

The Baptism of Love

by Leonard Ravenhill

The Church's greatest need is a 'baptism of love', a great outpouring of the spirit of love, to overcome the decay of faith and the pursuit of materialism in the world.

Duration: 1:13:35

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4

Topics: "Love"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher talks about a man who devoted 53 years of his life to serving God. Despite facing abuse and mistreatment, he remained faithful and had very little material possessions to show for his dedication. The preacher emphasizes the importance of truly loving and serving the Lord, rather than just singing about it. He also discusses various societal issues such as divorce, excessive spending, and the obsession with pleasure and sports, which he believes are contributing to the downfall of society. The preacher concludes by highlighting the need for forgiveness and the importance of putting God's glory above personal desires.

Transcript

Maybe put it under the title of Will Christ Return in 1974. One of the news commentators reminded us the other day, actually two weeks ago, that no less than eight governments had toppled, or at least the, if not the governments that toppled, the presidents, the principals, the chancellors, the prime ministers, advocated their office all in the last eight weeks. Since that time we've had two or three others, and now we've ten countries that have either collapsed or their leaders are leaving.

And it doesn't look as though America's too secure right now either. So maybe tonight we'll talk on this very wonderful theme, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm going to assume, for the sake of time, that you at least know that there are thirteen verses in 1 Corinthians 13.

In case you've forgotten, it begins with, though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as founding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal. In the two thousand years of the history of the Church of Jesus Christ, very erratic history, very dramatic history, the Church of Jesus has lacked many things. But not in the past, nor in the present, nor will she in the future lack critics.

She's always had them, and we always need them. And we have a lot today, and they're trying of course to tell us with some degree of truth, the Church is washed up, we're a relic, we're standing on the sidewalk

watching the parade go by. The main actors being of course the Communists, and the Romanists, and a few others.

And I don't think we need to be nervous about it, let's face it, the Church is, as I say sometimes, the greatest tragedy in the world today, is a sick Church in a dying world. What is wrong with the Church? Well it would take a long while to analyze that, but let me say this, that I believe that there is one thing that would really put the Church of Jesus Christ back into business, and that is a baptism of love. I believe that the greatest need in the Church today, in the home, in the fellowship of the saints, in the Church speaking in general, is a great outpouring of the spirit of love.

In his chapter 13 verses, Paul says, though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have no charities, it says in the rather sleepy Elizabethan English of the authorised version, a version that I stay with. A lady told me not many weeks ago, in a kind of hushed, sanctified mood, she said, I've just received a living Bible. I said, I've had one fifty years.

In fact, I never knew the Bible was dead anyhow. I didn't need Ken Taylor to tell me the Bible's living, the Word of God said that. The Word of God is the living Word of God.

And there is nothing more living, more vital than this great theme again of love. Now remember this, that this is written by, a man who one day was going down the road to Damascus, and he carried inside of his toga, the garments the Romans wore, he carried what he thought was the death sentence of the Church. We would say he was mad, blazing mad, breathing out threatenings.

And there's one thing for sure, that when he went down that road to Damascus, he didn't have much of this commodity of love. And yet here he is writing the greatest song, the greatest theme, it's a poem actually, the greatest poem ever written, was written of course by divine inspiration and through this amazing man, the Apostle Paul. Whenever I read his life, I'm challenged and I'm humiliated and embarrassed.

Because you see, you've got to remember that he didn't live in our day of jets and planes and trains. It's rather interesting when you think that for the first three or four thousand, four thousand, five thousand years of history, that men never moved any more swiftly than on the back of a horse or across the sea on a ship with a bit of cloth on it, the wind puffing the thing along. Sometimes we should go back to that.

In America, I know there's only two kinds of people, the quick and the dead. If you're not quick, you're dead. That for three thousand years, we only moved on the backs of animals, went over the ocean on a little boat with a stick on it and a piece of cloth.

And it was in days like this that the Apostle accomplished all that he accomplished. He began his life in the historic capital of the world, a very wonderful place, Tarsus. And he ended up in the military capital of the world, Rome.

In between, he went to the religious capital of the world, which was Jerusalem. He went to the Las Vegas of his day, Corinth, the very church to which we write now, he's writing here. And he went to the intellectual capital of the world, which was Athens, which is mentioned in the 17th of the Acts of the Apostles.

And there you get the sweep of his life. He wrote 14 epistles, if you include Hebrews. And he exceeded everybody else in suffering, in outrageous sacrifice, in unreasonable efforts.

You could describe his life only in superlatives, in every area in which he moved. And there must be some reason for this. In the language of a child, what made him tick? Why did he do these things? And I think he gives the answer.

In fact, I'm sure he gives the answer in the second epistle, in the, about 5th chapter, verse 14, where he says that this is the secret of his own life. He believes, of course, that there's a day of judgment ahead. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

I trace these folk without stickers on the back of their nice little automobiles, you know, smile, God loves you. That's only one side of the coin. You should have one at the other side, on the other bumper, saying God is angry with the wicked every day.

Because God doesn't joke, and he doesn't smile on a rotten world that stinks in his nostrils right now. God is angry with the wicked. And Paul never lost sight that God is a God of wrath as well as he is a God of love.

There's no sentimentalism in God. His love is love. It's not sticking daisies on Volkswagen's thinking you'll change the world.

We know the classic verse of the gospel is John 3 16, God's soul of the world. Well, Paul believed that. He would never tackle the situation.

He went to the moral capital of the world, Corinth. Why did he go there? Because he says the love of Christ constrains me. He not only takes a great panoramic view of the world and says God's soul of the world, but he narrows it down, and he says Christ loved the church.

And he gets it narrower than that, he says he loved me. And the outstanding wonder of Paul's life was not that he built a colossal church, if you like, on the, on the, on the slop and the sin, uh, uh, spurs right in the center of the rottenness that's in the world, Corinth. But the most amazing thing he said is that one day God found me breathing out threatening.

Paul was never immoral. He wasn't a drunkard. He was a man of impeccable morality.

He was the greatest brain the world ever saw, apart from Jesus himself. If he'd gone on pursuing his career, he would have been greater than Gamaliel or any other Hebrew teacher that ever was. And they said there are hopes on this.

And one day dramatically, we might mention it sometime during the week, he met the Lord Jesus. I'm glad he didn't meet an evangelist. He might have given him a copy of the four laws, and that would have ended him anyhow.

But, but he didn't meet an evangelist, he, he met Jesus. And if you meet Jesus, if you have a confrontation with Jesus, you'll never, never be the same, either one way or the other. It would be a saber of life unto life or death unto death.

And on that Damascus road he met the Lord Jesus Christ. And then you remember that he said on that road, please cry God to reveal himself to me. And then he went to God's great Bible school, which is in the wilderness, and he said it, please God to reveal himself in me.

One was dealing with his past and his record, the other was dealing with the, the work inside of him that needed to be done, the cleansing and the sanctifying and the undoing and so forth. Now Paul says, though I speak with the tongues of men. You've got to remember in every case to whom the apostle is writing.

Here he's writing to Greeks. I thrill every time I think of the infant church of Jesus Christ. The church was not presented to the world on a silver platter.

