

The Voice of the Holy Spirit

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I would speak tonight on the Voice of the Spirit. I want to read some Scripture, John 16, 7 down to 11. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment, of sin because they believe not on Me, of righteousness because I go to my Father and ye see Me no more, or of judgment because the prince of this world is judged.

In Revelation 2 and 3, I'll not read them, seven times the text is repeated. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying unto the churches. Then in the last chapter of Revelation, verse 17, the Spirit and the Bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.

Let us pray. Our Father, in us, in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. In our minds dwell no power of persuasion. Without Thee we can do nothing, but with thee we can do all things. So now, Father, we turn away, as though we were taking an axe away from a little boy and giving it to a man. As though we were shoving aside an amateur and letting a master sit down to the instrument. We shove aside the man that men know, and we invite the man Christ Jesus to speak and to effectively confirm the word by the Holy Ghost. Help us tonight, Lord. Tomorrow may be too late. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now, let me say again that the world we inhabit is a lost world. And the inhabitants of the world are lost. The inhabitants of the world are lost, not in any poetic sense of the word, but they are lost by a mighty, calamitous visitation of woe too grave, too terrible to describe.

And to make it worse still, this lostness is inside the heart. You see, there are two ways of getting lost down here. There is the way that a child may sometimes get lost in the city, go around the block and cross the street and forget where it is. It is geographically lost or physically lost, but it knows it's lost, and its lostness is external.

Then there is the confirmed amnesia victim that is lost in his mind. He does not remember who he is, how old he is, where he was born, what he did, does not remember anything up to a given moment yesterday or the day before.

That is a worse kind of lostness than the lostness of a child that wanders down the street and can't find his way home. For a dozen policemen will help with the child, and the child will advertise to high heaven that it's lost. But the amnesia victim doesn't know that he's lost. And his closest and dearest friends, his own wife, can come and speak to him, and he's courteous but completely detached and indifferent. He's lost inside. And to add still to the terror of this situation, the inhabitants of the world are not only lost, and not only lost inwardly, but worst of all is that they scarcely know that they are lost.

Now, that's the state we're in. And yet there are voices that are entreating us, and it gives me great pleasure to say, and this is basic to the Christian message, that while the world is a lost world, it is not yet a forsaken world. God is speaking in many voices, and there are voices that entreat us because God has not forsaken His lost world. He said, and cried, Adam, where art thou?

You'll find all through the Bible the voices of entreaty, of invitation, of alarm. Ho, every one that is thirsty, come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money, come ye, buy. Wine and milk without money and without price. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. And I will give you rest.

Now, those are only samples of the many hundreds of verses that are sounding and echoing through the Scriptures. But the clearest, loudest, most easily distinguishable voice is the voice of the Spirit. And His voice gives grave and serious meaning to any other and to all other voices.

For if it were not for the presence of the Spirit uttering His voice through the consciences of the world, no other voice would have any significance whatsoever. It would all be sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, giving forth no meaning, for Jesus our Lord, tells us here of the Holy Spirit's work in the world.

And He says in the text, when He is come, when He is come. When the writer wrote the song, The Comforter is Come, he set in fairly good hymnody one of the great facts of the world, that the Comforter is here. And the Comforter came to confirm Christ's words and Christ's works and Christ's person.

Now, the words of the Lord Jesus Christ were words so lofty and so astounding as those of no other religious teacher. Christ was not the only religious teacher. We have had the great religious teachers of the East and we have them still on down to Mrs. Eddy and Father Divine.

There have been christs saying, Lo here and lo there. There have been men saying, I have the voice of God, I am speaking for God. And they have established their religion, some major, some minor, some long forgotten, some still going strong throughout the earth.

But the words of Jesus were in a class by themselves. The claims that He made, brand Him immediately as being God or an idiot. The claims that He made outclassed and outstripped the claims of all the other religious teachers in the world. Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up, He said, of His own body.

I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Before Abraham was, I am. Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven and before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall separate them as the sheep from the goats.

Those are but a sampling of the astounding words of Jesus and the claims that He made. If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins. And God has given all

judgment into My hand. Marvel not at this, for the day will come when they that are in the graves shall hear My voice and shall come forth.

