

The Leading of the Lord

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In the book of Exodus, the twenty-third chapter. I want to review just a little bit and point out that this passage which we read was spoken by God to Moses for Israel, and that it is also spoken for our admonition, upon whom the end of the world is come.

Now I want you to be sure that I am not spiritualizing this passage, as they say. Or if I am, I am in good company. For the passage of Israel from Egypt to Canaan was held to be a type of the Christian's progress from earth to heaven, in one of its aspects, and from conversion on toward the victorious and fruitful life in another of its aspects.

Those who teach that the passage of Israel from Egypt to Canaan was a type of the Christian's progress from earth to heaven have had a bit of a quarrel with those who teach that it stands for the progress of the Christian from his conversion to the period when he reaches the victorious life. But I do not see why there should be any disagreement about it for the simple reason that it's both.

And in teaching this, that we have a right to this passage, that I have a right to take it as I have taken it and used it and applied it to my heart tenderly over the past years—thirty of them, really, thirty-two of them, as I've explained. In using it this way, we are quite in accord with Paul, who freely took the story of the Old Testament characters and applied them to the new, who freely explained that the Old Temple was the physical manifestation of the Heavenly One, and in the whole book of Hebrews is dedicated to that doctrine, that everything God did for Israel was physical and earthly and has its heavenly and spiritual counterpart.

And we're quite also in accord with John, particularly in the book of Revelation, and we're in accord with the Church Fathers. The Church Fathers, I mean from the early Church Fathers down to the present day, and we're in accord with the hymnists who sing about, Lead me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land.

The whole thing is an image drawn from the Lord leading Israel through the wilderness, and you will find this all through our hymn books. Now that I say because I want you to know that I am doing a piece of legitimate exegesis here, and I don't want you to be argued out of it by somebody, somebody with an accountant's mind.

There are so many God's children who have accountant's minds, that is, they're adding machines, and their theology is about as imaginative as an adding machine. And you're likely to fall into the hands of these pedestrians, and when you do, smile and say, I'm in line with Paul and John and the book of Hebrews and the Church Fathers and the hymnists and the saints generally.

Now, He says the place which I have prepared, and I want to point out and take a step beyond what I spoke of last week, that God had a place prepared for Israel, and He has a place prepared for His church, and He has a place prepared for every individual member

of that church. And that that place is to be understood in two ways, as provisional and final.

God had a provisional place prepared for Israel, that is, God had a long-range plan for Israel, but to get Israel to the final long-range place He had a short-range plan. And the short-range plan dealt with an hour from now and tomorrow and next week and next month, whereas the long-range plan dealt with the place of the next millennium.

And so let's look a little how this short-range provisional plan of God, the place which I have prepared, I'm going to read to you a bit out of the Word of God. I'll read from Exodus first, Exodus the 40th chapter. Here's what the Holy Spirit says, Then the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys. But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day it was taken up. For if the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, the fire was on it by night, in the sight of the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

And then, that passage in Deuteronomy 1.29, Then I said unto you, Dread not, that is, Moses is saying, I said unto you, Israel, dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God, which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes. And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the Lord bare thee as a man bares his son, in all the way that he went until he came unto this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God, who went in the way before you, to search out a place to pitch your tent in.

Now the Lord had Canaan in mind as the long-range plan, and He finally took them there. But you notice here, you pitch your tent at the end of a day, or maybe it was two days, or however long it was. But he said, the Lord went before you to search you out a place to pitch your tent in. He went in fire by night to show you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

Now there is the provisional short-range leading of God. He led Israel, not only into the land finally, but he led them step by step in order that they might go to the land. You can see this, can't you? That if God is not able to lead us the next mile, he cannot lead us the next hundred miles. If He cannot lead us the next ten feet, He cannot lead us the next mile.

The Lord leads His people. He has led the church through all her history, and He leads the Christian, the individual Christian, and He is grieved when the Christian makes Him say, yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God, who went in the way before you to search out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night and in a cloud by day. And He leads a local church. If we are in His will and stay in His will, I believe in the leadership of the Holy Ghost. I believe that the Spirit of God is to the church what the cloud and fire was, for it is the same thing to Israel.

