

The Crib, the Cross and the Crown

by Leonard Ravenhill

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a deeper understanding and relationship with God, and not just going through the motions of Christianity.

Duration: 1:08:02

Scripture: Isaiah 41:8, Isaiah 53:10, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the lack of conviction of sin in today's preaching. He emphasizes the need for the Holy Spirit to convict people of their sins and for them to have sleepless nights realizing their transgressions. The preacher also criticizes the seduction in churches and the focus on material possessions and worldly desires. He praises Jesus as the meek and lowly conqueror of hearts and quotes Isaac Watts' hymn about Jesus' reign. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the coming kingdom of Jesus and the need for people to bow their knees before Him.

Transcript

We enter your gates tonight with thanksgiving and your courts with praise. We do not wonder that the servant said, who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness and in power. Lord, we see so much that's artificial around us at this time, but we bless you for the real things.

Lord, you've told us that all these human systems, human devices, human inventions, and human securities, you've said they're in Hebrews, they're all going to be shaken, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. We thank you as the writers of the Hebrews says, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is a scepter of thy kingdom.

We think of the tyrants who have ruled over nations, the Hitlers and the Mussolinis and the Russians. We think of these men who wrote history in human blood. We think of the proud boast of Hitler when he said the Third Reich would live a thousand years and yet it didn't last a thousand weeks.

We see the vanity of man and yet they're still vain. They still think that somehow they can pull us out of this morass as a drunken, sinful, disgusting nation and disgusting generation. It seems all the nations are tarred with the same brush.

Their goal is to live, move, and have their being in the visible, live by their five senses, live for what they can grasp, what they can own, what they can be proud about. We thank you for the meek and lowly Jesus. We thank you for the one who never lifted a sword and yet he's conquered more hearts than all the other warriors put together.

We bless you for his dominion. We thank you for the words of Isaac Watts when he said, Jesus shall reign where'er the sun doth its successive journeys run. His kingdom stretch from shore to shore till moon shall wax and wane no more.

Blessings abound where'er he reigns. The prisoner leaps to lose his chains. The weary find eternal rest and all the sons of want are blessed.

Lord, I think of a disgusting, disastrous, disappointing, and despicable situation of millions of people around the world at this moment. While many of us are talking easily about the second coming, they haven't heard about the first coming. They're still in degradation.

They may as well live in sewers. They live in such uncleanness. They live in the darkness of sin with all its fearful ghosts, with all its terror, with all its witchcraft, with all its superstition.

Lord, we are not like the men we read of in your word in the Old Testament there who ran out and found a feast, found the tents deserted and stacks of food, and they didn't sit down and have a meal. They ran back to the city and said we found insufficient. Lord, we're oversupplied with Bibles in our country, oversupplied with preachers.

We've all kinds of announcements and texts and books, and yet, Lord, we're not really a spiritual nation. Religious, yes. Spiritual, no.

Lord, what do we have that the world wants? What do they see in the church of the living God that would draw them in? Do they see us living a nobler life, a holier life, a purer life, a life with more character, a life with more dignity, a life with more integrity? Lord, so many of your professed people are so much like the world. The world doesn't admire us or want what we have, but Lord, you ordain that we should be a royal priesthood and a holy nation. Lord, help us to cleave after Thee more than ever we have done before.

As we cross the barrier between this year and the coming year, if you tarry, Lord, we pray that each of us will vow for a closer walk with God. As Cowper said, a calm, a heavenly frame, a light that shines along the road and leads us to the Lamb. Lord, I pray again you'll bless your word to our hearts tonight.

Whatever men may say, Lord, your word says that the men who wrote this book were holy men of God as they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. God, bring us to that place where you can trust us with the movement of the Spirit of God, a power that will pull down the strongholds of Satan, a power that will illuminate minds as they have not been illuminated for centuries. Hearts, Lord, that are yearning for nothing except the anointing of God, the mysterious unction that cannot be bought, it cannot be taught, it cannot be caught.

You give it or it can't come. You're the source of it. I think of Wesley's word when he said thou of life the fountain art, freely let me take of thee, spring thou up within my heart, rise to all eternity.

Lord, there's not one of us here strong enough in our own righteousness, our own goodness to combat the world of flesh and the devil. It's only when your life springs up in us, thou of life the fountain art. And I

remember Pope John's wonderful word, he that hath the Son hath life.

Well, Lord, there's not many have the Son. Millions go to church, they partake of communion, they get baptized, they do all the other things demanded, and yet they have no life. And therefore they find church boredom.

They find it a ritual, they find it an obligation. But Lord, I don't know true lovers that ever found it difficult to meet each other. And Lord, we want that love to be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, that whether we're here or absent from here, whether we're sitting in the fellowship of the saints or walking in a shop, that your presence will be so real with us, that Lord, somehow something may shine in us and through us to this dark, dark world.

Lord, I pray that you'll pardon us, have mercy on us as a nation for this foolishness. And other nations that profess your name, Lord, with all this vanity, with all the tinsel and toys and trappings and trees, people trying to find contentment, trying to find fellowship with each other instead of fellowship with the Father. Lord, we pray for such that seek you tonight.

And all over the nation, Lord, there are people gathered, not many in twos and threes, but there they're gathered in your holy name. We pray tonight, Lord, that as we sing sometimes, beyond the sacred page, I seek thee, Lord. Lord, reveal, as one hymn writer said, talk to us, Lord, thy self-reveal while here on earth we rove.

Speak to our hearts and let us feel the kindlings of thy love. With thee conversing, we forget all toil and earthly care. Labor is rest and pain is sweet, if thou my God art there.

But I wonder how many precious Christians in Russia tonight, starving, starving for food, starving for clothing, and yet maybe they've honored you and praised you and magnified you and worshipped you more than we have. Lord, we use so many seducing things round about us. As someone said today, Lord, amidst all the toys and tinsel and trivia, how many people in America today want a broken heart for a lost generation? Lord God, I wonder you haven't destroyed us, never mind the sinners.