Now nobody ever talked like that. And many who heard Him did not believe Him. But He said when the Holy Ghost is come and the Holy Ghost came as a silent, penetrating, immediate witness.

Now there is no contradiction here when I say that the Holy Spirit's voice entreats us. And then I also say He came as a silent, penetrating, immediate witness. For silence is sometimes more eloquent than sound. And the penetrating stillness of the Holy Ghost is more terrible than the loudest shout from the housetop.

And the Holy Ghost is here confirming the words of Jesus. That is why the critics are all in confusion. That is why when a man becomes a doubter and begins to pull the Word of God apart, God makes a fool of him immediately, puts long, hairy ears on him and turns him out to pasture. And he writes himself some books. And standing solemn faced as a barn owl, he says things to students in his classes that would bring hell down in roars of laughter.

And yet he doesn't know that he's being funny. For God has withdrawn from him the inner light and he is speaking as a fool speaks. Because the silent, penetrating voice of the Holy Ghost is not heard in his words. He hears it no more.

But the Holy Spirit is here to confirm to the consciences of men the truth of the words of Jesus. And the works of Jesus. There was no denying that a mighty miracle worker had been there. He did raise the dead. He did heal the sick. He did cleanse the leper. He did turn the water into wine. He did make the bread, a few pieces of bread to feed the multitude.

He did do these wonderful things and there was no denying it. The Pharisees didn't try to deny it. They could not, seeing the man that was healed standing among them. They couldn't say anything. You cannot deny a fact that stands and stares you in the face, that you can touch and feel and push around and investigate.

You can't possibly deny such a fact and they didn't try it. They simply said, He does His works in the power of the devil. Somebody was doing miracle works there and when He has come, the Holy Ghost came that He might confirm and verify the divine quality of the works of Jesus and prove Him not to be one more miracle peddler but indeed the very God who had made the world and could make it do what He pleased for it to do.

And then there was the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The most significant, the most telling person that ever lived in the world was Jesus. I think that could generally be agreed among all peoples of the world. Even the Mohammedans might admit that. And certainly the great religions of the East would admit it. That He was, that He stands out in history. Head and shoulders as above all the great.

And now how are we to dispose of Him? What's the world to do with Him? What are religious minded people to do with this mighty person that stood taller than the tall pine tree at the beginning of the Christian era?

Well, the Holy Ghost came to do a confirmatory work, and He raised Him from the dead. And now since the Spirit has come, this mysterious witness has come. Christ is no longer on trial. And it's no longer a question of was Jesus the Son of God? All that is beside the point and irrelevant.

And there's never any such thing anymore as a sincere question, was Jesus the Son of God? The Holy Ghost has taken out of the realm of polemics the idea of Christ's deity and has put it in the realm of morals. And this silent, immediate witness, this penetrating voice in the consciences of men tell us that this person was indeed the very Son of God.

It was very noticeable, wasn't it, that as soon as Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost, he immediately rose and preached what he had never preached before. Namely, that this man whom ye crucified is the Christ of God.

That God raised Him from the dead and He is the Lord and the Christ of God. And as soon as Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost, you will find that Paul in the ninth chapter of Acts went doing exactly the same thing. He reasoned and proved from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Son of God. That the coming Messiah was to be the Son of God and that that man was Jesus. So that the Holy Spirit's witness is a witness to the lordship and deity of the Son of God.

So my friends, remember this, that Jesus Christ needs no more of your defense. Jesus Christ needs no more books written to prove that he was God. Jesus Christ is no longer on trial. He needs no advocate pleading His cause before the unfriendly court of the world. He needs no witness to rise and say, I know He was the Son of God. He needs no reasoner with his fine logic to prove it by history that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. The proof of the Sonship of Jesus has been removed from the realm of the intellect and placed where it always has belonged in the realm of morals.

And the Holy Ghost has put it there. When He has come, when He has come and He came and He is here and He may be grieved and He may have to withdraw Himself partly from some places, but He is here and He is here as a silent Holy Witness, more eloquent than all the noise of the world, saying this Man was indeed the Son of God. I say that Jesus Christ is no longer on trial before men, but men are now on trial before Him.

