case of raising his hand signing a decision card.

He didn't come to the altar and make a down payment with a few hot tears and expect a mansion over the hilltop with music piped in from a thousand million angels world without end and immunity from eternal judgment and escape from hell fire. There was no down payment or a few tears. This was a case where if this is the very Son of God then he says what this Christ offers me must be everything or nothing.

The 11th chapter of Hebrews which we usually call the chapter of faith we notice that all these men were men who walked alone. I think every preacher in fact I think everybody should have every book that Dr. Tozer wrote and you can get them now in paperback and in his last book he has in the last chapter the title of the last chapter is the saint walks alone. Eagles always fly alone and lions always hunt alone and I remember once in mid Atlantic seeing a whale and it was alone and great creatures fly alone or walk alone or swim alone and great men walk alone and this is why there are a few great people because we we like to congregate.

The Bible says that our fellowship is with the Father but very often it isn't it's with each other about the Father. But first of all our fellowship is with the Father and then with his Son and then with one another and you can't reverse the order. There are three things to do with the Bible the word of God one is to learn it the second is to love it and the third is to live it.

And none of them are easy by themselves and they're three times as difficult when you put them all together. There's a little German preacher Eric Sauer S-A-U-E-R How many of you have read Eric Sauer's books? Some of you must have done one or two preachers around here that can read. Most preachers can't but some of them can read and they've been reading Eric Sauer.

He has five very wonderful books one of them is an exposition of Hebrews 11 and you should read it even lay people because it makes you realize something of the wonder of the great you see these Jewish people and they were Jewish Christians and one of their problems was to stand the buffeting of other Jews who said now look you're in a minority you can't be right you've overthrown a system or you're trying to overthrow a system that has lasted for thousands of years you know there was a revelation on Mount Sinai you know the finger of God inscribed on letters of stone the Ten Commandments which are basic for all mankind for all time and you've given this all up to follow a fellow that was only a carpenter anyhow and you're not too sure about him they were getting rather shaky and this epistle is to confirm them in their faith and again if you read Eric Sauer you'll be very thrilled and I think very inspired.

J.H. Stuart well not Jimmy S. Stuart but J.H. Stuart one of the greatest preachers of our generation you should read his books you'll preach he has one or two wonderful books A Faith to Proclaim and Heralds of God which are particularly sermons or addresses to preachers one is the Warwick Lectures I think but J.H. Stuart says it sometimes the preacher prepares a great slab of truth he takes hours and hours and hours in the week to prepare a sermon and then kind of says to the congregation open your mouths and here it comes whoop swallow it and they swallow it in one lump and they have indigestion till next Sunday they swallow all the thinking of the preacher in a matter of seconds now I think by the same token we read the Bible like this there's a book and you should get it I must have sold I think thousands of copies for this preacher because often I go to preach to preachers conferences and I always advise them to get a book called The Burden of the Lord it's published by Abingdon costs you about three ninety five it's

one of the best books ever written on preaching and Ian McPherson reminds us in that book of the time when it was a law an unwritten law in Scotland that a preacher he would spend a whole day say Tuesday he wasn't available to his church he wasn't available to his wife if somebody died he didn't care let somebody else bury them he would shut up with God all day Tuesday to prepare his sermons for Sunday and then on Saturday he spent the whole day on his face before God preparing the man to deliver the prepared sermons and then all day Sunday he wasn't available on Sunday because he was preaching so three days out of four that preacher wasn't available to anybody boy there'd be a change in our preaching if we boys did that if you gave a whole day and let your church know you weren't available for anything on Tuesday huh and then you weren't available on Saturday not for fishing with Mr.

Jones the millionaire in your church who keeps it going if you got rid of him maybe the Lord would keep it going but anyhow the thing is you know if you just keep around with these boys you'll get on you'll be sweet and nice and sugary but boy you won't count on a hill of beans for God who must be the best preacher in the country if God says I'm not does that matter why do we go after these vain congratulations of men we ought to spit the things out you're not going to put any labels on me you're not going to give me any honors if you can find it find a poem by F.W.

F.W. Meyer called St.