The church came into the world under the total, under the control of a totality, it was a totalitarian world, it was a sophisticated world, it was under dominion of the greatest military machine in history, that is the Roman empire, the greatest religious system, the Jews, and the greatest system of intellectualism, the Greeks were in their power, and the church was walled in. I looked down into the Grand Canyon some months back, I suppose two or three years ago, and I remember seeing the little sign there about the size of this desk, you may have seen it, and it says, now this is the legend here. Across there, that little yellow ribbon, is the Colorado River.

350 feet wide, 45 feet deep, it goes at a certain speed. And then the walls of the canyon are a mile high, and the distance of the furthest wall is seven miles, and so you get all the details. And suddenly I said to myself, supposing you put a child in that situation, would the child ever get out? Surely he couldn't swim a fast flowing river for 350 feet, and 45 feet of water, he can't climb a mile high, he couldn't scale these rocks, what would, how would he get out? Well it's almost a physical impossibility.

Well then that is the picture, as I stood there, there is the church of Jesus when it was born. Walled in on this side with a mile high of brilliance of the Greeks in their supreme wisdom, and walled in at this side with the greatest military machine in the world again, the Roman Empire, and obstructed in front with the mighty monopoly, as they thought, the Jewish religion. And yet remember that the church of Jesus Christ, without money, without armies, penetrated every one of those systems.

Penetrated them why? Because there was a dynamic. Because the word of God recognizes in the Old Testament, love is a fire, love is stronger than death. And when Paul says, I may speak with the tongues of men, oh boy, they knew what he was talking about.

Remember in their background they had the greatest orator that ever lived, Demosthenes. He slurred his words worse than Winston Churchill, I used to listen to him during war days over the radio. And he slurred his words, but he was a brilliant man.

I'm not plugging for England, but if America had been sensitive enough to obey him at the Yalta Conference, we wouldn't be in the mess we're in now. But Roosevelt backed up in some other area. If we'd done as they wanted to do when they were dealing with the Arabs and that bunch there, and a few years back when Mr. Eden was the Prime Minister of England, we wouldn't be in the situation with the Arabs that we're in today, but we made accommodations.

Anyhow, that's just a bit of, let you know how smart the English are. But apart from that, this man, Winston Churchill, slurred his words. Demosthenes had an impediment.

And as a young man, when he heard the orators, brilliant, and they got their scholarships, and they got their endowments, and they got their crowns, he burned with desire to be an orator. And so he went down by the sea and put pebbles in his mouth and shouted his words, got his tongue around the pebbles, got

his voice over the roar of the waters, and before long became the most eloquent man maybe the world has ever had. He's a classic example of a Greek orator.

And when Paul says, I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, they must have thought that to orators like Demosthenes. They must have thought of poets like Homer, who made the stuff that the orators used very often. Speaking with the tongues of men and of angels.

Philosophers like Aristotle, and who have you got, that gave them all the stuff they needed so they could shoot it out and stir the people. There's a record of a man by Cato, another of the greatest of orators. You see, there was an enemy of Rome by the name of Carthage.

Carthage was in North Africa across the Mediterranean Sea from Rome. And every great orator that was speaking politically, he would point there and say, there is Carthage. Carthage must be destroyed.

You know when Cato got men stirred, they would draw swords they weren't even wearing. They'd rush to a bridge that wasn't there to try and get over and destroy their enemies. That's the power of oratory.

Carthage must be destroyed to have what they call a peroration. They stir the people up like Hitler used to. And then the final time after, Carthage must be destroyed.

Carthage didn't destroy Rome. How was Rome destroyed? Oh, well, she was destroyed like America will be destroyed. She committed suicide.

That's all she did. I don't believe there's a country in the world big enough to destroy America. She doesn't need destroying, she's doing it herself pretty good right now.

Morally, socially, economically, mention any area. Now don't get mad, you say, well you're an Englishman wiping us off. No, I'm just telling you the truth.

I mentioned the fact the lady got mad in one meeting I was in, and she came up to me furious. What are you doing in this country talking about my country like this? I said, because my Billy Graham's in my country talking about my country like that, that's why. So all I'm doing is just balance the thing out, you see.

I want you to know, she said, that I am a pure-blooded American. She was a blonde, very pretty. It all went down the sink at night, but anyhow she was pretty.

And she was blonde, what I call a suicide blonde, you know, dyed by her own hand. And she stood there rather furious, and she said, well I want you to know I'm a full-blooded American. So I looked at her past as sweetly as I could, and I said, what reservation are you from? What do you mean? I said, you're a pure-blooded American, you must be, uh, why, what would I, what tribe of Indian do you belong? Indian? My folk came from Europe.

Well, what are you telling me you're a pure-blooded American for? The only pure-blooded Americans I know most of them are on reservations anyhow. Can't even get their own country back, but let's not get into that right here. Oh yes, yes, yes, yes.

We don't need any enemies to destroy America, America's destroying itself. Why did Rome collapse? Well, if ever you want to read something a bit heavy, you might read Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, which is certainly a very fantastic book, and he gives you an outline. The reasons, he

said, the rapid degrees, number one is the rapid increase of divorce, and the undermining, as he says, of the sanctity of the home.

The spiral rising of taxes and extravagant spending, demounting craze for pleasure and brutal sport. The spending of too much money, uh, gigantic schemes and spending money on armaments. If you think men aren't insane, well, tell me why we've had two world wars and we're in the mess we're in now.

We couldn't have been worse off if we'd never had the war. With 50,000 bodies of the finest young men in America lying rotting in Vietnam and elsewhere. What good has it done us? Surely we could have had Watergate without Vietnam, couldn't we? Could have had all the rotten politics.

We could have had this, uh, stranglehold that the oil people have on us for fun. We could have had all that without men shedding the life's blood. But you see, I think one thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history.

If we did, we'd be a lot smarter. Now, Rome collapsed under the weight of its own sin. And the final thing he said that caused the destruction of Rome was the decay of faith into a mere form of godliness.

And all those five symptoms are very prominent in America, and in England, of course, at this very moment. All I hear is, he says, the Carthage must be destroyed. No, Carthage did not destroy Rome.

Rome destroyed itself. But you see what he's talking about? He's saying to these people that I speak with the tongues of men. Now, they were up against two things.

They were up against the eloquence, the power, the might, and the orator. The man who could stir you emotionally, politically, and get you angry about certain things. And they were up against something else.

Because Paul here, again, says, though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels. Now, what's he talking about? This is a day when the popular word, of course, is charismatic. Charisma.

And there's more interest in charisma than character. Now, I don't care if you speak in tongues and stand on your head as long as you live a holy life. But if all you do is speak in tongues, and then the same tongue you've spoken with, you're bitter, and critical, and snarl at people, and get bad-tempered, forget it.

Because you didn't get the gift of the Spirit. You may speak in tongues from three angles. One, psychic.

You can produce tongues yourself. Number two, demonic. And number three, a genuine spiritual gift.

And of all the gifts that there are, the gifts of the Spirit are there. It's no good throwing out the baby with the bathwater. There are gifts of the Spirit.

But I believe that the greatest need right now is to analyze and find out. And the way to do that, the greatest need in any church right now, is the gift. Not the gift of discernment.