And strange and wonderful as it may be, He who once stood before Pilate now makes Pilate to stand before Him. And He who pleaded His cause before the unfriendly world now sits and judges that same world. And He's transferred the religious question to the heart.

There is a throne where one sits where never a man can come. And there is on that throne a Man--wonderful paradox. The long claws that stretched out to get Him and take Him to the cross can never reach as high as that throne where He sits.

And yet He sits there in the form of a man so that we would recognize Him instantly in the shape of a man and know that this is a Man and He's there invested with full authority and full power and with full right of judgment. And there is a holy witness

present Who in all things speaks for this Man who sits on the throne. It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, He will not come. But if I go, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

And now I think that we ought to remember that however we treat the Holy Spirit's warnings, we treat Jesus Christ himself. However we treat the Spirit's presence, we treat the Lord Himself. We ought to get that in mind. Christ the Lord is not some faraway being, but He is mysteriously, wondrously present now in our midst in the person of the Holy Spirit. When He is come, He will convince the world concerning. And He is here now convincing the world.

And the fate of the individual man does not depend upon historic evidence. Now with all my heart, I believe in the historicity of the Gospels. This is not a subterfuge to hide away from the belief in the historicity of the Gospels. I believe they're historically correct. I believe that they can be confirmed in the format of history. I believe everything that's here is historically true.

But let me point out something to you, my friends. If faith depended upon a man knowing enough history in its right and proper context and being familiar enough with the writings of the historians of the world to arrive at a scholarly belief in the deity of Jesus, then there could only be a relatively few people anywhere in the world saved.

If in order to believe in Jesus Christ, I had to know the historic facts of Rome and Greece and Palestine and Syria and Egypt, and if I had to be able to go to the great tomes and search for myself and discover the historic truth, and then having discovered that historic truth, I had to know enough of the laws of evidence to know whether it proved him to be the Son of God or not, then I would have to be a scholar, a logician, and a lawyer to arrive at belief in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the Holy Ghost came to take the deity of Christ out of the hands of the scholars and put it in the consciences of men. The Holy Ghost came to lift it out of the history books and put it on the fleshy tablets of the human heart. So you can go to the jungles where men cannot read and write, where they wear nothing but a G-string, and you can begin to preach Jesus Christ and sin, and the Holy Ghost will witness to sin and righteousness and judgment, and He will confirm the truth of Christ's words and works and Person to the most ignorant jungle heathen. And that heathen never heard of Rome, never heard of Greece, never heard of Pilate, never heard of Caesar, never knew the city of Rome ever existed, doesn't know that Palestine exists, doesn't know where Jerusalem is, never heard of David, never heard of Abraham, knows nothing about the Reformation.

And yet you can go, a missionary and simply tell the story, and they'll begin to tremble and sweat with the knowledge that they're sinners, and they'll believe in Jesus Christ. And having believed, they'll be transformed and turned inside out, and made honest and good and clean and humble and right, and they'll learn to read and they'll begin to sing the simple Gospels, they'll form themselves into a church.

And the great, strong, elemental fellows born of the jungle and the wild winds and the stars will become deacons and elders and preachers in that church. And they have no

scholarship, no knowledge of history, no ability to weigh evidences. They know nothing about relevance and irrelevance and the laws of evidence.

No, when He came, He took polemics away from the scholars and gave it back to the human soul, so that now my faith in the deity of Jesus does not rest upon my ability to comb through history and arrive at logical conclusions concerning historic facts. The Holy Ghost blazes in on me like a lightning flash, blinds me with the wonder of it. If ye are willing to do His will, ye shall know the doctrine whether I speak of God or not, said Jesus our Lord, when the Holy Ghost has come. And He is here. I think that this is one of the most important truths that can be taught in the world today.

And yet, so far as I know, I'm the one single lone individual who is preaching. There may be others, and certainly in the spirit of it and in the whole weight and drift of it, my friend Ravenhill agrees with me on this. We've talked over these things and we're one in it. But we're one or two or three at most in the midst of a vast cloud and sea of witnesses that are prepared to make the deity of Christ rest upon historical evidence when the Holy Ghost has taken it away from that realm altogether and has put it as a burning point in the human conscience.