We're so slow, we're so lazy. Father, again, I pray, bless this word to our hearts tonight. Inspire it, only you can do that, and quicken it to our hearts in Jesus' name.

Thank you. Now tell me, is it too cool or too warm, or what is it? Some put the coats on, some take them off. You'd better swap chairs.

Well, it's good to see you. Most people are Christmas shopping or backsliding, I don't know which. Maybe both.

It's good to see John all the way from Iowa. How are you doing, John? And a row of people there from Waco, or Waco, whatever you call it. And some people from the outermost parts of Decatur.

Nice to have them. Anyone here from last days? Oh good, five, six, seven. Oh, we're growing in grace.

So if you want to buy a chair, you can have one tonight after the meeting. Well, praise God. I've been thinking about three things today, well, partly during this week because of the so-called celebration we have around.

Three things about Jesus. First, the crib that the world is celebrating, the cross, and the crown. Oh, I think one or two people got their feathers ruffled or something else last week when I was kind of decrying against Christmas.

I'm going to go again here and let me say something else. Look into right now, Jeremiah chapter 10. Jeremiah chapter 10, verse 1. Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain. For one cutteth out a tree of the forest, and worketh of the hands on the workman with an axe.

They deck it with silver and with gold, they fasten it with nails and hammers, and move it not. Well, if it doesn't look pretty clear picture of a Christmas tree. They cut a tree out of the forest and they load it with what? Silver, with gold, with tinsel, with trivia.

And what's the scripture say? The heathen. We don't think that. My mother used to say we should learn something every day, and I try to do that.

And I'm still dumb. But I've been struggling for 80 years now to do that. But I learned something today.

Do you know it wasn't until the middle of the 19th century that Christmas was celebrated in America? Do you know what the Puritans did? They established a law if anybody kept this pagan Christmas they had to be fined a certain sum of money. And that's not too far back. But now we've got to the tinsel and the toys and the trivia.

But you know another thing about it is I think the churches are seducing young people about this. How do they do it? I've got a brochure coming to my home every week. In fact I get a few from churches I've been to in the past years.

I'm going to write and ask them not to send them because they make me sick, they trouble me. One of them comes every week. Comes to the church that is different.

Where's the difference? There are five volleyball teams and they were working for the championship. I believe it makes the devil happy when they play volleyball. You say what's evil about it? It seduces young people.

They should be praying. We talk about Rome. What was it? Who was it was fiddling when Rome was burning? Nero.

Oh some of you remember him. Good. Nero fiddling while Rome was way worse than that.

We have lights. We claim we're on the edge of catastrophe. We're heading up for a holocaust that'll be worse than any holocaust that's been seen.

And yet we're playing games. Young people tonight could be here. They go to a meeting.

It's supposed to be a fellowship meeting. Fellowship with who? First of all our fellowship is with the father, with his son Jesus Christ, then with one another. But very often we make fellowship with one another a substitute for fellowship with the father.

I say the devil rejoices in all these volleyball and basketball teams for the simple reason that these young people could be preparing themselves. How many of our young people could sit down at 15, 16 or 17 years of age and head on talk with a Mormon or talk with a Jehovah Witness? Hmm? Do you think you could lick them? Could you out preach them? Out teach them? And what are we here for? Aren't we here to shine as lights in the world? But we're not doing it. You see the crib, around the crib you get how many people? There's a seat there.

Dig. Good. We got one of our prayer warriors.

It's a blessing he came. He'd get fined if he stays away two weeks. Where's your friend Spencer? Yeah he is.

We miss him though very much. Will he come you think? Good. So do I. Okay.

Well we're talking about the Christmas tree here in the 10th chapter of Jeremiah and saying around the crib when Jesus came how many were expecting him? A minority. I love to think of Anna. We talk about Hannah in the Old Testament.

What about Anna in the New Testament? Hannah in the Old Testament, a woman, an intercessor. Why? She said God do it through me. She wasn't praying for Israel.

She wasn't praying for the overthrow of the Philistine. She said do it through me. What did she pray for? You say a child.

No she didn't. What did she pray for? A man child. What did she get? A man child? No.

What did she get? A prophet. God did more than she could ask or think. But listen she went up yearly to the temple.

Don't you think people mocked her? Here's that barren woman again. Here she is. Why doesn't she give up? She knows her husband doesn't care for her.

He likes the other wife far more than her. And yet she went year after year after and not only that but when he was born she dedicated him to the temple. Can you imagine giving a baby at four or five to the temple and going every year and taking him a new suit of clothes and not see him again? It's like dear old Duncan Campbell said that the basic fact about Christianity is sacrifice.

If you have an experience of God that costs nothing it does nothing and it's worth nothing. It isn't theology that saves people. It's passionate love for Jesus Christ.

It's revelation of what we're here on earth for. What was the man that wrote? Come on now you scholarly people. He wrote the book Roots and they showed it on TV.

Oh thank you. Alex Haley. Good.

You'll get full marks tonight. Somebody asked him what's the next thing you're going to study? He said I want to know before I want to know why I've been here. Do you ever face up to that? That's an ungodly man.

What am I doing in this world? Have I a mission? Have I a commission? Have I an obligation? You see we take liberty for license. We're free but we're not free to the uttermost. Free from sin I hope.

Free from the fear of man. Free from the dead of death. But around the crib there you've only got few people.

You've got Hannah. I told you the other week that now the computers are out. They estimate that Hannah at this time.

No Anna. Hannah's the old testament. Anna was 106 years of age.

So cheer up JB you have a long way to go. 106 years of age and yet she continually went to the temple. Don't you think they were designated as stupid? This old lady's coming up.

She's been coming here for the last 60 years. She goes to the same place. She prays.

She cries to God and it's always the same. I'm waiting for the salvation of Israel. And you know what? She's in cahoots with or cahoots whatever you say with Simeon the silly old priest there.