People say, I've got the gift of discernment. You can have that without being saved. You can have that and be a prostitute.

You can have the gift of discernment and be a drunk. But you can't have the gift of discerning a spirit. And that's what the Word of God says.

Now, of course, everybody comes and thumps you and says, are you filled with the Spirit? Yes. Do you speak in tongues? No. Oh, well, you're not filled.

Well, you don't believe them. Because if they say that, they're not biblical. Give me a proof text.

Oh, I'll give you a proof text, all right. In this very chapter, he's speaking, pardon me, in the previous chapter. You see here, in chapter twelve, he's involved in a great theological discourse.

And he resumes it in the fourteenth chapter. He comes up to breathe, as it were, in the fourteenth chapter. It's been so heavy in chapter twelve.

He's been talking about the Holy Spirit, concerning spiritual gifts. You know what I'm convinced of? Only this last month I came to this conviction. The Holy Spirit has no gifts to give.

Oh, you say you just read it. Wait a minute, wait a minute. The supreme miracles of the ages were, number one, the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Number two, the resurrection from the dead. That's the most stupendous. We're not saved because Jesus died for us.

You say you're only saved by the blood. Oh, no, you're not. Oh, no, you're not.

You're not saved through the blood of Jesus. You're not saved because Jesus died for you. They're two parts of something else.

He must do more than die and shed his blood. He's got to rise again from the dead. He rose again for our justification.

I like that little chorus that says, Living he loved me, dying he saved me, buried he carried my sins far away. Rising he justified freely forever. One day he's coming.

You've got it almost all there. Dying is not enough. He must rise again.

What did it say when Jesus rose again from the dead? It said he went down every cavern in hell and declared his resurrection power, and he led captivity captive, and he gave gifts unto men. And the Spirit of God would have no gifts to give except that Jesus purchased them with his own blood. Because the Holy Spirit is the executor of the Godhead.

It's like somebody leaving a stack of money in a will for you, and then you go to the lawyer, and the lawyer distributes it and says, Well, that's your part of the will, and that's your part, and the Holy Spirit does that. He takes what Jesus purchased for us. Well, the old hymn says, The purchase of thy death divide.

And Jesus purchased gifts for men, and the Holy Spirit activates those gifts. But wait a minute. You see, we're so lopsided.

Some of us have been dried up so long that anything that comes along, anything that's supernatural is of God. Don't believe it for a minute. There happens to be a kingdom of darkness and a devil, and everything that's miraculous is not of God.

Satan can work miracles. Do you happen to know this? That one of the tenets, if you like to call it, in the faith of the Mormons, is that they speak in tongues. Did you know that? Would you say they're spirit-filled?

I've been to mission fields in many parts of the world, and somebody will say, You know, they had a feast there, which they did in Papua, New Guinea.

They killed 2,000 hogs, and they ate for about a month, and then they starved. They actually eat until they're sick, and then they vomit. They go vomited up, their stomach's empty, and they eat again, and they drink, and they get mad, and they dance.

And sometimes they stand up, and they speak flawless English for ten minutes, and they've never heard a word of it. How do you explain it? You say, Oh, you're like the rest who are knocking tongues. No, I'm not knocking tongues at all.

I'm telling you that if every church was, it should be in the New Testament character, that every gift of the Spirit would operate in this church. But the Holy Ghost wouldn't give 99 people the gift of tongues, and nobody the gift of interpretation. I've been in churches like that.

He wouldn't give 99 people the gift of tongues again, and if somebody happens to be away, the Holy Ghost isn't as foolish as that. What does the Scripture say? It says that there are differences of administrations, but the same law. There are differences of operations, verse 6, in case you're interested, of chapter 12.

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. Now listen very carefully here. Now you quote me as much as you like, but don't misquote me, because I'm going to quote the Scripture here.

Listen to the Scripture. To one, this is verse 8, if you're listening, and you're not too prejudiced to learn, somebody hasn't stuffed you because you got some bunch of tapes from Fort Lauderdale or somewhere. What does it say in verse 8? For to one, he's given the Spirit by the word of wisdom, to another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit, to another, faith by the same Spirit.

Boy, I'd like a, I'd like a few deacons with a gift of faith. Wouldn't you? Isn't it amazing again, going to a church where everybody says they're speaking tongues, but nobody has the gift of faith, and none have the gift of wisdom, and nobody has the gift of knowledge. But oh boy, we're going to do a war dance because we all speak in tongues.

No, no, listen, listen, listen what it says. Verse 9, to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, the gifts of healings, not gift of healing, gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another, the working of miracles. Verse 10, to another, prophecy, to another, discerning of Spirit.

Listen, to another, not to everybody, divers kinds of tongues, to another, he says. Now how does he finish the chapter? He's not looking too happy, some of you, by the way. But anyhow, how does he finish the chapter? He says, are all apostles, verse 29, are all prophets, are all teachers, are all workers of miracles, have all the gifts of healing? Obviously the answer is no.

Do all speak with tongues? The obvious answer is no. Do all interpret? The obvious answer is no. And then we're told to understand the best gifts, and tongues is always the last on the list.

It's the most divisive. People only have to speak in tongues, and oh boy, you know, none of the preachers around here, there isn't a church here that's got any life in it at all. I mean, you know, there's nowhere to go to get fed.

They're like these sharpshooters that go to a foreign country there, and they go and they get all the natives to put their hands up if they want to be saved, and take a picture of two thousand, and they say, we saw Pentecost two nights in succession, you know. Do you know we saw more done for God in three nights than those missionaries had seen for 40 years? And the stupid fellows haven't the sense to realize if the missionary hadn't have been there, he'd have been in the stew pot that night. The only reason he could put his foot in that area was that the missionary had worked there for 20 or 30 years, and taught them the things of God.

No, no, no. What did Jesus say? By this shall all men know that you're my disciples if you speak in tongues. Did he say that? The first and greatest commandment is, I shall speak with tongues.

Actually, you should receive tongues when the Holy Ghost. No, it doesn't say that. You should receive power after the Holy Ghost.

By this shall all men know. Here is the badge of discipleship. The disciples said, well, you're not going to leave us like this.

We've just got to love you. I've given up a business to follow you. I was a successful fisherman.

Well, I was a tax gatherer, and I would be getting a pension in a year or two, and I'd drop the whole thing, and I'd become a disciple of yours, and now you're going to leave us. I don't think that's fair. Jesus says, look, somebody greater.

Oh, no, no, that's just a consolation prize. Who could be greater than you are? And somebody says, well, if you're going away, we'd like people to know that we belong to the original party. Do you think we could wear a uniform so that, you know, when people see us, they say, hey, he used to be with that miracle worker called Jesus.

He says, no uniform. What about a badge? Oh, any old hypocrite can wear that, but that's no good. Well, why don't you give us a sign, you know, something like this, or a shibboleth.

Isn't there something, you know, so that when people see us, they say, hey, he belonged to Jesus then. Jesus says, yes, I've got something for you. What is it? He says, by this shall all men know that you're my disciples, if ye have love one toward another.

You could have tongues and not have love. In fact, do you know any churches more split up than Pentecostal churches? They're not split, they're splintered. They've only to come to a discussion and they break up and start another church, and break up and start another church.