So the problem today is a moral problem altogether. It's not an intellectual problem at all. Now don't let's be too humble here. Don't let's, like a lot of poor misguided people do, admit with a wry face that we're a bunch of dumbbells and barely know our letters. Augustine was not a dumbbell. Luther wrote his theses first in Latin and then in German. He wrote to the Pope, and wrote it first in Latin for the Pope and then wrote it in German to give to the people.

No, no, you don't have to pump your head out so it's a blessed vacuum in order to be a Christian. And there's much use for the human mind, so keep yours. There's much use for the human brain, so take care of it, keep it cool and educate it all you can. There's lots of use for it.

But I repeat, the use for it will not be in the realm of divine evidence. The Holy Ghost takes care of that. And the Holy Ghost is here to confirm the person of Jesus. And whatever the Holy Ghost says, stands forever. And whatever He does now, the judgment will approve and confirm.

We come into a church like this, oh, we get here some way. If we got here, maybe got here to meet a girl or a boy. Maybe we came here hoping we would. Maybe we came here to get our parents off our neck. Maybe we were just wandering by and wondered what it was all about. Maybe it's just a habit. Any one of the 25 reasons might be dredged up out of our memory right now. And we think we can just come in and go away again and there'll be no harm done, like going to a PTA meeting. Well, I'm a little bored, but I'll sit through it. What's it all about? And when it's all over, you go neither better nor worse.

My friends, a concept like that ignores one of the most vitally important facts in the world. And that is that wherever the Lord's people meet, the Holy Ghost is there, confirming the Word and the work and the person of Jesus and demanding moral action, so that a man never knows when he goes to a gospel meeting. He never knows when the

last shred of excuse will be stripped from his naked, trembling conscience forever. For the Holy Ghost is not fooling. Sometimes preachers are.

I heard this terrible thing recently, this terrible thing. A man, and I think he was a minister; he had a good sense of humor. And he, knowing the Bible, he learned how to make the Scriptures always say the right thing. Payoff line, as we say. And when there'd be a conversation on, he'd turn it around so that a flip of the verbal tail that made people laugh was always a Scripture quotation.

One day, he came to die. And they said to him, well, you must find great comfort in the Scriptures. And they began to quote the Scriptures to him. And he said, don't, don't, don't quote it, don't quote it, don't quote it. There isn't a verse you can quote that I haven't made the subject of a joke. And now, when I need it, it means nothing to me.

The Holy Ghost isn't joking. People may be, and it's gotten in this country now, in evangelical circles, where a man without a sense of humor can't get to first base. He's got to be funny. Let's go hear that jaybird, he's funny as a crutch. The very fact, said Dr. Buswell, you can call a preacher a jaybird proves he's lost his character.

And men may play, but the Holy Ghost is in dead earnest. Jesus Christ went away in dead earnest. And He sat down in utter, solemn sincerity by the presence of the Majesty on High. And He sent that wave of silvery light, containing in Himself all the essence of the Father and the Son. Down He came in the form of a dove.

And then as fire sat upon each of them, and they knew that Jesus was the Son of God, they knew it instantly. They didn't know it while He was among them, but they knew it then. They didn't know it for sure, but they knew it now. And the Scripture says that when He has come, He will convince men concerning.

Now, the Holy Spirit will not witness to minor matters. Another important thing I'm saying here tonight, that you can't get the Holy Ghost involved in minor things. Let's reach up and pull out a grotesque illustration out of the air. And let's put it like this. Let's imagine last fall when two great and good men were running for the presidency. I insist upon them both as great and good men, Stevenson and Eisenhower.

And these two men were running against each other for the presidency. Suppose that in their speeches, suppose that Eisenhower had insisted upon attacking Stevenson's baldness. And let us suppose that Stevenson, paying thousands of dollars for time on the air, would get up and in his brilliant witty way, would have spent a whole half hour talking about Eisenhower's wretched taste in ties. Neither man could have been elected. They would have elected a Chinaman by a write-in vote.