But doesn't the scripture say if two of you shall agree as touching anything in my name? And yes there were just about half a dozen of waiting for the promise of God to be fulfilled. You know one of the necessary ingredients of the Christian life particularly in prayer is patience. Somebody said one night to miss George Muller one of the great men of prayer down the centuries.

He said I was in a meeting last night your friend whatever his name was got saved. Isn't that great? He said yes. He said I thought you'd been praying for him for 15 years.

I have. Well aren't you going to celebrate? He said your prayer was answered last night. He said friend my prayer was answered the first night I prayed 15 years ago.

God gave me assurance. This is the fulfillment of the prayer. You know there are times I think when we get assurance we ought not to pray again about a thing.

Blessed assurance. What do you mean? Brother Farrar's favorite thing blessed assurance. Perfect submission.

All is at rest. Is it right? Are we at rest? Today they've kept saying what we want is peace on earth. They ask famous people I want peace on earth.

Sure they do. They want peace on earth. They don't want the prince of peace.

Here are the thought they've come and if you're shopping mall or somewhere you'll see a beautiful stable scene with men with crowns on their heads bowing down. That's totally Tommy Rott. The wise men never saw him.

They saw the young child. They didn't get it. It was the shepherds that went to see the babe.

They went to seek a young child. They come for years following that star. But again there's only a few there.

The initiated are waiting for his coming. You know we kind of just read it there it goes like that. The first thing Jesus did before he could walk or talk was divide people.

Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. The minority were not. They were happy.

They were thrilled. Can you imagine oh dear old Anna going home that night. He's coming.

He's coming. He's coming. He's come.

Hey Simeon let's have a celebration. They didn't take a bottle of wine or some other junk. They just magnified the Lord.

Here he is a salvation of God. How do you think Mary felt? Again we pass over the story so easily. Don't you think everybody said you know that little girl Mary.

She's a tramp. She's pregnant and she says she never knew a man. That's a tall story.

You see it's too tall for the average man today. You can't believe the Bible. You go to school and let the children go to school and hear Carl.

What's his name? Carl Sagan. He'll tell you when the first star was put there within about four billion years and you can't challenge him because he saw it all. He's the supreme authority.

You can't believe this written word of the living God that makes men holy a believer unbeliever like that and stuff it into children. Tonight they said on the news that the last news we heard were one of the big cities in Alabama that they had an illuminated cross on top of a church. They asked it to be taken down.

We're getting more and more and more an unchristian nation. We're pumping all this junk into the young people's minds about humanism. Humanism is God-centered.

Christianity is Christ-centered and you can't marry the two. There's no way. So it's a great thing to have assurance in prayer.

I think one of the keys at least to me is Hebrews 11 6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is. He is what? He is what he says he is. He's who he says he is.

He's able to save to the uttermost. He's able to keep you from falling. He's able to present us faultless before his father's throne.

There is no inability with God. There is no ignorance with God. There's no limitation with God.

And yet you see we've such a paltry conception. Brother Farrar was talking tonight about Thomas Boston. He said it was Thomas Watson but you expect an American to say that.

It was Thomas Boston he wrote the fourfold state. When did you write that? About 1600 something. 1712? I didn't know it was so late.

Anyhow it's a long while ago. Yeah I think a connection now. Okay 1712 he wrote the fourfold state.

Brother what's that Bishop Morrison. Jack raise your hand so they can see you. No come on don't be half-hearted.

There you are. Now he has a book it sells at uh with mailing it sells at what does it sell at? Thirty dollars uh looking unto Jesus. Written in 1591.

It has 700 pages on the second verse in Hebrews 12. Why does Hebrews 12 begin? None of you know? Come on you have to get a prize again. Good good.

You got three out of three you're doing well. We're a cumbersome and we're so great a cloud of witness. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us and run with patience the race that is set before us.

Patience. You don't need patience to run you sure do. The first time I was at college I had a run in the afternoon a marathon.

Boy did I run. Oh there are two teams the fast ones and the slow ones. Good night who's going to go with the slow teams the old guys.

We ran through the college grounds. A fella nudged me he says don't go with the first pack. I said you mind your business I can run.

We got up the road. Oh I pulled back that was when I got to the gate I pulled back they were going so fast. I was almost exhausted the first mile.

We got five miles up the road all the fast pack was sitting on a wall looking at the river they were exhausted. Run with patience and we talk about a man getting a second winding. Let us run with patience the race that is set before looking unto Jesus the author.

This man wrote in 1591. Or was it Ambrose? Was it 1691? 1691. 700 pages on one two on the second verse.

Boy I should have lived in those days I'd have enjoyed preaching. Services went on for nine hours. I have a record on my desk now maybe I told you.

They asked let's call him uh Dr. A to pray and he said he opened the meeting in prayer. He prayed for two hours. They asked Dr. B to preach.

He preached for four hours. They asked Dr. C to close in prayer. He closed after two hours of praying.

The meeting lasted nine hours. Good night. We'd have to call the mortuary and if we had meetings nine hours our folk would die.

Oh meetings are long. I preach in Methodist church. Good night my old family Methodist.

Some years ago in the Carolinas the first Sunday morning 5 to 12 a woman got up and stamped out to the door. She did it a second Sunday morning. I said to the pastor what in the world's wrong with it? Oh she always leaves at five minutes to 12.

She wants to get out before the crowd go out of church. The third Sunday morning she walked to other. I said lady hey.

So she stopped. I said you walked out two Sunday mornings. You don't like the presence of God? What are you going to do when you go to heaven? Walk out to hell? It's the only option you have.

Oh he said you're hurt to feelings. I don't care as long as I walk her out. We can't enjoy a nice meeting.

It's too long. It's too long. Isn't it? People go to an opera for three hours.

It's not too long. They go to a football game. Takes them an hour and a half to get to the Cowboys.

A dying team but anyhow. They go up there and they sit for about three hours and watch it and eat. What do they do? Drink soda pop and what do they eat? Corn.