They're no worse than anybody else, they're no better anyhow. With all the gifts, the gifts don't hold people together. Very often they divide.

But you see, the word of God says that we are lively stones, and the only way to hold stones together is to cement them together. And the cement, the strongest cement of all, is the cement of love. You're the lively stones.

Oh yes, Paul says, I may speak with the tongues of men, but if I have no love. What is the first and greatest commandment in the Bible? The first and greatest commandment is, thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Who is the first being in the world, in the universe? God.

And God is love. What is the first fruit of the spirit? Love, joy, peace, long-suffering. I remember buying a telescope in Ireland.

My sweet wife comes from Ireland, I'm English, we never fight, we get on perfectly. And uh, but I bought this wonderful telescope. Took it home and uh, said to the boys, now I bought you a telescope.

And I thought, that's going to keep them quiet for days, you know. They're just going to go upstairs. We lived in a house that happened to have three stories, and we were on a hill and they could sweep right over the valley, see Manchester and other areas.

I thought, boy they'll get up there in the day and look around, you know. They won't have any trouble for six months. They'll be so quiet and excited.

The boy went upstairs, he was down just, he said, Dad this is a great telescope. I said, sure I got it very cheap and I'm glad you like it. Well he said, it's a good one.

I said, yes. He said, and you know what? I said, no. He said, it's a celestial telescope.

I said, what do you mean? He said, it's not for looking at the land, well it's only to look at stars and other things. You see Daddy, what we'll have to do to use it is stay up late at night. Hmm.

And I thought I'd solved the problem and I'd made a hundred. But you know one day when they were playing with that long telescope, I saw that boy get hold of the telescope and he pulled one section out and then another and then another and then another. And suddenly I thought of that scripture.

The barrel of the telescope. You can put all the other sections in it and it seems to me, Pastor, you can do that with this. The barrel is love, joy, peace, long-suffering.

If you get that you'll get the rest all right. You see. But we want other things without this thing.

Paul says, I may speak with the tongues of men. Now he didn't speak with all the tongues of men. Paul wasn't an eloquent, he, I don't think he was a brilliant preacher, he was a profound theologian.

Apollos was the orator. He, oh boy, he'd make something run up and down your back when he preached. When Paul went to the intellectual capital of the world, Acts 17, read the story.

They looked down their noses at him and they said, why, what will this babbler say? That doesn't sound like an orator. In the 10th chapter of the 2nd epistle and verse 10 he says that when those big muscle men saw him, you know the guys that do all the barbells and what they look, they said, his bodily presence is so weak and his speech contemptible. He's no great preacher.

Oh he was a profound theologian if you had a brain big enough to follow him and you were interested and you didn't want merely cereal every time you went to church. That's all some people want. It's a great meeting if you sit and clap your hands, you know, and have a nice time and you didn't learn that much when you came out of the meeting.

But somebody told you somebody got healed in Timbuktu. Now I believe in healings. I've seen just about everything except raising the dead, but those are not the greatest things.

You can go to a healing meeting and not gain that much knowledge. Thrills, oh you get thrills. Sure, Miss Kuhlman's coming to town a week, when's she coming, next Sunday.

I know Miss Kuhlman, I've taught with her for hours, I've preached in her meetings, and she's a great woman. And I've nothing against miracles, I'm glad that miracles are done, but they don't build your faith up necessarily. Faith cometh by what? Hearing the choir? Doesn't say that.

They minister sometimes, faith cometh by hearing, but immediately it follows us, I'm hearing by the word of God. This is why Satan will push you off other things. This is why it's nicer to watch a tv program, even if it's a gospel program, and get the word of God, and let it become living and vital inside of us.

Because faith cometh by hearing. All right, Paul says, I may speak with the, he doesn't say speak through the moral. I don't believe any man ever did, I don't believe any man ever will.

There are certain gifts God gives. If he's given you it, and you're sure it's of the spirit, well treasure it, don't strut. You see, very often people who get gifts start strutting.

You know, I've got the gift of tongues. Tongues? Oh, I got a gift of interpretation, it's far more rare than tongues. Every Tom, Dick, and Harry have tongues, but I've got interpretation.

I've got the gift of wisdom. Hmm, never thought that. That, uh, and uh, and I've got this gift, and I've got that gift.

And this is what the Corinthians were doing, they were strutting around. They were making a display in the house of God. They were so content with the gifts, they're like someone who gets a little thing around the neck, and oh she does this thing, oh isn't this lovely, isn't this lovely, these beautiful jewels, and forgets the one who gives it.

And when you do that, you see, very often what we want is not for the glory of God, I want it for my ecstasy. I want it to stir me emotionally. I want to feel better.

Life is so humdrum, you know, when John's gone to work in the morning, oh I'm all ready to wait till he comes back at night. Oh I'm so tired. It's a blessing to have soap opera, I don't know how I get through.

And you say you love God and you watch the soap opera far longer than you pray, far longer than you read the word of God. Do you think God believes you? Not for a moment. Love, stronger than death.

Love is a fire. Love, Paul says, look they tied me to a whipping post and lashed me 195 times, and when they'd done I shouted hallelujah. I hung on a piece of wood in the Mediterranean for 36 hours.

There was something in him and they couldn't lash it out, and they couldn't threaten it out of him, and they couldn't wash it out of him, and they couldn't starve it out of him. Do you know what he got for it? Well he didn't get what the modern evangelist gets, you know, \$200 shoes and \$300 suits and \$200 alligator shoes and a Lincoln Continental Royal, of course that's dead now, every good evangelist has his own plane. That man died almost broke.

Do you know the greatest revivalist America ever had was Charles G. Finney? And after he'd had cities where a hundred thousand people were born again. You haven't got an evangelist do that in the last 25 years, and I don't care who you name. Mr. Roberts, Billy Graham, Nick Coleman, any of them.

Put them all together they haven't had a hundred thousand permanent maybe. That's certainly not a record like I saw outside of that church in Rochester, Rochester, Minnesota. Charles G. Finney was here for six months.

A hundred thousand people were changed. Do you know how you can tell when you've had a revival? Because the moral climate is changed. Not people just running to church and being happy and singing around, but the drunkard is converted and the alehouse closes down and dance halls close down.

That's revival. You haven't got a man in America today can have revival like that, nor have we got one in England. We're so happy with tinsel and toys we don't know that much about the Holy Ghost really in my judgment.

Charles G. Finney shook whole cities for God and do you know that after he was in the midstream of his success he had to sell even the traveling case he carried to pay his expenses. He wasn't asking send me a dollar, only send me five dollars, only send me this. Some of those men are so rich before long we won't talk about the rocky fellows, we'll be giving the names of evangelists.

And people that want tied in their own church send money to some pretty fellow that they like. I'm to turn the switch this morning, boy that boy had a lovely hairdo. I thought I'd write to him say you're the prettiest girl I've seen for years.

His hair was teased. You don't get your hair cut if you're an evangelist. Did you know that? You book up at a beauty parlor for men and you have it teased.

It costs 10 to 15 dollars. Yes it's silly and you laugh but it's serious too. These are men you know that have left the world, the flesh and the devil and the holy sanctified them.