Paul it has about 28 standards it's the most awesome thing outside of the Bible you know his number one book it's the best seller in the world outside of the Bible Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is a better book than that and you need to get it and read it to your children it talks about the heart of man all the double nature and so forth the holy war if you didn't get John Lake's films get them they're not very expensive but they're wonderful and when we see him I remind you again dear friend listen you say Jesus may come any time tonight well listen if he does it means you're in white it means right now you have on your wedding garment why? because it says when we see him we should be like him it doesn't say when we see him we have half an hour to get ready get on the phone and put right

the wrongs it's too late he's coming in a split moment and I want to be living alerted in my spirit that he can come the one thing that hinders Jesus Christ from coming tonight is not all the crime of the world all the diabolical rottenness of well call it what you like call it crime call it abortion that is not keeping Jesus Christ from coming back to the world the one thing that keeps him coming back is the bride is not ready we're not washed we're not pure we're not living a hundred percent for God we're not living with eternity's values in view we're mesmerized by materialism or we're trapped in trivia we're not eternity conscious as we should be you see the majesty of men like Wesley and others particularly those old Puritans they live in eternity I have a book I want to loan it to

you I'm going to loan it to Jack and if he loses it it costs him ten thousand dollars and that's only the installment the book is called Preaching the Eternity how often have you had a message on eternity lately one of the old men in there Ebenezer Brown says this I live five days in eternity and I come down to share with my people what God has revealed about eternity we don't get that kind of preaching anymore and I'm afraid that many of us are going to die short of the goal that God set for us by his grace Lowry wrote a book many years ago I've never seen it I've seen an abridgment of it but he wrote a very wonderful book called The Possibilities of Grace if ever you see it buy it and don't be selfish and keep it for yourself mail it to me and I'll send you all the expense but anyhow

read it and then pass it on to me you may not want it back but it's a magnificent book on the possibilities of grace all the areas in the spiritual life that we do not explore we all go round on our particular little theological roundabout don't we and we know the points over and over and over again and if you if I hit every doctrinal point that you like I'll be a good guy but if I if I hit some points you don't like you'll think I'm astray and I'm not but anyhow there are new areas for us to explore in grace the possibilities of grace are so vast there's a book and you should get it I must have sold I think thousands of copies for this preacher because often I go to preach to preachers at preachers conferences and I always advise them to get a book called The Burden of the Lord

it's published by Abingdon cost you about 3.95 it's one of the best books ever written on preaching and Ian McPherson reminds us in that book of the time when it was a law an unwritten law in Scotland that a preacher he would spend a whole day say Tuesday he wasn't available to his church he wasn't available to his wife if somebody died he didn't care let somebody else bury them he would shut up with God all day Tuesday to prepare his sermons for Sunday and then on Saturday he spent the whole day on his face before God preparing the man to deliver the prepared sermons and then all day Sunday he wasn't available on Sunday because he was preaching so three days out of four that preacher wasn't available to anybody boy there'd be a change in our preaching if we boys did that if you gave a

whole day and let your church know you weren't available for anything on Tuesday huh and then you weren't available on Saturday not for fishing with Mr.

Jones who's a millionaire in your church who keeps it going if you got rid of him maybe the Lord would keep it going but anyhow the thing is if you just keep around with these boys you'll get on you'll be sweet and nice and sugary but boy you won't count a hill of beans for God yes sir we preachers get away with a lot of stuff some of our preaching is the same old sermon we had two three four years ago and all we did we ran the same train but we changed the engine in other words we preach the same sermon and we we just put a new text on it and much of our preaching is merely getting a text and ad-libbing our way through it somebody asked my friend Paul Rees in a minister's conference how long does it take you to prepare a sermon and he said write out what was true fifteen hours fifteen hours you take five hours a day for three days to read that's right he said you create a very wonderful prayer this morning God came down as you pray you prepare your prayer yes I don't just write it out but I prepare my spirit to pray how long do you take to prepare yourself I spend two hours in prayer so I can pray five minutes before my congregation fifteen hours to prepare a sermon two hours to prepare a prayer to offer for that congregation I believe that America and England have hit a slump spiritually tonight because the preachers have hit a slump that's why we've got lazy believers because we've got lazy preachers I nearly said lousy but I changed it lazy preachers and lazy people some of you boys spend more time playing golf than you do playing praying one man's nodding his head I guess he's a fisherman but anyhow some of you spend more time playing golf that's why your church is in a hole I was preaching up in New York and an old old lady came shuffling along and she said to me did you ever meet A.B.