For in serious and important matters, you deal with basic principles. And they both tried to do it. And they dealt with domestic problems, foreign relations, taxes. They dealt with problems that go to the roots of American living.

Do you suppose the Holy Ghost is any less wise than politicians? And yet we want the Holy Spirit to help us while we talk about trivialities.

That's why I scorn to debate over things that don't matter. That's why they'll never get me concerned with the little niceties of prophecy. And that is why though we have baptized by immersion, we'll never condemn those who don't believe in that mode of baptism. That is why I will not engage in controversy over eternal security. And that is why you cannot get me involved because I want the Holy Ghost to help me, and He won't help me fool. He'll only help me when I'm serious. And the Spirit of God is here.

Now a lot of people try to escape by pretending. They pretend that they are seekers. They say, I'm a seeker after light. Could you look in the glass and say, I'm a seeker after light? When He has come, He will convince. And then you say, I'm a seeker after light. Your problem is not lack of light. Your problem is a moral problem.

And yet men try to hide and escape by pretending. They say, I don't know which form of baptism. He did not say when the Holy Ghost has come, He will convince that the Baptists are right. Nor did he say when the Holy Ghost has come, He will convince the world that infant baptism is correct. He said when the Holy Ghost has come, He'll talk about three vital things, sin and righteousness and judgment. And he insists on moral sincerity.

As I rode along tonight on the bus coming up here, I thought this radical thing to myself. Modified it a little, even in my own head. But I thought, I'm not sure that God hasn't got more respect for a sincere devil than he has for an insincere religionist. If a devil is a devil and he hates God and loves sin, and he's sincere about it, God will reject him forever from His presence, but He'll say, there goes somebody at least I can respect. He means what He says. I would thou art hot or cold, because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot or cold, I'll spew thee out of my mouth.

I say a sincere devil stands higher in moral things than an insincere Christian or religious person. I'm not sure about baptism. When I've settled on what mode of baptism I want to be baptized with, I'll become a Christian. Liar. You might as well know it. That's insincere. That's hypocrisy. That's pharisaism. That's dodging the issue. There's no truth there.

Some say if I knew what church was, which church is it, Mr. Tozer. Tell me now. Write me a letter. Write me a letter and say, now Mr. Tozer, which church is it? The Roman church, Greek church, Protestant church, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Nazarene, Pentecostal, what church is it? Have they never heard the Voice? Have they never been still enough to hear the mysterious witness that penetrates to their conscience and says, sin and righteousness and judgment? If they had ever heard the Voice and had ever been sincere in response to it, they'd never have any reason to ask such questions.

Now, these three vital things, He presses them home, for they're critical and they're eternal and they're important. These three vital things, sin and righteousness and judgment, and sinned because they believe not on Me. The one belief is the sign and the proof of sin.

Now let me say this again from a little different angle, that faith is also a moral thing. I've said this before and you that know me will have heard me say it before and probably

wonder why I'm saying it now. But if you wonder why I'm saying it now, then you didn't know what I meant when I said it before.

I believe that we are where we are in evangelical circles because of a basic misunderstanding of faith. We think that faith is a conclusion drawn from a fact. And out in the world that is so, but in the realm of the Spirit it is not so. Saving faith is not a conclusion drawn from facts presented. Saving faith is a gift of God to a penitent man.

And there's where we are. The young fellow will get down on his knees, anybody will do that. Go anywhere and you can get them on their knees. Go down among the rattlesnake handlers in the mountains and you'll find them there. Go over to Arabia and you'll find them down five times a day on a prayer mat. Anybody will go to his knees if you don't make any demands of him. It's a simple matter to get people forward, it's a simple matter to get them to their knees.

So while they're on their knees, somebody rushes in with a marked testament and sticks a text under their nose and says, who said it? He says, God. Do you believe God? Yes. Well then do you believe the text? Yes, I must because I believe God. Well then get up and testify. And he gets up with an intellectual faith that has not saving in it or any saving quality. That's where we are now. It takes three works of grace to put a man in this day where the first beginnings of salvation used to put him in olden times.