They've gifts of the spirit and they want to lift you up. Boy I wasn't lifting as high as most of those boys I'll tell you that. This man says when he has raised churches and shaken the kingdom of darkness, do you know what he says? He says unto this present hour I suffer need.

We're living in a success syndrome now. If you get saved and filled with the spirit you'll get more money. Do you want a blessing pack? Send me five dollars, the Lord will send this back to you.

You see whenever you feed people selfishness they'll come on for that. And this is what some of these men are doing, feeding our selfishness. That's all there is to it.

Paul didn't know a thing about that. Oh yes it's easy to stand in church certain times with tears in your eyes and think my richest gain I count but loss and poor contempt and all my price. But when it comes to the squeeze and you have to make some sacrifice for the Lord how do we get up? You see love is the greatest thing in the world, sure it is.

You know what people say when they fall in love? Oh well now of course they're a little unreasonable they've fallen in love. One of the greatest men that ever crossed the bridge of time, a man by the name of John Wesley. Converted when he was 35, I thought of him two days ago.

24th of May he was converted, 1738 about a quarter to nine. He was a man of impeccable morality, he was a genius, a great scholar. You know how he really came into the deep things of God.

He didn't write many hymns, his brother Charles wrote thousands but one day he picked up a piece of dog-eared paper and it was in French and it was written by a woman called Mary what she called Mary Antoinette Blerigno. She lived a hundred years before Wesley and she wrote a hymn that became the theme of his life. It wasn't something he sang and forgot, it was something that burned in him every day.

She wrote this a hundred years before he came along and God directed him to that piece of paper and it's in all the Methodist hymn books. I have a number of them at home. She wrote this, come Savior Jesus from above assist me with thy heavenly grace empty my heart of earthly love, that's where it starts, the negative side, and for thyself prepare a place.

Now listen to this, one of the most breathless things you'd ever hear. Nothing on earth do I desire but thy pure love within my breast. This, only this will I require and freely give up all the rest, wealth, honor, pleasure and what else this short enduring world can give.

Tempt as ye will my soul rebels for Christ alone resolved to live. Thee will I love and be alone with pure delight and inward bliss. To know thou takes me for thine own, oh what a happiness is it.

Do you know anything about an extravagant love like that? Did you ever make a commitment to Jesus Christ that cut you off, amputated you from the world, it's pleasures, it's pomp, it's pride, it's courageousness, it's so-called success? John Wesley could have died Prime Minister of England if he'd been a politician. If he'd stayed in the Church of England he could have died in my judgment the Archbishop of Canterbury. If he'd gone on inventing things which he did he'd have invented things long before Edison and far more of them.

But one day he came into a realization that Jesus Christ the Son of God did something because he loved him. And after that he says nothing on earth do I desire but thy pure love within my breast. Did it mean anything to him? I'll tell you how much it meant.

He was converted at thirty-five. Turn thirty-five round makes fifty-three. Fifty-three and thirty-five make eighty-eight the time he died.

Do you know that for fifty-three years John Wesley, maybe the greatest genius in his day, lived on a hundred dollars a year? Do you know he built orphanages? He made money, sure he made money. He printed books, he printed hymn books, he built churches, he built orphanages. And when he died he left six pound notes worth five dollars each, give one to the poor bearers and be sure they're poor men who need it to carry me to my grave.

After fifty-three years he came to Georgia when he wasn't even saved to be a missionary. He laid down in the mud at night because there were no hotels in those days. And he laid down in the mud and he said when I woke up I was frozen and I managed to get this arm free.

And then I struggled and I pulled this arm free and then I got my hair, which was worn long in those days too, and he said I pulled it out of the mud and I eased out my shoulders and I stood up and I was covered with frost as white as snow and I brushed it off and I sang the doxology. Nothing on earth do I desire but thy pure love within my breast. He died worth six English pound notes, thirty dollars altogether.

He left a handful of books, he left a faded Geneva gown he used to preach in. And somewhere, I don't know where, somebody gave him six silver spoons and they were listed in his will. And a total of fifty-three years extravagant devotion for God.

They whipped him in the streets. They threw buckets of filth on him. They blessed him on the stages of England.

He died too. And many, many times he was abused. And at the end of fifty-three years of service he had six pound notes, six silver spoons, a handful of books, a faded minister's gown, and what was the other thing? The Methodist Church.

You see, one day he fell madly, blindly in love with the Lord Jesus Christ. And he didn't sing it like you and I sing it, you know, wore the whole realm of nature. Listen, before you start singing about the whole realm of nature, how about trying to come to the revival every night this week and prove it, eh? If you wouldn't get him every night this week, do you think I'll believe you that you'd give him the whole realm of nature? You sure wouldn't.

Well, the whole realm of, it never will be, it never could be. But that little something you have could be so changed by the power of God this week that you might fall as madly in love with Jesus Christ, and instead of ending up with nothing more than about ten million in the bank, you could die rotting on a foreign field with the birds picking your bones, and have a glorious resurrection. My boys are on mission fields now.

One's just come out of New Guinea, he's down in South New Zealand at the moment. The other boy's down in Argentina, hasn't been home for nine years. And the other boy's in the west coast of Africa.

I haven't seen them for years. Don't cry about it. If I got news today they, they died on the field, I don't believe I'd, I'd weep.

I'd rejoice. Thank God they didn't die on a battlefield. Died on a mission field.

I would like to raise sons that did nothing more than become millionaires, or lawyers, or presidents, or kings. It isn't worth it. You may think so, that's your view.

You have every right to your opinion. Doesn't make the opinion right, but you're right to it. You see, I'm saying this, that the only world, a way to turn this rotten, wicked world upside down, in my judgment, again pastors, is that we get a baptism of love that makes us daring, and aggressive, and sacrificial, and stupid in the eyes of the world.

And they say, well why did you do it? Because I love him, that's why I do it. One hymn writer says, love will soften every trial, love will lighten every care, love unquestioning will follow, love will triumph, love will dare, let me love thee Savior. And all around the world this morning they're singing Charles Wesley's hymn, love divine, all love excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down.

Charles Wesley wrote to him, O thou who camest from above the pure celestial fire to impart, kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart, and there let it for thy glory burn with inextinguishable blaze. Love is a fire that consumes. All right, so Harry and I'll need to do this right here now.

What does this stateless, sleepy, Elizabethan English say? Uh, if you have no charity. What do you mean by charity? Well charity you give away your old clothes, your surplus cash, don't you? That's charity. But it's not love.

You can have charity without love, but you can't have love without charity. Charity is a shabby word. I say again, you give a... I remember a lady coming to my church for years.

She wore the old clothes of all the women in church, nearly if they fit her size. She'd more clothes than the Goodwill store herself. Cupboards full of hats and coats and bags and shoes.

One day she came in a gorgeous outfit. She waited at the door, and as she went out, she said, how do I look this morning? Well there's always one way to flatter a woman, and I did it. Bless me.

I looked at her, and I said, well you look 15 years younger. And we've been real friends ever since, because she was certainly, you know, she got a few cracks. She tried to fill up with cream and other things, but she certainly looked nice that morning.

Do you like my coat? Beautiful. Do you like my dress? Nobody ever wore it before. Look at my shoes.