Simpson in person and I said no I know my good friend R.R. Brown of Omaha did he said I remember he embraced me and I can still feel his beard rubbing against my cheek but one day A.B. Simpson had it out with God if you like to put it that way and you know the great modern healing crusade in England under the Jeffery brothers started as a result of let me see Edward and George Stephen was the pioneer and Stephen read A.B. Simpson's book on divine healing if I remember right the reader I haven't read it for 30 years I guess but I think in that book he says this that healing is not the whole gospel it is not the main part of the gospel but that it is a part of the gospel nobody with any spiritual intelligence can refute it's there

and this awakened a desire for this shall we say branch in the church of the living God to be fruitful again and A.B.

Simpson had written that book now in the days when money was money somebody asked me a little while ago he said have you seen the new I don't even have one but he said have you seen the new L.B.J. dime and I said no I haven't he said I'll show you one and he showed me a dollar bill well in the old days when dollars were dollars I think the dollar now is worth about 46 cents it's actual value but in the days when money was money A.B. Simpson had five thousand dollars a year that was money then would be worth maybe twenty five or thirty thousand dollars he had his own carriage and horses used to drive to his stately church in New York that great Presbyterian church but when God the Holy Ghost met him he discovered like so many others the God of I'm convinced of this that all over America today and even in this audience some of you guys know to preach better than you dare preach but you're scared stiff over one thing of being thrown out of the synagogue and the other thing that God might let you down financially and so you prefer to walk in the darkness instead of in the light you rather go with a calm bunch and keep one or two of them sweet because they get in their pockets and particularly at Christmas then you debay the will of God but there are a thousand missionaries scattered over the world this morning because one man dared to step out of that beautiful church with all its financial security and the little old lady said to me the last time I heard him preach in New York he had walked across the city in a rain storm he was sitting there with one leg crossed over the other and his shoe was up and the sole was wiped through and before he went to preach he took his socks off and wrung the water out and put his wet sock on again and then he put a piece of paste there in the bottom of his shoe and he'd forgotten all about it and he was there singing blessed assurance like this and showing everybody the base of his shoe that was filled just with a piece of cardboard a pasteboard but I think you'll go a long way before you find anything to improve on Dr.

Simpson's two volumes on the Holy Spirit maybe there are some areas where you can develop more thought and if you don't have it we've got a good preacher here who should be preaching this morning Tom Radmorel and he has a book there on the gifts of the spirit which is about the same as things I think I've ever read. I sent some copies to the ends of the earth and they wrote back and said right away this is the best thing we've ever read.

It's so balanced, it's intelligent, he isn't grinding just for tongues or something like so many people are. He is concerned as I am and you are. I trust that we see the church come back to all the fullness of God because otherwise we cannot have the blessing of God.

You cannot limit the Holy Ghost and be blessed and I'll say again we're paying a lot of lip service to the Holy Spirit but actually we're restraining the Holy Ghost in our modern churches I'm totally convinced of it. You say we had a great time last night, the Spirit was there and more often than not it's really a psychic blessing in the meeting. It's psychic.

It's emotional. Oh they sung the hymn my mother used to sing, I haven't heard it since we put her in the grave. And I was so blessed last night.

One lady told me she'd joined a new church and she said in the old church I never wept all the 25 years, 20 young years I was there but every time I go to church now the first half hour I just cry until my clothes are wet. When I asked her what she got, oh I feel so well it doesn't be good. Now I believe that basically that woman's whole experience was emotional.

She was blessed in the realm of her emotions. Now but we can't be blessed there. But I did not discover either in her or in that church there was any real growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And while I'm here with my gripes I want to say this. I find in America more than any other country I've been in America an awful poverty in pulpit prayer. Nearly every church I go in Sunday morning they sing a hymn and then they say now let us pray Lord we thank you we're here this Sabbath again bless us bless the choir as they sing and Miss Jones as she does something and something else amen thank you.

Now I have a set of books in a library that I have by Dr. Parker of London. They used to be called the set used to be called the people's Bible. Now it's published by Baker preaching through the Bible.