Well, He'll convince the world concerning sin. When I was growing up, they were telling me this little thing. Oh, how I thank God I've been a rebel all my life and a skeptic all my life. If I hadn't been, I might have been pastor of a big church and no heart in it. I could have been. You know, I don't hurt anybody and I don't make any moral demands on them, kiss the babies, pat everybody, eat cake with them, drink a proper amount of English tea and don't hurt anybody's feelings and thunder against modernism.

And take a man dead 50 years and rip him to pieces and prove that he was a scoundrel because he didn't believe the margins of the Schofield Bible. I could have had a big church, brother, ridden in a caddy. Sure, I had sense enough to know that way back there. But I thank God I've been a rebel all my life and still am. And I'm in rebellion against that kind of teaching that would pick chickens out of their shell and let them die and against that kind of practice that would take over the work of the Holy Ghost and crowd Him out and retire Him.

This is the age of the superannuated Holy Ghost. We've retired Him and said, thanks, we have our Bible, a good King James translation, and we won't need You till the millennium. And the Holy Spirit is a marginal annotation and is taken care of by a few proof texts and forgotten. But He won't be forgotten like that. He holds your faith in His hand.

They used to say, the problem today is not that sin question, the problem is the Son question. And if you will believe in the Son, why the matter of sin is all taken care of.

I heard one man who had better been doing something else the time, I recommend hoeing in the garden. But he said this, he said sin has no more meaning to God. On Calvary, sin beat itself to death and perished. And now sin has no meaning to God since

Calvary. He ought to have been raising tulips, and not preaching the gospel. For he was a good man talking like a blooming idiot.

The problem never has been the Son question. The problem has been the sin question from the day he stretched forth her hand in an evil hour and gave also to her husband and he did eat. And when the sin question is settled, the Son question comes leaping in, happily solved. And if you will be willing to do the will of God, you shall know that Jesus is the son of God. And you won't have to read long books to prove it. It's all there.

Now, not only sin but righteousness, the voice of the Holy Spirit. Righteousness because I go to my Father. And the fact that He went to His Father is conspicuous proof of the world's condition. For there was one righteous Man in the world and He couldn't stay. There was one righteous Man and He had to leave. He was too good to stay. They hounded Him out of the world.

And today, the more we become like Him, the less welcome we are in society. To make Christianity socially acceptable is an effort that's worse than wasted. To make out of the cross a symbol and relegate its nails and thorns and blood and terror and ostracism back to the hill above Jerusalem and forget that that same cross is alive today wherever the Gospels preach is to commit a theological error as deadly as Russellism. And yet it's what we hear most of the time. After all, believe me, we know better now; they don't crucify people now.

They don't crucify people now because they can get along with them too easily. There's too much collaboration between men who claim to follow the Crucified One and the people who don't believe in the Crucified One. Wherever they can catch a Christ-like man, they'll run for the nails and the hammer.

And what we need, I don't pray for it. I haven't the courage to pray for it. But I'm here and I'm at God's disposal. But what we need in our day is to have some more Christians crucified. We need more persecution. We need a social situation that makes it dangerous to be a Christian. But it isn't dangerous now. It's quite the popular thing.

They use a preacher now for almost anything. They can't cut a tape. They ought to have a preacher there to cut the tape. They can't break ground for anything. The latest dog pound at what reverend has to be there to say a prayer and break the first shovel full while he looks up, smirks at the camera. The ladies can't begin their campaign to drive all the ground moles out of Cook County except they have a pastor there. He's got to be there to mumble a few words, smile, and look religious. But nobody crucifies the old boy. They get along with him, get along with him.

But there was one righteous Man, and He couldn't stay. Their faces went as black as canes, and their countenance fell. And they said, we won't be made moral fools of by this man. And they nailed Him on the cross.

And the Holy Ghost is here to convince the world concerning that unpardoned act, that act of crucifying the world's only holy Man, that is, holy in the final absolute sense of the word who was holy without being made holy. There may be holy men now, and there may be righteous men now. But they're righteous men because they were made

righteous by the One who never was made righteous. Jesus Christ never was any less righteous than He is now. He never had to be washed nor cleansed, and His baptism was never a baptism for cleansing.