See my handbag? Notice my hat? Did you inherit some money? No. You know Mrs. Jones that comes to church? She told me that she was praying the other day, and oh, she said, Jesus, I love you. And she said, the Lord said, hold it a minute.

You can't love horizontally without loving vertically. You love me? Why, yesterday you went downtown, and you said, that coat there, boy, that's a lovely coat, it's only \$250, and the hat matches it, and that's another 50, and the handbag and the shoes, you can get the whole lot for, say, \$500. Yeah, I'm going to go down tomorrow.

Now look here, just, just, just a minute. You're not going to persuade me you love God that you haven't seen, when you can't love the woman that you see every week that comes in old clothes, and she's very poor. Now, I'm going to prove your love for me.

If you really love me, you take that woman to town, and buy her all that outfit, \$500, and you wear the old clothes this winter. And she said, that's just what she did. She came down the next day, took me to town, and bought me this gorgeous outfit, and she's going to wear all the clothes, the old clothes, all this winter.

She's never done that before. But the Lord said, don't you try and tell me that you love me, when selfishly you make an excuse. Husband says, you're going to buy some new things.

Well, I've given the old ones to Mrs. So-and-so. Isn't it great? Hmm? You can always give something to missions if it has a hole in it, can't you? Uh, or a dress that doesn't fit for the missionary bout. I mean, it wouldn't do for you, a dear sanctified person like you, could never come to church with something a bit faded, that it'll do for Mrs. Jones up the river there, that's killing herself on the mission field.

But wait a minute. You say, well, I gave her that dress. No, you didn't give her that dress.

You say, she didn't pay for it. No, she didn't. You didn't give it to her.

Who did he give it? He gave it to Jesus. And then gave me this suit. And when I went for it, uh, he said, well, there you are, take your suit.

I'm giving it to you. I said, no, you're not. You're going to buy this \$125? No, I'm not buying it.

You're going to leave it here? No, I'm going to take it. Well, how are you going to take it if you're not buying it and I'm not giving it to you? I said, because I'll show you, I'm going to take it. And I put my finger in the hook.

I said, I'm going to take it like this. But I said up there in the book, do you know what it said? That Mr. So-and-so gave a suit to Jesus Christ. What? Well, that's what the good book says, in as much as ye do it for the least of these, my brethren, ye do it unto me.

And when they have a judgment, God's going to say to you, listen, you didn't give me a suit or a pair of shoes. You say, you've got things wrong. I didn't leave it.

Oh, but when that man came to your church and he had a hole in his shoe and that woman had a dress that was bad. And that Mr. So-and-so was in, uh, you see, all you saw was that man and his name. You didn't see inside of him lived Jesus Christ.

Because if I'm born again, Christ liveth in me. And you didn't despise somebody else, you despised the Lord Jesus Christ. What size suits do you take, pastor? You could get twenty this week, I hope.

In as much as ye do it to the least of these, my brethren, ye do it unto me. But we don't see it do we? Love. You know, there's a little word in this, uh, wonderful poem that's very ugly.

In fact, it's one of the roughest words in the whole of the New Testament. You don't need to come to your wise pastor and ask him what it is in the Greek. But do you know, it's a constant thorn in my flesh.

It's a very difficult word. I think most of you could even pronounce it. I know you don't speak English, though you try, but, uh, this is, this is just a little word.

A-L-L. All. Oh, that's a rough word, isn't it? Love beareth things.

No, no, no. Love beareth all things. Believe of all things.

Hope of all things. Endure of all things. Well, anyhow, the apostle never had circumstances like mine.

He'd never have said that anyhow. Not sure he knew what he was talking about. Don't think he was ever married, for one thing.

Well, how do you explain this thorn in the flesh? But, uh, apart from that. Love beareth all things. Believe of all things.

Hope of all things. Endure of all. Huh? Can you see a man running up to Jesus and saying, hey, you're the greatest preacher I ever heard.

I heard you preach the Sermon on the Mount the other day. That's gonna be a classic forever. The greatest man that ever preached, preaching the greatest sermon ever preached.

Now, I like that except one thing. I want to tell you something. I've got a brother that nearly drives me, we would say, nuts crazy.

Now, he's been in trouble once, twice, and right now I'm bailing him out for the third time. Do I have to keep doing this? Do I do it seven times? Jesus said no. Oh, good, what do I do? Jesus says, do it 70 times seven.

70? 490 times? That's right. And he goes home, he gets a piece of plywood about 20 feet long and 6 feet deep, and he puts 490 squares on it. And every time his brother does something wrong, he ticks off a square, and he ticks off a square.

And one day his brother does something very rough, he says, listen, I want to tell you something. That famous man told me, I don't need to forgive you 490 times. And listen, I want to remind you, you've forgotten, but I've already forgiven you 485.

Brother, you've got it coming. I've been saving this up for the last three years. You know, I don't often get mad, but when I do, oh yeah.

You don't often get mad, do you? With the children, or your husband, or your wife. But when you do, you, you, you make such a cavity there, you, you rip somebody so deeply, that it hasn't healed up. The next time you blast your head off.

Forgive 490 times? No, no, no. What he's saying is, love doesn't count. Love ever gives, forgives.

That's what it does. It ever stands with open hands, and while it lives, it gives. For this is love's prerogative, to give, and give, and give.

All right, now I've got to hurry. Change the word here. What do you mean by charity? Giving away your old cloth? No, no, no.

Most of the modern translators have put another word in here, haven't they? Though I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not love. Love suffereth long, and is kind. Love envieth not.

Love vaunteth not itself. Love is never rude. All right, now you've got problems.

The Greeks had at least four different words for love, hadn't they? Three great words for love. Everybody talks now about agape, or agape. Everybody's got this word on their mind.

Wish they had it in their hearts, but anyhow they got it on their minds, and they stick it on the back of a paper, and everything else. It's nice, you know. It's sloppy, silly stuff, most of it.

As long as a Catholic priest speaks in tongues, you love him. Oh, and some nuns. You know, we go to a meeting where nuns go.

Well, why don't they leave the lousy system? The Roman church is as anti-Christ as communism is. But oh, we go to a meeting where people sing nice little things, and it's so nice. You think I'm going to put my arms around a nun, or a priest, just because he speaks in tongues? I think he does.

When this morning he celebrated the sacrifice of the mass, which is blasphemy. And the only reason that he agrees to come is because I've got to share the Virgin Mary with Jesus, because they say he, uh, Mary's co-redemptrix. In other words, Jesus didn't finish the job on Calvary.

So Mary is co-redemptrix with Jesus now. And in case you don't know, she's ascended to heaven. Did you notice what they said, was it a year ago? They'd opened the grave where Mary was supposed to be.

And do you know what? You'd never guess. It was empty. Boy, they'd have been pretty shocked if they found her walking around inside, wouldn't they? We've opened the grave of the Virgin Mary, and it's empty.

She's ascended to heaven. Forget it. She's the dust they walked on.

We're going to have as much trouble with the Roman church up the road as we have with communism right now. Don't you make any mistake about that. The biggest sneaky thing the devil's ever pulled, and so-called wise men.