I read that set of books not because I enjoy his sermons I think they're very brilliant but I do enjoy the profundity of his prayer which is printed before the sermon. His sermons are wonderful but oh brother when he prays he lifts you to heaven. You see you've got problems getting people.

First you have to get them in the church that's one problem. Two you've got to cut off their thinking from the world outside. Number three you've got to get them in the spirit so you can get the word of truth through to them.

And this is not an easy thing. But you know that set of George Whitfield that when he preached on hell you'd think he'd been there for a week. He brought Brimstone and fire with him into the pulpit.

But when he preached on heaven you'd think he'd step right out of the room and come straight onto the platform. There was something of another world about it. We don't seem to convey this gathering somehow.

We come slick and easy and smart and crack a few jokes. There's not the sense of awesomeness. As though the initial experience, I don't care whether you call it sanctification like the Nazarenes or the baptism like one group or something, but coming into a crisis experience of the Holy Ghost, even after you've been born of the Spirit.

And if you want a book that will really show you a lot of light in this area, you can get Gilchrist Lawson's book on the deeper experiences of the great Christians. And he shows one after the other. John Wesley came and after he was miraculously born again, he admits he was filled with the Holy Ghost.

The founder of the Salvation Army admits John Billy, Bill Booth. You have to be a Billy you know these days. And so they have Billy Booth in those days and he was filled with the Holy Ghost subsequent to being born again.

He said I had a baptism. Maybe the greatest evangelist of all time, certainly in American history, was Charles D. Finney, a man with a scintillating mind, a mind as sharp as a razor, who was miraculously born again of the Spirit of God without any teaching at all. He said in a matter of hours I was baptized with the Holy Ghost walking over Boston Common and not only that but I had repeated baptisms of the Holy Ghost.

And if you want to know why he had compassion and revival he said I can't go three weeks without being broken up in confession before God. I dare not go three weeks without brokenness at the feet of Jesus. Preacher maybe you've gone three months, no wonder you're as hard as you are.

When did you last get down and weep all the people inside your church never mind outside of it? Oh science has got nothing on the Bible. Did you read that book? What's the book on diseases? Martha you remember it? None of these diseases. How many read it? Oh that's a fantastic book.

Boy it makes you feel about three feet taller when you've read it. One of the laws that God ordained in the Old Testament was that a male child should be circumcised on the eighth day. Why not the seventh? Why not the ninth? Because the eighth day is the most perfect day in the life of a babe when the blood will congeal and immediately you don't have the difficulties you would have if you circumcised on the seventh or the other ninth.

Took science hundreds of thousands of years to find it. The Bible had it. They had a plague in Europe because people would come out of one section of the hospital after operating and go deliver babies in another section and the mortality rate was something about ninety percent or something.

And one day a doctor says look there's something wrong here. And before ever any babies are delivered now you must go in another room and change your clothes and scrub your hands. And once they scrubbed their hands and changed their clothes the mortality rate went up.

They were not carrying germs out of one section of the hospital to the newborn babe. But if you go back to the Old Testament it tells you to do the same thing. The midwife has to change her clothes and wash her hands.

But it took science four thousand years to. The Bible isn't behind times. Don't fool yourself.

Oh it's amazing what you'll find if you do a little bit of digging. And a lot of our kids are embarrassed in high school these days because they think the Bible's old fashioned. It's more up to date than tomorrow's newspaper.

You see as far as I see God doesn't break the pattern. He may alter the measure. But if you read the last book that was published in Tozer's name, not the last book of sermons which is very good.

The second volume of the Tozer pulpit is twenty two sermons on the Holy Spirit and they're very good. But the book before that was Man, the dwelling place of God. And in the last chapter of that book Tozer has a wonderful little message there on the saint must walk alone.

The saint must walk alone. God doesn't have an assembly line. God's university is open to every human being.

And I suggest to you as to anybody else it was forty years on the backside of the desert for Moses. It was thirty years of being forgotten for his only begotten son. God never bothered with him for thirty years in one sense.

And I suggest to you preacher that you're rather presumptuous if you can't remember a time when God almighty anointed you with the Holy Ghost. You're rather presumptuous to preach because Jesus never preached until he was anointed. And I've heard people say that after, after all Jesus was a workman.