And when the Holy Ghost came upon Him, He came upon Him as a dove and not as fire. And there was no need for purgation. And the Bible never says Christ was baptized with the Holy Ghost. It says He was anointed. Baptism was symbolic of cleansing. Anointing was symbolic of office. He was anointed without cleansing, for He never was anything but clean, the spotless Lamb of God.

And He was the one spotless Man, and He was the man that couldn't stay. They hounded Him out of the world. Jesus said to the Pharisees when He lived among them, ye have killed the prophets. Now you build their monuments, but you're still guilty of killing them.

And so we're now talking nice about Jesus, painting His pictures, saying nice things about Him. We have His blood on our hands as a race. He will convince the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. Now the prince of this world is judged, Jesus said. And the voice of the Spirit speaks of a day of reckoning.

I was thinking how much better it would be if we could have a choice. If God could give us a choice and say, now you're going to die within the next 12 hours, I'll give you your choice. Do you want to rise again, or do you want to stay forever in the state of blessed unconsciousness and never rise again? That's sheer imagination. That could never happen. For God has ordained that all men should rise, some to righteousness and some to everlasting condemnation.

But if a man could have a choice, every once in a while, we read of somebody in a fit of self-pity and a variety of other sins, will get a gun, kill his wife and two or three children, then kill himself. They can't get at him. Police can't get at him. You can't punish him. A coward ten times over. So cowardly that probably hell won't even admit him until he's washed a bit.

But if you could give that man an opportunity and say, listen, do you want to rise, or shall we fix it so you'll never need to wake while millenniums spend themselves? Oh, what a relief for that man. What a relief for that man. My God, my God, he'd cry. I died with the sound of the gaspings of my wife and children in my ears. I died fleeing from it, and I haven't been able to get away from it. And I hear it yet and hear the sighings and see the blood. Please, please let me go to sleep and never wake again.

It would be a mighty convenient thing if sinners never had to rise from the dead. If they had all, Hitler and Caligula and Mussolini and some more of them had it in their power to stay dead, it would be convenient for them. But they that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man.

There's a judgment. I believe in that judgment. I believe it. They have taken it away from us in the hour in which we live, and they've said it's ridiculous, that God isn't a bookkeeper, and we can't conceive of God putting entries in a book like a common clerk.

John Jones, 321 West 44th Place, June 14th, 1953, did commit the below-mentioned sins. They say God's no clerk. God isn't writing books, debit books.

Oh, how ignorant can we get and still not drop dead? Of course, God isn't keeping that kind of books. Of course, God isn't a clerk. But every deed that ever has been committed or ever will be committed from the beginning to the world till the last man is instantly now present before the eyes of God.

And God needs no clerks and no pens. The omniscient God sees perfectly all that ever was and all that is and all that ever will be. And without raising his eyebrows, He knows every man's heartbeat and every man's thought and every man's deed.

So, judgment will be very easy for God. Judgment won't be difficult for God. Of course, He puts it for us to understand that books were opened, and the dead were brought forth and so on. All that's to convince men. But God doesn't need any help like that. God already knows, judgment, sin, and righteousness.

Now the Spirit of God will persist. He'll keep on. That penetrating, silent, eloquent Voice until the Voice can no longer be heard or until we listen and return. And you know it still works. A man who hears the gospel message and believes it, really believes it, really turns to the Lord Jesus Christ, there's still transforming power in it. You don't see much of it, but you see some of it.

I won't mention names, but I'm thinking of a young fellow. I think he may be present here tonight. He was this morning. You know, nobody looked at him twice. He was just one more boy, young fellow, all good-looking and all that, but just one more young fellow in the millions. Trotted down the aisle here some, maybe two months ago, and something happened to that boy. And the whole life is transformed. His whole life is transformed. His face looks different, better looking than ever. The tone of his voice is different. Everything is different.

Now he says, I'm going to quit my job and get a job where I can be at church. My job's all right, but it takes me out of church. I'm going to get a job where I can be at church. What happened to the fellow? Only what could happen to everybody that listens and hears the Voice and believes and turns.

Jesus Christ is still the miracle worker. He still raises the dead Lazaruses out of the grave. He still raises the consciences of men out of the deep mud of their past. He still converts. He still regenerates. He still transforms. He still makes Christians out of dead clods. He still does it.