And if you don't, if you don't speak kindly and not charitable, well, I happen to come to a country where the blood of the martyrs was spilled on the floor. They were burned there by the Romanists. And I'll tell you this, if they got a chance, they'd burn us today.

And if you don't believe that, go down and take your, don't, don't, don't go to Disneyland for your vacation. Go into a South American country. Go down into, uh, is it Santa Cruz in, in Mexico.

And you'll find there in the cathedral, a huge cross, and Jesus is crucified on the front, and the Virgin Mary is crucified on the back. And isn't it a month since the Pope said, in, in a worldwide broadcast, we're not giving the reverence due to Mary. There isn't a thing in that book tells me to reverence Mary.

So we think the only way to hold the world together, you see, the only enemy, you see, Rome is scared to death of communism. And it says in the 15th of John, doesn't it, that when the branch cease to bear fruit, which to me is the, uh, Rome again, that when it bears, that men will gather that branch, not the devil and not God, and men will gather the branch and burn it. Do you know Rome has killed more Christians than all the wars in history? Now, I didn't intend to say that, but it was for somebody.

Maybe the lady got up and walked out, but that's all right. There'll be more walk out before we're through the week, maybe, but that's fine too. Couldn't care less.

I'd rather talk to 10 people that mean business with God than 10,000 that come for fun. I'm not here to get any medals. I'm too old to bother about human opinion from that angle.

I won't try to insult people, but I'll, boy, I'll die at the stake for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son. I won't share Jesus with the Virgin Mary. But love is what? What do you mean by love? Can I give me five minutes and let you go and I'll crowd an hour in five minutes.

All right. We took out the word charity and put in the word love. What do you mean by love? Well, there's one word love you salute, the flag.

They used to do that in Greece, and they used a word for love. Here's a little child, you say, I love this child. They use a different Greek word for loving there, to loving there.

You know we talk about philanthropies and all the rest of it. Right. Now we've got problems in England.

We've only one word for love. This man loves to fish, this man loves golf, that man loves something else. These people love.

And we use the same word. You don't use another word that's not even inflection. You say love, love, love.

I don't know what you mean by love. You love golf? You love golf. You love to fish? You love fish.

You love to collect stamps? All right. You love to ski? All right. Same word all the time.

Those kids standing under a tree last night in the moonlight, licking each other's faces, thought they were in love, you know. Sentimental, emotional stuff. And they come on and say, I don't understand.

Daddy and Mummy won't let us get married. And we're old enough, we're 16. Sometimes stupid parents let them.

And all that happens from there, till they come of age, is your fault, not theirs. Because you've a legal hold on them until they're of age. Even if they kick the bottom out of the house, God will hold you responsible till they're of a certain age.

Can't live without each other. They get married and a month after, they can't live with each other. Why? Because there's no love there, that's why.

But he's talking about another love here. Take out the word charity, put in love. Am I right? Take out the word love and put in Jesus.

What is 1 Corinthians 13? It's a full-length portrait of Jesus Christ. Christ suffereth long and is kind. Christ endureth not.

Christ vaunted not himself. Christ was never puffed up. Christ was never rude.

Christ was never resentful. Christ was never glad when others go wrong. It's a full-length portrait of Jesus.

We took out charity, put in love. We took out love, put in the name of Jesus. We'll take that out and make it a harder still.

Put your name there. Can you do it? Look at me, yes, but you look up for a minute into the face of God. You're a believer, you've been baptized, you read your Bible, you go to church, you pay your tithe.

But tell me this, in your heart of hearts, are you this disciple, this lovely person God wants you to be? Can you really say, I suffer long, I'm kind? I'm never rude. Nobody ever heard me be rude. Nobody's ever hurt me in a temper.

You can't find a person I've ever resented because I'm, you know, ornery and difficult. I have love, such love, I'm patient, I can bear all things, I can believe all things, I can hope all things, I can endure all things. How does that fit in? Don't look at your husband now.

You'll be looking straight forward. What about yourself? You say that's an awful high standard. Well, Jesus didn't die for anything less.

That's a sanctified life. That's a holy life. If I speak with the tongues of men, you can do, I can show you miracle workers that are immoral.

I can give you the name of a man that could see a hundred people at the altar at night, and command demons out of them, and cripple people, stand straight, and all kinds of things. And on the way home, he got a call girl. He had a call girl in his motel every night, as well as a fifth.

That doesn't mean that every man's like that, but I'm saying this, you can have that without this. You can do miracles without love. So this love beareth all things, it believeth all, it hotheeth, it endureth.

We were in a meeting not too long ago, and I'm through with this. There's a big church out in the west, further north from here. The church was as large, if not larger than this, and a strange gallery that was as long as the church, and it was packed.

It's a community church. The socialites came, the governor of the state came, leading politicians, millionaires, who have you got? They were there. Lovely church.

I spoke this morning on a different slant on the message of love, and just before I spoke, the sheriff came in. Great big fellow, just buzzed in his car, and he had his guns there, and he was a typical, you know, film star sheriff. Nice crisp gray hair, and a mustache, and voiceless looking fellow, and he sat down at the side of one of the most beautiful women I've ever seen.

She looked, her eyes lit up, he squeezed her hand, and I prayed. When I preached, I said this, you know, you pray about revival. You think God's going to pull a switch, and split the skies, and split the church, and down it will come, and we'll all be blessed.

I believe we trigger off revival. We trigger off revival by humility, and repentance, and confession. As I finished that morning, I said that as some of you always sit at this side of the church, because you're dead, and sit here.

You've bitterness, and hatred, and enmity, and suspicion, and you've gossiped, and slandered. And I can see one man there, he had a, I think he'd been to Oxford University, and he fiddled with his tie, and there were some other big shots there, feeling uneasy. And I just said this, look as we close this meeting, I just said to them, you close your eyes right now, and they did, and I said, how many of you right here in this house of God could start revival, if you'll be humble enough, and sensible enough, and broken enough to say, I've got a grudge again.

Because you can't be a Christian, and bear a grudge. If you've got a grudge in your heart this morning, you're not a Christian. You may be a backslider, but you're not a Christian.

The man with the Oxford tie stood up. People stood up, about 15 or 16 of them, and I said, all right. How many of us here know in their heart, there's bitterness, and hatred, and so forth.

And they began to stand up, and I said, while you're standing, and the sheriff stood up, and his wife stood up. I said, right here, while you're standing, you make confession to God. Say, Lord, I confess my grudges.

I confess I've been a child. I confess my bitterness. Cleanse me, and fill me with the Spirit.

Say that, and sit down. And the woman prayed, through tears, that just ran down her face, and her dress. Her husband began to pray.

He had a voice like a, my, he talked about a bowhorn. He didn't need it. Just boomed out in the church, I'm the bitterest man.

I know the sin of this town. I know what's wrong with its leaders. I know that, and boy, he really went to town.

He was holding his wife's hand, and shaking like that at the same time. When he sat down, a woman up there, she began to say, Lord, I've got more bitterness in my heart than all the rest of the church put together. You know my grudges.

You know my bitterness. You know this tongue of mine that's torn people, and so she went on. When she finished praying, she walked down the aisle, and she knelt in front of the sheriff.