Surely he was, but Christ wasn't. Give me just thirty seconds to say this. My wife and I were in a meeting north of Chicago.

I went to a church there one Sunday morning. When I finished, the young fellow there said to me, would you like to see Mr. Andrews? And I said I would. He said he's a wonderful man.

Comes from your country. At least he comes from Scotland. He's eighty-three years of age or eighty-four.

I'd like you to meet him. Well I'd wanted to meet this man. I'd read some notes of his Bible studies and been blessed.

Oh I've seen Scotchmen eighty-four years of age droopy and with cheeks that were all pleated and shaky and nervous and grumpy. He didn't tell me a thing about the man. All I knew about him was that a few years ago, maybe twenty years ago, or a missionary and when he got there God said now you obeyed me you go back to America and don't care what people criticize you for.

Sure this was my step and you came out here. Now you go back I'm going to put a sickness upon you that will keep you as an invalid. God told him that and he's never sought healing for that reason.

And you're going back to be an intercessor. My dear wife and I went into the room and looked at this man. When the door was open I couldn't believe he was eighty-three years of age.

If you'd said forty-three I'd have said sure, maybe thirty-three. Oh well one thing gave him away. He had a little beard about three inches, just stubborn white beard but his cheeks, there wasn't a crease and he looked as though he got makeup on, his cheeks were so healthy and his eyes were sparkling.

And he said I'm glad to meet you brother Ravner. I said sir I'm very happy to meet you. I stayed in his room for about five minutes.

And in England we always say that if you go into the presence of royalty, you always walk backwards way, you never turn your back on the king or the queen. And I walked backwards way to the door and I said thank you sir. I'm very happy to have had this interview with you.

Well my friend said what did you think? I said well I was staggered to see a man like that, as healthy and vivacious and vigorous as he is. He said I didn't tell you this but you know brother Ravner, that man hasn't been to bed for twenty-five years. He has prayed every night from ten o'clock to five or six o'clock in the morning.

He reads one half of the 119th psalm and a half of the 7 on the mount Luke's version of it. And for twenty-five years he's been the spirit of intercession and he's as fresh as a man of thirty-five. For the simple reason he said he knows how to pray in the Holy Ghost.

Brother that man's going to have a reward when the books are opened, huh? There's no measuring the power of the Spirit of God if he gets right of way but you see so often we make our vows and two hours after we've forgotten all about them. Read the Acts of the Apostles will you and mark Ammon with continued. They continued in the Apostles' prayer.

They continued in doctrine. They continued. It's a continuing thing.

It's not something that just comes now and then I feel I'm filled and here I can make it. Because Ephesians 5:18 in the Greek says not be filled with the Spirit but be being filled with the Spirit. A continuous inflow.

A continuous anointing. Peter and John said silver and gold I have none. No they have nothing.

The tyranny of God. The power of the Holy Ghost. Do you have that power tonight preacher? Do you have that power that you can push the table away very easily and fasting isn't a kind of a crucifixion? That you can shut yourself up sometimes for hours with God and then the people say when you preach on Sunday that wasn't our preacher there's something very different about him.

The anointing of the Spirit of God is upon him. I say to you before God that none of us ought ever to stand before you. Read the Acts of John Knox when the cathedral was filled out in Scotland and everybody was waiting on him and he said friends I just bid you goodbye.

I have no message from God today. Takes a big man to say to a cathedral crowded with folk I have no message. Most of us would have cooked an old one up anyhow.

We have repaired an old sermon and said well they've forgotten I preached this five years ago. And the brother was talking about the offering. I heard the story about a young man who left a small town and went to a church and went out to become a millionaire and came back and they decided to let him tell his success story in the town hall.

Then afterwards in the church he testified that the reason he became a millionaire was that he was sitting in church one night they were making a missionary offering and he had a dollar in one pocket and a dime in the other. And he argued with himself and said I can't afford to give the dollar anyhow I'll give the dime. And then he said the Lord said the dime's no good give me the dollar.

And he said the Lord and he was going to give the dollar then he said the dime's no good to me so I'll give the dollar and the dime. And he said I'll put it all there. He said that night I gave the Lord everything I had and that's why I'm a millionaire today.

And the little old lady on the front row said in a stage whisper I dare you to do it again.

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