I said cornflakes. Corn chips or something. I think that's what the team eats.

Cornflakes. But you know to get there an hour and a half. Come back an hour and a half.

Stay there three hours. That's not too long. Why? They're excited.

The holy presence of God should be so real in the sanctuary that as Phineas said, when God is in residence people are pulled in. When he's not the devil pulls them out. We're not seeing the manifest power of God as we should see that power.

And I trust we're going to do that. Well anyhow we go back to the to the crib. Again all this seduction in the churches pulling young people.

I don't know a church. I told a lady the other day I don't know a preacher within 50 miles. She was a bit angry with me.

I said well okay. Get angry I don't care. Where's the thus saith the Lord? When do we tiptoe out of the sanctuary? Awed with the majesty the holiness of God.

We don't. So there's not many there when Jesus comes. There's the crib and all the sanctified people around it.

No decorations. No fancy stuff. You know I had a book some years ago.

I think a preacher borrowed it. They're the biggest thieves of books I know. It was called English Messiahs.

And there's a woman there and it describes her. Southcote I think her name was. Johanna Southcote.

A single woman and suddenly she declared to this big assembly that she was pregnant by the Holy Ghost. I've never known a man you know that. I live in seclusion.

And she had all the symptoms. Gradually she got larger, larger, larger. And in those days they didn't have the tests they have today.

And she said I'm going to bring the man child into the world. What did they do? They made a cradle. One of these swinging things you know.

And instead of having brass supports they had solid gold supports. Everything around the thing was so extravagant. And right until the day before she was supposed to have the child everybody believed in her.

Because there's nothing happened. There was no preparation like that. What was the first message Jesus preached? Come on Matthew 11 28.

Get four points. Come it starts Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden. For my yoke is easy.

I am meek, meek. Isn't he meek in all everything? Why did he come the first time with 10,000 of Old Testament saints scorching through the sky on the chariot that Elijah went to heaven up in? He could have captured the world. He didn't do it like that way.

He came in through a back door. I believe all his life he had the smear over him. That he's a bastard.

He was never born of God. His mother was a tramp. The ignominy, the shame right through his life.

But when he comes to the cross you don't get a handful of people. You get a roaring crowd of unbelievers, sightseers. As I've said to you when I if I make an altar call, which isn't often now, I never say bow your heads and close your eyes.

Jesus didn't say to his disciples you know this is my greatest humiliation. I'm going to have to go to the cross with a thief in front of me, a thief behind me, harlots and sinners and all kinds of vile people reproaching me, scorning me, ridicule me. He didn't do that.

He went triumphantly to the cross. We don't like scorn. We don't like reproach.

There are very few few people that can say I don't care whether people like me or not. We like to be appreciated. We like to say who this that and the other is.

I was talking the other day about someone saying a nice word for a preacher I know. He said yes he's all right but he's a name dropper. You know when you hear people dropping names to me it means they're insecure.

They're trying to lean on somebody else. As I've said to you I don't have many friends. I could count them all on two hands and my feet anyhow.

Acquaintances yes, people I know, but friends no. Jesus was deserted, scorned from his birth, deserted at the cross. But then you get moved from the cross to the crown.

Let's go now over to where am I going to now? Revelation chapter 5. What's a sign of Christmas in the world? It begins with M. A merry Christmas. Christmas to them is jollification. Christmas to us is the incarnation.

The next step from the incarnation is justification of the cross. And the next step after that is resurrection. As a dear old Baptist preacher said in the last century, without the incarnation the resurrection is impossible.

And without the resurrection the incarnation is incomplete. But to people make merry is a jolly time. Merry Christmas, have fun, get drunk, have a show.

All the world wants is jollification. But what we see in that wonderful babe there is the incarnation. As Wesley put it, God contracted to a span incomprehensibly made man.

That lovely hymn that half drunk people will sing. In fact half the Christians or 90% of Christians that sing it don't understand it. Charles Wesley's hymn, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Mild ye ladies glory by.

What do you think the angels thought going back to heaven empty-handed? When they reported he's staying down on earth. Hmm? Where did you leave him? In the palace? No. We left him in a lovely place.

It had wall-to-wall carpeting. It was manure. It was fragrant with stinking urine.

Curtains were made of cobwebs. The heating system was sweating beasts. And the light was a flickering candle.

And there he who created the heavens and the earth, there he was born. In the darkness of a stinking horrible stable. He was there before the world began.

Before as the scripture says so beautifully, before the trees of the field clapped their hands. Before the morning stars sang together. What do you think heaven was like? I've never yet heard maybe Gabriel Farrar to preach one day on the loneliness of God without his son for 30 years.

Hmm? Ever hear anybody preach on that? Ever hear anybody preach on the agony of the father? I've never tried to think of the anticipation of Mary. Oh well it says there that 750 years before Jesus came he will be born of a virgin, yes. Go a bit further into the chapter.

What does it say? You go to the 35th chapter where it says what will he do? When he comes the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped. It would sound as though the whole world would reach out for him. Then you go to the 53rd.

And the 53rd chapter it says there, Who hath believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? He shall grow before him as a tender plant. There is no beauty that we should desire him. He's like a root out of a dry ground.

Then what's he going to say? His soul shall be made an offering for sin. The Catholics make a lot of his body but that's not what he died, that's not what brought his salvation, it was his soul that was made an offering for sin. So there were a few anticipating his birth.

There were more people when you get to the cross but then you come to the crown. Let me read this before I forget. A chapter.

My dear principal drilled some things into my mind. He said every Sunday, he got up early in the morning and he had to preach twice and he said every Sunday morning I read Revelation chapter 5 through. Every Monday morning after a good meeting or a bad meeting he said I read Isaiah 41.

In Isaiah 41 and verse 8, I've forgotten how it begins now. Isaiah 41. Thou Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

He said I need to know that. Thou whom I've taken from the ends of the earth and called thee unto the chief men thereof. And he goes on, fear not I will help thee, I will strengthen thee, I will uphold thee.

But you see that wonderful psalm, I thought of it earlier today. What does it say? The psalmist says the Lord of hosts is with us. So what? What do you mean by host? Do you mean the heavenly host that he speaks of? Do you mean the host of Israel? Because he narrows it down from there.

He's the God of the host but he says the God of Jacob is our refuge. He's the God of the individual. F. B. Meyer said he preached one Sunday morning and an old lady, you know this old lady turns up

everywhere.

And the little old lady waiting for him to come out of the pulpit and she grabbed his hand and she said oh the host of wonderful sermon. Stepping back a minute somebody said that to Spurgeon one day. A lady said you know I think that's the greatest sermon ever preached in the world since the apostles.

I want to be the first to tell you. He said you're the second. She said no I'm nobody.

Nobody came out of the pulpit except you. He said you're the second. Well who told you that? The devil he said.

As soon as I finished preaching the devil said that's the best sermon that's ever been preached. But F. B. Meyer said the little old lady said to him do you know what you revealed to me? I personally have a whole Christ to myself. All that he can be to anybody through the ages he can be to me.

I'm poor, I'm needy, but I love him with all my heart, soul, mind and strength. And therefore my degree of yearliness to God I believe is degree of his degree of yearliness to me. He's not going to cram himself into my life.

He doesn't come. We talk about the holy ghost. Where does the word ghost come from? It's an old English word guest.

The holy ghost was in some translations the holy guest. We have a hymn in England singing at Keswick a lot. Our blessed redeemer ere he breathed his tender last farewell a guide a comforter bequeath with us to dwell.

He came sweet influence to impart a gracious willing guest where he may find a humble heart wherein to rest. How long does your guest stay? As long as I want it. And then they go.

You know we we assume because we've kind of got you know saved and filled with the spirit my goodness look how far up the road we are. Are we? I don't think so. Revelation 5 I said the right hand of him that sat on the throne of book written within on the back sealed with seven seals I saw a strong angel notice it's an angel there proclaiming with a loud voice who is worthy to open the book.

Verse 3 no man in heaven or in earth no man in heaven or earth or under the earth was able to take the book. Remind you again briefly here he says no man in heaven. Elijah you do it no.

Ezekiel you do it no. Jeremiah you do it. Isaiah you do it.

Abraham you're the friend of God you take the book out of there. I don't don't touch it. No man in heaven or in earth or under the earth could come forward and take the title deeds of the universe out of the one that sat on the throne.

No man nor in heaven or earth nor under the earth was able to take. I wept much. Do you know the greek says there it says he was convulsed with tears.

It wasn't just a weak sod it was the same word that's used of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. Jesus didn't see the streets he didn't see the cattle he didn't see the fat priest he was seeing the footsteps or the footprints of Jeremiah and Isaiah and all the great saints of God and he said you've crucified them. I mean he said you've destroyed them and he knew they were going to destroy him and he wept over Jerusalem.

I wonder if he weeps over America tonight. Blaise Pascal said that back in 1531 or something he personally had a confrontation with Jesus. I've reminded you that Solson Hetson was lying on a bed of rotting straw in the Gulag in Russia concentration camp when he met God through another man who carried scriptures in his rags.

On the other hand this precious man this most brilliant man the world's ever had as far as I'm concerned this man who made the greatest inventions at 14 and 19 and 20. I think I gave you a runoff of that Virginia did I? If not I'll send it to some of your men get it and give those young ladies it next year. But it's fabulous here's a man of a colossal intellect here's a man in retirement in a monastery and yet God meets a man down here.

You know we only expect sometimes to meet God in the sanctuary. What did that precious little man say in the seventh chapter of Acts? Stephen in his defense said when God appeared to our father Abraham where? Mesopotamia. What a hellhole.

All Mesopotamia was was a super Las Vegas. Nudity, drunkenness, vulgarity, idolatry, superstition everything was there and yet God appears to him there. What's the man doing on the back side of the desert? He should have been riding in a chariot down main street and there he is looking after stinking sheep and the bush sets on fire.

Do you wonder that wasn't Madame Guillen that said or Faber said could I be cast where thou art not that were indeed a dreadful spot but with thee my God to guide the way it is equal joy to go or stay. I remember the first time I went to a prayer meeting in Ireland what a dump it was it was it was an earthen floor no fire no light a flickering oil lamp. But I remember the first night I was there somebody prayed part of an old Methodist hymn where we seek thee thou art found and every place is hallowed ground.

I'm challenged every day of my life by the prisoners in Russia I'm convinced there's my counterpart there that today has worshipped God more deeply more sincerely. They can't get out and go shopping every time they want to go. They can't run here they can't run there.

We've got people now in in this state whose lifestyle has been tragic uh not tragically but drastically changed because of the oil collapse. But lots of them years ago could have given up lots of the things that they're forced to give up now being forced to do this forced to do that forced to do the other. You see God isn't after conscription.

I only know of one man who was compelled to bear the cross and that was that big black man that picked up the cross when Jesus fell. He had to carry the cross by compulsion. It's compulsory in this sense you can't be disciple without it but God doesn't take you and hang you over hell in order to make you surrender all your rights.

In fact he shows us of his love more often doesn't he? He says I wept much because no man was found worthy. Let me read it from my testament here. I like this better.

It's the same thing but I like it better. Okay revelation 5 3. No man in heaven or earth nor under the earth was able to open the book neither to look thereon. I wept much.

I was convulsed with tears. My whole spirit was broken he says. What's going to happen now? He's died to make it possible there's nobody worthy to do it.

I wept much no man was able to do this. Now look what it says. I want to say the next verse.

Then the angel Gabriel came to me. Does it say that? Oh I've got it wrong. Oh Michael the archangel came.

No? Well one of the angels. No? Wouldn't you think Gabriel would come up and blow his trumpet and say listen? But it isn't Gabriel. It isn't Michael the archangel.

It isn't even the angel. It says one of the elders a man who himself had been redeemed and regenerated. It's he who is intoxicated now with joy.

He's not weeping and broken. One of the elders said to me weep not. Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah.

I want to take that one Friday night. Hath prevailed to open the book. Prevailed? Jump now down to verse 12 or verse 11.

I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders. The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. Angels are never numbered are they in revelation? Is it in first Kings 19 where it talks about an angel or second Kings 19? One angel was going home.

He dipped his wing too low and he destroyed what 185,000 people. One angel. And Jesus said on the we singing a song that there's a lovely hymn called he could have called 10,000 angels.

Jesus said I could call 12 legions. Well the lowest denominator of a legion is 5,000. The largest is 10.

If he could have called 10 legions of angels. Well you multiply that. What 10 legions? 10,000 times 10,000 is what? 100 million? And yet one angel with his one wing could destroy 175,000 people.

If he called 10,000 then he could have wiped the whole human race out. But he doesn't do that. You know sometimes you get a near squeak as they say in England.

A squeak you say a close call. You know very often I think there was an interception by angels there. We're not aware of angels.

Somebody some people make too much fuss of it. But I believe he still gives his angels charge concerning us. He gave his angels charge concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

The number of them was 10,000 times 10,000 plus thousands of no number. Saying not singing but saying with a loud voice worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. Now step back a minute and read that verse again over in the fifth chapter.

Verse 5. One of the elders saith unto me weep not behold the lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book. And I beheld and lo the throne and lo in the midst of the throne. Tell me right now can you think of it when's the first time you do you remember Jesus being in the midst where was it? Come on lady get the fifth one you got four.

Well it was when he was a little boy in the midst of the temple asking them questions. Then in Matthew 28 isn't it where he says there where two or three are gathered together in my name. Boram the great Australian essayist calls it the blind man's text.

He says there's a blind man there he knows there's not many people there because the preacher says where two or three are gathered in my name. But there you have him he's in the midst asking questions as a child. He's in the midst in the 28th chapter of Matthew when he says where two or three are gathered together together in my name there am I in the midst.

Now what's the other thing I'm thinking of here? Is it Matthew 28 where he's yeah what does it say sorry read it for me yes. Now what's the other scripture where he was in the midst? You know what we do we're so determined to get filled with the Holy Ghost we forget the disciples had the Holy Ghost a long while before Pentecost. He says he came in the upper room and breathed on them and said receive ye the Holy Ghost.

Did they receive him? Sure they did. What did Wesley call that? The witness of the spirit. The spirit bears witness with my spirit.

God is a spirit. I'm a spirit. Spirit to spirit doubtless speak.

And there in the upper room he breathed on them and said receive ye the Holy Ghost. They received the Holy Ghost. But when it comes to Acts 2 they received him upon baptism.

It's like a man we a man we know there in the in the Bahamas. And the Queen of England decided to make him a knight. Boy did he get excited.

Weren't they all excited? He had to wear knee breeches you know and silk stockings and go of black shoes with silver buckles. In other words he had to go according to the protocol. And the Queen was but the head newspaper said uh so and so won't call his name but it said he's going to be knighted.

He's going to Buckingham Palace. He was already announced in the paper the Queen had announced it but he must go for his investiture and he must kneel there and she takes a sword and puts it on his shoulder. His name is Leonard by the way.

And she puts the sword over and says rise Sir Leonard and he's a knight. The disciples received the witness of the Holy Spirit of God in the upper room. I don't believe they could have tarried those 50 days.

They weren't in despair. They weren't yelling. They weren't screaming.

What does it say? They saw Jesus sent to heaven and they returned to Jerusalem with what? Sorrow? Great joy. The next 50 days it was ecstasy. We're getting nearer, a day nearer, nearer, nearer, nearer.

Then it's only one day to go because they knew that Pentecost meant the 50th. They were building up excitement and joy. They'd already got a treasure in there by the Holy Spirit.

They'd a witness. But they're going to get the upon baptism and then doom and with power to quicken every faculty of their being. I don't know what you feel like.

I feel these days like our dear Paul said, Daddy I feel we're so near to something. There must be a breakthrough. The church, I don't care what you call it, Pentecostal or Presbyterian.

We're not apostolic. We're not biblical. Tell me in God's name where is a church where people go to church every day, pray every day and people are saved every day.

That's a normal Christian life. That's what Jesus died for. So here is this man, not an archangel, not a seraphim, not a cherubim, but he's saying here in this fifth chapter in Revelation, verse five, one of the elders, again I'm stressing this because I hadn't noticed it before like today, not an archangel, not a cherubim, not a seraphim, not an angel, an elder, a man who had been redeemed by the precious blood.

He'd been regenerated. You know a popular preacher now is always saying you know what we need to do. We need to go to these countries and tell them about Jesus.

We don't. Who's soaked in the word of Jesus more than people in South America. They have a cross on the wall.

They have a shrine there with a virgin. I wonder all these people getting saved in these countries. Do they pull the crucifix down? Do they take the virgin away? Are they genuinely born again? My dear Martha and I, two weeks ago I went to a assembly of God church, a gorgeous church, a praying church, a church that fasts and prays down in New Iberia and it was blessed there and we had a minister's meeting.

I was introduced to a very fine looking man. Eleven years before that he was the most powerful Roman Catholic priest in the area. That whole area is Roman Catholic.

In fact 80% of the church has come out of the church of Rome. Born again, spirit filled believers. Do you know how he got saved? He was reading through Hebrews and he read Hebrews 1 and it stunned him.

What does it say? God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake by the Father's last day spoke to us by his Son. And then what has he gone to say? When he had purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Father. No, no, no, this was what hit him.

When he had by himself and he immediately said that, he said well the Mass is no good. There was one priest came once and did one thing. He was the altar, he was the priest, he was the sacrifice, it was his blood and all the Mass is corruption, which it is.

But does people, all these people getting so wonderfully saved, do they quit the Roman church? I don't think so. Or there'll be more persecution. Ask our dear Paul what it's like when their young people get saved, they get kicked out of the house.

You have to find some place for them. Right from the beginning they have to suffer persecution. Dear Lord, our people can't give up Christmas trees, can't give up all the tinsel and the toys, we'd never survive.

We'd have to have a Holy Ghost revival before the Communists get here, or we'd be sunk. But it's that word again there, that little word, he hath prevailed. Come find him.

Okay, in the middle of verse five. Weep not, behold the line of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed. To open the book, prevailed against what? Every device of the devil.

Prevailed over forty days of temptation in the wilderness, tempted in all points, tempted sexually because he's tied as a man. Offer the kingdoms of this world. What do you mean by the kingdom? Not the real estate, the devil has more sense than that, he knew Jesus owned the whole world.

I believe he offered him the intellectual kingdom, in the brilliance of the Greeks of those days. I believe he offered him the religious kingdom, because the Jews had authority. I believe he offered him the Roman, the military kingdom, because the Romans had conquered the world.

And he says, you can have all these kingdoms, here you are. Jesus didn't say you're a liar, they don't belong to you. They did belong to him, they still do.

He's the God of this world. And yet Jesus triumphed over him, all heaven watching on. What will he do? And there he is, fasting alone in the desert, as the hymn writer says.

If you're going to be a true Christian, I'll tell you one thing amongst others, it'll be a lonely life. It's a narrow way, and you know what, it gets narrower and narrower and narrower. I liken it to walking on a tightrope.

You don't see people shaking hands on a tightrope. Even when they go to a zoo, I mean, what do you call the other thing? Carnival, circus, same thing. In the zoo you have monkeys on wires, in the circus you have people on wires.

You don't see them shaking hands, and no, they get over as quickly as they can. And this is a narrow way, and few there be that find it. You know, if we had a super, super revival of a billion people being saved, it would still be too much.

Well, can you imagine a billion people being saved in governments, in hospitals, in universities, in schools, business people, a billion people being saved? And yet there'd still be four billion people lost because there's five billion people in the world. You know, we're such a, well, there's a book by J.B. Phillips, I never read it, I've had it twenty years, it's on my shelves, I let Jack read it. What's it called? Your God is Too Small.

I'm angered in my spirit against the church these days. Again, fooling with these young people. Why don't we get them filled with the Holy Ghost? Why don't we get them to pray? Is there a church in town where youth have a prayer meeting? I'll find out.

Where they get down and study the Word of God, do they know the basics of the atonement? What do they know? All they know is they got saved. They shed a few tears, got baptized, and were accepted in the church. That's about it.

He hath prevailed. Over what? Well, again, over all the power of the devil. He prevailed when he triumphed, not only the forty days in the wilderness.

What about, what about that black, black period, where prophetically in the Psalms, all thy billows have gone over me? In other words, in the garden of Gethsemane. If I could live one day with Jesus, I used to think I'd like to be there at Gethsemane. I couldn't stand it, it would destroy me.

I would like to have heard him pray, rather than hear him preach, rather than hear him, see him raise the dead. But he hath prevailed, he prevailed, prevailed over the devil, for forty days. He prevailed over demons, he cast out demons, he prevailed over sickness, he prevailed, prevailed over death, Jairus' daughter, and all the other people.

But he prevailed himself, in the loneliness, when everybody else, you know, that petulant Peter that says, you can't trust John and these other fellows, boy, they'll let you down. I won't, I'll never let you down. I'll be with you right to the end.

And Jesus said, before the cock crows thrice, you'll deny me twice. And somebody said to me the other day, we don't know what we're made of till we get into that situation. It's so easy to be strong, isn't it? On

paper.

So easy to have idealism in our minds, but it's working it out. God works it in, but our problem is working it out. But the line of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed.

Verse 12 in chapter 5, 10,000 times 10,000, and thousands of times. I think that's right, 10,000 times 10,000, we'll be 100 million. And thousands of times, saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb that was slain.

Huh? How many of you played the Messiah records over? You do good. How many of you do good? You know, I love that there's three main chorus, everyone likes the Hallelujah chorus most. I like that first chorus, Blessing.

His name to me called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father. I can't sit on the chair, I get up. I either go pray or go write.

It's wonderful. But then the other one, boy, there's a quiet thing that says, worthy is the lamb. Hallelujah.

I hope Hamel makes it to heaven. He should do after writing that. But he says, I'm telling you, you see, here is a man who's been redeemed himself, regenerated himself.

And he sees this vast host of 100 million angels, and Jerobim, and Seraphim, and Michael, and Gabriel, that vast heavenly host who are saying, some of you heard Gregorian chants. How many of you heard a Gregorian chant? They're beautiful, aren't they? Majestic. We'd rather sing mansion over the hilltop.

Can you imagine 100 million chanting, worthy is the lamb that was slain? With voices more modulant than any that Whitefield, they said Whitefield could say to a crowd of 10,000 people, he could say Mesopotamia, they'd break into weeping. It's that modulation in his voice. He could whisper or his voice was like an organ.

A man sitting on a side of a hill, a mile from where he was preaching, heard him and got saved. Now they can sit under your nose, not you folk, but sit under your nose and not hear. What a strange day we're living in.

Father Farrar gave me a tip today about, tonight about reading a, I'm going to read that chapter in four-fold state. But you know, they're almost, the absent feature today in preaching, the least emphasis work of the Holy Ghost is conviction of sin. People don't go home to have sleepless nights.

They don't realize they've transgressed the Holy Ghost. They've trod the blood of Jesus Christ underground. They've sold Jesus for less than Judas sold him for.

They then live as they ought to live because my parents won't like it or somebody else won't like it. Oh, I'm an oddball, sure I am. I sure don't want to be like the rest of the crowd that's around.

You're too narrow. Well, that won't stop me getting through the eye of the needle if I'm too narrow. If you're too fat, you can't get through.