And I can hear her now, saying, Paul, Paul, will you forgive me? And she put a dainty little hand in his, and he put his over, and swallowed it up, and his wife put her hand on top. And there they were praying. I slipped out of church.

It was quarter after twelve. I went back for the night service. The pastor said it was a great meeting this morning by the radio.

I said, well, I felt God move. He said, you slipped out at quarter past twelve. Yeah.

He saw the sheriff, and his wife, and that woman. You know they were still there at quarter to two, straightening things out. It wasn't a case of, forgive me, come on, give you a kiss, and let's be sloppy, and cover it all up.

They got down to the bottom. You see, so often when we come to meetings in revival, all we do is want a little bit of ease for our guilt. We don't want the Lord to tear the roots out, and get down there where it counts.

I stayed in that church two weeks. It's very rare I get to stay two weeks. Some of them won't get rid of me in two days, but I stayed two weeks there.

On the Friday night, they had a party for the pastor, after the meeting. We had some coffee, we had some cake. This lady came up, and she said, excuse me, and I, oh, hello, you know who I am? I said, you're the sheriff's wife.

I want to tell you something. The last two weeks in our home, it's been heaven. There hasn't been a crossword.

There's been no bitterness. Love has just flowed. Why it wasn't even like this when we got married.

You see, I'm the second wife to the sheriff, and he's my second husband. We both lost our partners in death, but things haven't gone smooth. He's got three children, I've got three children.

Mine are always in the right, his in the wrong. His are always in the right, mine are in the wrong. And just before you came, we were filing for divorce, and the pastor said, well, why not give God a chance next week? Could you please hold off? She said, I never thought my proud, arrogant, opinionated husband would confess sin in front of a crowded church.

But you should have seen us when we went home. We didn't get home till nearly three o'clock, and when we got in, he shouted, uh, hey kids, and they all said, oh, he's here. And they all ran for cover as though they were going to be shot.

Come on kids, I want to see you all. I've got some good news. Oh boy, good news.

My three children sat there, his three children sat there. She said, that big husky man got down on his hands and knees before each child, and confessed he hadn't been the daddy he should. He'd been too ill-tempered.

He'd been too quick to give them a crack. He hadn't considered them enough. He apologized to me and and he said to the children, I wanted your mother.

She's been with you all day, and I've got you. Go on, you have a TV in your room, you have one in your room. Go on, get out of here.

And each time he spoke to those children and said, you know, your daddy's been this, this big 17-year-old kid started, oh, he's been going to fight this father before, but you see, he realized his daddy had love for him now. And he said he just jumped forward and put his arms around his daddy and said, daddy, you weren't in the wrong. I've been insolent.

I've been sassy. I thought because I was grown up, I should do this and run the house and have money. I'm sorry.

And the other one said he was sorry, and the other was sorry, and the other. And before long, she said that we were, I don't know what time we got supper. It was nearly church time, but we had a love feast before we had supper anyhow.

We had our arms around each other. We confessed things. We straightened things out.

Oh, and she said the last two weeks have just been hell. Who did it? A man humbled himself. I got a grudge.

I got bitterness. We were having dinner in a pastor's house after the morning service. The phone rang, and he came back, excuse me brother Raybould, please.

Did you see a lovely handsome boy sitting on the right? Yes, he belongs to one of the classy families in this town. His sister's gorgeous. She's a beauty queen.

Two years ago she got into trouble. Went home, told the mother she's expecting a baby. Mother waited till daddy was in a good mood, and they told daddy.

How shall we tell John? One night John was in a good mood. They told him he hit the ceiling. Get out of here, the slut.

Think she's going to stay in the same house? Well, wait a minute. The fellow's promised to marry her. Let him marry her.

I won't go to the wedding. I won't buy her a gift. If she doesn't get out of town, I get out of town.

What are you going to do? The girl left town, left her home in the rich part of the city. He was in the service that morning when I said you can't be a Christian and bear a grudge. You'd only be a backslider.

You cannot be a Christian and have bitterness because it's the antithesis of love. You cannot be a Christian and have hatred. Backslider you may be, Christian no.

The boy called in the middle of the lunch at the pastor's house. The pastor said a miracle happened this morning. That boy's just called his sister 1,500 miles.

Her husband's been sick, the child's sick. They haven't \$20 worth of stuff in the whole house, and he told her I'm coming. She said you're not coming to this place.

The garage at home's better than this place. My husband's been sick, the child's sick, there's been unemployment, we've got nothing. He said Mary dear I want to tell you something, I love you.

Love me? You've surely shown a lot of love. Oh but wait a minute, this love only came in my heart in the last hour you see. I was so bitter against you for letting the family down.

But I love you. Listen I'm coming, I'm coming. I'm going straight to the office tomorrow.

I've five days leave coming. I've five days vacation. I'm coming, and listen I'm bringing you \$500 out of my savings.

I didn't buy you anything when you got married. And I don't care if you live in the rottenest hole in town, you're my sister. And not only that, I love you.

Next morning he went off with his \$500. His sister broke down, her husband broke down. I don't know much about, I don't know anything about this church.

I don't go out to preach often. This is the fourth time I've preached this year, and it's almost the middle of the year. I don't beg for money, I send letters out.

But I came here because I felt God wanted me to come. I don't know much about this church. Maybe I'll know a bit more a week to date.

But there's one thing I'd like this church to be known as. Not Crescent Baptist Church so much. But I'd like people in every stage of society to say, there's one thing about those people at Crescent, you know, they really fulfill the Word of God.

Where it says, by this shall all men know that you're my disciples, because ye have love. It's easy to sing, my Jesus I love thee. How much have you loved that Word this week? How much time have you spent with it? How much have you left prayer? How often have you been there? You got a grudge in your heart this morning, somebody you ought to forgive, a bitterness.

Maybe a girlfriend you broke up with, maybe a business deal that went wrong, a deacon you didn't like, or maybe somehow you don't like the pastor too much and something else. You know it'd be very nice to clear all that mess up this morning before we try to get revival this week, wouldn't it? Wouldn't it be good to help God to do something? And you say, well here I am, I confess bitterness, I confess my lack of love for his Word, for prayer, for the saints of God, and for a lost world. If you'll confess and forsake, he'll forgive and cleanse.

And the love of God can be shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit. Shall we pray? Father this morning we thank you that we're still in this free land. We thank you for this time of waiting before thee.

You know our hearts this morning. We can cover everything up to everybody, sometimes even cover things up for ourselves, but everything is uncovered in thy sight. You know that lack of love for thee, for the Word, for prayer, for souls.

Speak afresh to us in this moment. I'm going to ask you to do one simple thing before I ask the pastor to take the meeting. And that is, I'm just going to ask you to stand to your feet.

Just stand that way while I do that. And while our heads are bowed and eyes closed, I'm going to ask you once, and only once, if you say, Brother Ravenhill, I've something I've got to get right this morning. I'm going to have to straighten things out with the Lord, and with other people, and I need prayer.

Will you be honest about it? Don't clog the channel. You might hold revival up in this church. Will you say this morning, all right Brother Ravenhill, I'm going to get this thing straightened out with God.

If you are, you come forward right now. That's the only appeal I'll make. Walk right out to the front.

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