It's tragic that He doesn't do it more frequently. It's tragic that we hide from Him in the caves and dens of the earth. It's tragic that we hide among the trees of the garden. It's tragic that we keep our hearts so hard we can't feel and so deaf that we can't hear. It's tragic that there aren't more.

But wherever the gospel is really tried out, it has its own transforming power still. And you need not apologize for the word of God or the message of the cross. It's still the

same old message. And somehow, we short-circuit it by making out faith to be an intellectual exercise. And we have not converts, but proselytes.

Then comes the death of the heart. You know, dying isn't a very pleasant business. I read of old Socrates drinking the hemlock when they compelled him to do it because they're a way of killing him in Greece, in Athens. And he lay down on the bench, his friends around him in tears. He'd taken a long, deep draught of the poison hemlock. And he kept talking. He was in possession of himself, very calm. He kept saying to Crito and the other friends around him, kept describing how he was dying.

Well, he said, my feet are getting cold. He said, they're so cold. And he tapped them. He said, I have no feeling now in my feet. He said that cold feeling is creeping up my legs now. He lay there and felt himself die and intelligently explained how it was going on.

Brethren, there are people, and you don't have to be a hundred years old. Some of you are very young. You have poisoned your conscience. You have drunk of the poison of sin so deeply that you're dying. You're dying. There's still some feeling left in you. But for the most part, you're insensitive and insensible. There's no feeling there. Little by little, you're dying.

I've seen them come up in this church, stay around a while, listen, maybe make an experimental trip to the altar once or twice, and then slowly lose interest, and then go. And way out there in the world someplace, disappointed, sulky, sullen, bitter, they wait for the Grim Reaper. But they died a little at a time before they ever left the church.

He that hath ears to hear, says the entreating Voice, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the Spirit and the Bride say, come and whosoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely. Humble thyself, and the Lord will draw near thee. Humble thyself, and his presence will cheer thee. God will not walk with the proud nor the scornful. Humble thyself to walk with God.

Now the Holy Spirit is entreating you. God's love entreats. The blood of Jesus Christ eloquently entreats. The Spirit of God entreats. The world is lost, but the world is not forsaken.

The voice of Jesus Christ calls now, and He calls you. Are you hearing Him at all? Have you been hearing Him tonight at all? Are you listening? Have you heard? Will you do something about it? You say, I wish it could be made easier. I wouldn't make it easier if I could. I wouldn't make it easier.

Listen, friends. If hell is what God says it is, if sin is what God says it is, if Jesus Christ had to die to save the sinner from hell, and you can't as much as rise and let a congregation know you're turning from sin, it's a strangely mixed-up business. Jesus Christ never taught that His people would sneak in an easy way. Never taught that they would creep in like vermin into the kingdom of God, crawl unobtrusively through the cracks. Never.

He said, if ye deny Me before men, I will deny you before My Father which art in heaven. And he that will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

We cannot crawl like a thief into the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ, if He's your Savior, He has a right to your bold and fearless witness. And if you will not dare to rise and say, I'll follow Jesus, I'll follow Jesus. Here I come, Lord Jesus. If you're not willing to do that, you're too big a coward to go to heaven. For the fearful and the unbelieving shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire.

The man who's afraid to rise and say, I will follow Jesus, is too big a coward to escape hell. God doesn't make it easy. On sinking ships and burning buildings, etiquette is forgotten. It's not made easy. The word of the Lord is not easy, but it saves. Let us pray.

O God, our Father, God, our Father, this night, the world has grown old, and the judgment draws near. Kingdoms have risen and waned. Nation has risen against nation, kingdom against kingdom. And as it was in the days of Noah, so is it now in this day. These are solemn times.

We appeal to Thee, O Lord, we appeal to Thee. Help us in this hour. Help us now. We beseech Thee, O Lord, for the cringing sinner, for the frightened, cowering sinner who hasn't the courage to get up and follow the Lamb, but who's trying to get in, somehow, through some window or back door.

God, have mercy, we pray Thee, this hour, through Jesus Christ, help us in this moment of decision. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen