

The World Has Not Seen What God Can Do Through A Man

by Leonard Ravenhill

This sermon emphasizes the importance of total commitment and surrender to Jesus Christ, drawing examples from historical figures like D.L. Moody and the apostle Paul. It highlights the transformation that occurs when God takes hold of a person's life, turning them from a persecutor into a powerful messenger of the gospel. The message challenges believers to let go of worldly attachments, pride, and self-interest, and to fully embrace the life of faith in Christ, allowing Him to live through them.

Scripture: Galatians 2:20, Galatians 6:14, John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 3:6, Romans 8:10, 1 Corinthians 3:1, Romans 6:6, Acts 9:1

Topics: "Total Commitment", "Transformation in Christ"

Description

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Transcript

I write at the beginning of history, Christian history. There was a man who was so totally sold out to God that we, I don't think, have ever seen these like sins. And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it. Neither yet now are ye able, for ye are yet carnal. For whereof there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed? Even as the Lord gave to every man, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. There was a man by the name of Henry Varley. He was a great preacher, and on one occasion he shot out a statement which has become a kind of classic in the vocabulary of preachers.

He said the world is yet to see what God can do through one man who is totally committed to Jesus Christ. There was a young man, he wasn't very learned, and so he said under his breath, well, by the grace of God I'll be that man. And some of you know him, I'm sure, his name was D.L. Moody.

You know, when I think of that, I always take issue with it because I'm quite sure that that was not a true statement. Right at the beginning of history, Christian history, there was a man who was so totally sold out to God that I don't think I've ever seen his like since. But going down that Damascus road, God got hold of that murderer and made him a messenger.

He got hold of the persecutor and made him the greatest preacher ever. He got hold of the executor and made him the greatest expounder of the gospel that the world has ever seen. He daringly says over and over, you remember Galatians 2.20, quote it so often, that I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live.

Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. I believe that's the most awesome thing any man can take inside of eternity. Not that he walked on the moon, not that he's in the who's who.

The only who's who I'm interested in, God's who's who. When we get up there, there'll be some shocks, I think. The greatest thing that could ever cross your lips is to stand and say to the world, the flesh, the devil, the in-laws and outlaws, Christ liveth in me.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, not when I shuffle off this mortal coil as Shakespeare says, but the life I now live in the flesh, surrounded with all the adversities and temptations and trials and all the things that can come, and yet Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. Paul has an amazing pedigree, he forgets it all.

As he ends his letter to the Galatians, he says in the 14th verse of chapter 6, that God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me, and I am to the world. And Paul says, when I said goodbye to the world, I said goodbye to a filthy thing, the world is crucified to me. It's a filthy world, it's a corrupt world.

But not only that, he says I'm crucified to the world. People would say of the apostle Paul, here's a man, he's got acres of culture, he's got a collateral intellect, he'll be a greater high priest than Hillel or any other high priest you ever had in history. And the fool of a man, he's been so charmed with this Christianity that he's resigned all that he could have in the world.

Yeah, it's easier for you and I to sing with Isaac Watts, we're the whole realm of nature, mate. I'm afraid we don't do it. Love's so amazing, so divine.

This man had a revelation of God that I don't think anybody's had before or since. I'm quite sure he quoted with certainty, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. He sees the great expanse of the world.

Why look at this man's staggering life. He began his life in the historic capital of the world, Tarsus. He ended his life in the military capital of the world, Rome.

He went to the intellectual capital of the world in the 17th of Acts there and they discovered this little undersized man. When they saw him, they said his bodily presence is weak and discovered he had a staggering scintillating intellect. They quoted poetry, answered with poetry.

They quoted philosophy, answered with philosophy. They quoted their history, he answered with their history. This man is all round, he's a fully developed man.

And they're staggered by this amazing man. If you read about the 25th chapter, it says the anointing shall not come upon the flesh. If you anoint the flesh, you'll be cursed.

There's so much flesh today. So much of me, of self, of self-pity, self-interest, self-glory. I say if you come to this altar, come to die.

Tell God I'm going to lose all my right this morning. Tell him you'd rather live six months with the anointing of the Holy Ghost and another 60 years without it. Tell him you pledge your hands and your feet and your mind, all you know and all you don't know.

Bring that wretched pride that's always getting at you, that envy that's eating you up, that jealousy that mars you, that temper. Don't ask for help, ask God to nail it to the cross. And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it. Neither yet now are ye able, for ye are yet carnal. For whereof there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed? Even as the Lord gave to every man, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

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