So don't be worried if they call you too narrow, say hallelujah, I'm graduating. Isn't that right? Jennifer didn't say so. Oh, Jennifer thinks so too.

Thank you, dear. Wouldn't it be wonderful, he says, look, gaze on the throne in the midst, look up in Revelation yourself, do some homework. How often he's in the midst, he's in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

He's in the midst of the four and twenty elders. And there he is with the candlesticks, there he is with the elders, but he's in the midst. And yet he says where two or three are gathered, I'm in the midst.

How do you explain him being in the midst here and midst there? Very easily, because he's omniscient and omnipresent. He's here, he's there, he's ministering to some poor old lonely individual missionary of the Amazon. But what he's trying to do, rivet your attention, there he is, the lamb that was slain, the lamb that was slain.

He has overcome what? Well, I've told you what he's overcome. Forty days in the wilderness, Gethsemane, loneliness, the rejection of the Father. That's going to be agonizing when it's explained to us at the cross.

Do you think for a minute these folks celebrating in town or churches, look it up, babe there and say, what he's going to do? He's going to be stronger than Samson, he's going to lift a billion sins. More than any, all the priests that ever lived right back to the Old Testament, you can take the leading priests, Aaron and his sons, and the subordinate priests, it does not matter what they have, this one man is going to take away the sin of the whole world. And that's why he says, in this wonderful word here, I keep looking at this verse five again, he hath prevailed to overcome, he hath prevailed.

Word is the lamb has prevailed. What has he done? Canceled a million sins, broken a billion fetters, changed hearts, renewed hearts, the Indian came in late again. You would think that boy was the worst boy in the tribe, drunken, drinking, and a friend there too.

Were you as bad as he was? Or worse? Not worse, no, he was the bottom of the pile. Hated every white man he ever saw until about two years ago. After all, he'd been trained to hate the white man.

We stole their land, we stole their reserves. What was it we bought Oklahoma, state of Oklahoma for what? Three million dollars. And the men that signed the contract were drunk.

The government, American government didn't go to the chiefs, they went to the drunks, and they signed it away. Two million acres of land for three million. Do you wonder he hated the white man? He lived in superstition.

His grandfather, he's still alive, is he, Spencer? Pardon? Well, who's the one that's a witch doctor? Oh, yeah. Well, he's got all that surrounding, living in that superstition, witchcraft, hatred, and yet Jesus got all of them and cleansed him, anointed him, he's got a new vision, he's got a passion for the lost like few men that I know. I want to appreciate Jesus now, not just when I get there.

I want to say my private devotions, worthy is the land that was slain, there he is in the midst of the throne, he's in the midst of us tonight, and he's in the midst of the throne at the same time. He's overcome what? To break every barrier so that whatever it is apart from sin in us, we can reach the throne of God. You know, if we really lived as we should live, every time we walk in the house, put clothes, we'd say, these are priestly garments I'm wearing, he's made us a kingdom of priests unto God, every meal is a sacrament, everything is holy, we don't have to wait till we get there, it's right down here.

We ought to live and move and have our being, as Paul says in a verse, I can't fathom. He says, I live, move, and have my being in God. I don't want anything outside of God.

I don't want anything outside of salvation. I don't want anything outside of the finished work of Jesus Christ, because there's nobody can add to it, and nobody can take from it. He's got a permanent throne, a permanent kingdom, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.

And every time I think of that, as I mentioned earlier, I think of Hitler, strutting up there, little stinking guy he was, Charlie Chaplin's mustache on his lip, defying everybody. Mussolini, wasn't United Nations then, it was League of Nations. You know, the League of Nations succeeded the other group, the Hague in Holland, years before, every time the United Nations breaks down, it changes its name.

It's United Nations. Who have they united? I can tell you, more they've divided than they've united. Hitler strutted, he said, the Third Reich, the First Reich was a mighty Roman Empire.

He said, my empire will last a thousand years, it didn't last a thousand weeks. And so it says there in Hebrews 1, I love that, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. What's the epistle to the Hebrews, to tell us about the furniture in the tabernacle? No, to exalt Christ, to tell us he's the first and the last, the beginning and the ending.

They see Jesus there in a crib, they like to think about him, they don't think about the ending. You can't very well go behind people in a shopping center and say, do you know that represents? Oh yes, a little baby that came into the world, a redeemer, a sufferer, one who bore the sins of the whole world. And do you know what? Before too long, he's going to set up a kingdom.

We're going to live in the imperial kingdom of the imperial king, Jesus Christ. You won't bow the knee now, you'll bow it then. Every knee shall bow.

And so there's a simple graphic picture, a few people at the manger, many more people at the cross, but multitudes there which no man can number. Angels in the background, cherubim, seraphim, and then all the redeemed of all the ages. I'm struggling to write a book.

I get turned off so often, I get to praising and magnifying the Lord and I can't wait till, you know, he says that one word. I reminded you before that when Jesus went to raise Lazarus from the dead, he said, Lazarus come forth. Why did he say come forth? Because if it said come forth, all the cemetery would have come.

And it wasn't time, but there's going to be a day when he, that same Christ, is going to speak and everybody that died, from Adam to the last trumpet sound, they're going to rise. There's a man upon Mount Everest, about 32,000 feet, 31,000 feet, an English student that died in 1931, I think. He could make it to the top, the others couldn't, but he disappeared.

And there he's embalmed in ice. The other day they showed a picture of the, or was it this week, the annual remembrance of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. What's the ship called? The Abizoner is sunk there with 2,500 men in that steel coffin.

They've tried to get to them, but each time the foul gases have driven them out. There's 2,500 American soldiers and sailors in that boat. I've seen it.

The water washes about a foot over the deck in Pearl Harbor. Who's buried in the pyramids? I don't know. What about all the people, all the blood-stained battlefields of the world? They're going to come from every kindred and race and people and tongue, kings and commoners, Tsars of Russia, Caliphs of Baghdad, Maharajas of India.

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