But then there is the final and long-range plan of God. That is, Israel was to be in full possession of the land, and the church is to be in full possession of the Father's house at last. But for the individual Christian there is also this, that the Lord would lead us into a place of fruitfulness and power and heaven at last.

Now I have prepared you this place. The great trouble is, and I repeat, that we want a place, and we want to pray that the Lord will lead us to the place which we have chosen, whereas God says, I will lead you into the place which I have prepared. And there is very often, a good part of the time it would not be too much to say, a good part of the time there is a controversy on between the Christian and God over that place.

The Christian says, I want Thee, O Lord to lead me to the place which I have chosen. And God says, I will, O child, lead thee to the place which I have prepared. We have got to settle this. Are we going to have this controversy all our lives, seeking the place which we have chosen, or are we going right now to cut the red tape and lower the overhead and get it over with and say, Lord God, here take me.

The place I want would not be all right anyway. Take me and lead me into the place which Thou hast prepared. If we will decide to let God lead us into the place which he has prepared, we'll have His leadership, not only His long-range leadership, but we'll have His day by day, short range provisional leadership.

Then he says, an angel to keep thee and to bring thee. You see, if Israel was going to reach the holy land, she had to be led by a power equal to or superior to the opposition. If God led Israel by a power equal to the opposition, they would reach a stalemate. If He led Israel by a power less than the opposition, He would never be able to move Israel toward the holy land. It became necessary, therefore, that God should bring to bear upon the opposition a power superior to their power.

And that's exactly what God said He would do. There were enemies there and they did fight. They weren't cowards. They didn't lie down and take it and let Israel walk over them. They did oppose Israel. But God said, I will send an angel before thee to keep thee and to bring thee in.

And now my messenger, he said, the Holy Spirit, God's omniscient providences, these are what we mean, the Holy Spirit and God's omniscient providences. What do I mean by his omniscient providences? I mean that God, being the sovereign God that He is, plays over the chessboard of history, and He can always outthink and outmaneuver the enemy, and can always be there ahead of the enemy.

And if He needs power, He can crush the enemy by His power. If it's wisdom, He can outmaneuver the enemy by His wisdom. But always in His providences, He leads the people of God.

My brethren, I am not at all sure that I would exchange, if God were to say to me, now son, I have led you a good many years by my providences. You have trusted Me, and I have led you, but I'll exchange this now and I will give you a visible fire by night to hover over you, and I will give you a visible cloud by day. Nobody else will see it but you, but

you will see the cloud and fire visible to you. I think I'd not exchange it, because anything that I can see with my eyes, the time can come when I can no longer see it.

But you can't outthink the providences of God. No man can do that. God's providences are His plans which He lays down, and He leads his people into it by a kind of a holy dance of circumstance. And when it's all over, then we look back and see that God has led us all the way.

Now he says, beware of him. That's verse 21. Beware of him, because he provoke him not, for He will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. Now right here, this verse 21 will discourage some people, and they will say, well, in that case then, Mr. Tozer, you're preaching to some perfect, pure person, but you're not preaching to me, because I have not lived my life, my Christian life, since the Lord first took hold of my hand to lead me into the place He hath prepared. I have not obeyed the angel in every particular, and I have transgressed, and if therefore it says that He'll not forgive your transgressions, then that cuts me out. Your sermon is preached to some Joseph, or some Daniel, or someone who has never had any trouble.

But I don't think we ought to look at it like that at all, because the Lord says, beware of the angel. That is, don't think that I make an unconditional promise that I'm going to lead you and let you get away with murder. Don't think for a minute that I am going to make a unilateral promise to you here, and I'm going to promise myself, and promise myself like John or like Herod did before the assembled guests, and get myself in a jam that I can't get out of, and for the sake of the guests around me, I'm going to have to fulfill my promise no matter what you do. Now, let's not think like that at all. That's to have rigor mortis of the theological intellect, and a lot of people have that.

But what the Lord says is this. He said, now remember, you've got to be pliable if you're going to be leadable. You've got to be malleable if you're going to be made into the right kind of vessel. You've got to be mobile if you're going to be led. God says, in effect, I can't guide a bicycle when it's standing still. I can't lead an arrow to its mark when it's still on the string.

You're going to have to put away your stubbornness. I can't overlook your stubbornness. If you're stubborn and refuse to be led, I can't lead you. And if you're rebellious and rebel against my plan to lead you, then I can't lead you. And if you're filled with unbelief and don't think I will lead you, then that hinders you. And if you're disobedient, that hinders you.

You see, the physician, if he's going to cure the patient, has to have the cooperation of the patient. If a guide is going to lead someone through the wilderness, the man is going to have to go along with the guide. And he will not overlook, says God.

Remember now, you Christians, I am leading you, and my plan is that I'm to lead you into the place I've prepared. But I'm not expecting that I'll lead you without your cooperation, because the Spirit has no authority to just wink and act as if you hadn't sinned. If you sin, then you've temporarily slowed things down. If you sin, then you have hindered me, and I can't lead you right.

And I wouldn't be so foolish as to preach to a church where I knew that the members of the board were unconverted, and the Ladies Auxiliary was carnal, and the Sunday School superintendent drank. And I wouldn't preach this way to that kind of church, because God said simply that this isn't, you can't do this.

He said, beware of him, because walking with God is a pretty serious business, and you can't get loose and go at ease in Zion and learn the ways of the world if you're going to go with me. If I'm going to take you out of that iron furnace and take you on into that grand land where the bees make honey in the rocks, and where the cows walk with great udders across the grassy meadows, where milk and honey flows, and where grapes of Eshcol are thick and large and juicy, and where pomegranates are sweet.

If I'm going to lead you in there and establish you there, you're going to have to walk pretty close to me. Beware, because this rule that I laid down here is not for worldlings. This rule that I laid down is not for carnal people who want to have their own way, and then who want to try to get leadings when they're not intending to obey. He has no authority, said God, to let you live like the world and be led like a child of heaven. You've got to obey the voice of the Lord.

Now that's plain enough, and it ought not to discourage anybody. But you say, but I haven't obeyed the Lord fully in everything, and I have had periods when I failed the Lord. What can we do? Well, you can come to yourself. Do you remember that's what the prodigal son did. He came to himself. He'd been living out in the suburb, and then he came into himself.

You can come to yourself, and you'll see what the history of Israel tells you. Read the history of Israel and see that when Israel failed God anywhere, God punished her, corrected her, disciplined her, and then took up and led her on. And if she failed him again, he punished her again, forgave her, disciplined her, and took her on. The way wasn't a smooth and easy way. It could have been, but Israel chose sometimes not to make it so. And the history of Israel has been the history of failure.

I wish that I could say that a Christian takes off from the ramp like a conveyor, right, just zoom, and it's off into the air and gone. I wish that I could say that's the way. No, that isn't the way. That's not realistic, so to speak, so to say. It's not realistic, and nobody here needs to stand up and tell me that he has never had any difficulty with himself since his conversion, that there never has been a fall, never a failure, never a lapse, never any trouble. He has moved with calm precision upward and onward. Don't anybody tell me that. If you've been converted over one day, don't bring me that because I'll have to look at you and turn away. I can't believe it. It just isn't so.

Human beings aren't like that. Israel wasn't, and the Church wasn't, and the Twelve Disciples weren't, and the people in the Book of Acts weren't, in spite of all we say about them. They still have failed the Lord sometimes, but always the story of Israel is that God forgives. God forgives. And the story of the New Testament is, God forgives.

Jesus took his Twelve Disciples to lead them into the place which he had prepared, and all but one of them entered that place which he had prepared. All but one of them. Judas, the son of perdition, never found it. Judas sinned away any possibility of it. If he indeed

ever was converted, he sinned away any possibility. But the other eleven made it through. And always it's so in the New Testament. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all righteousness.

I have a prayer in my little book which I carry with me, and I lose everything under the sun, but in 15 or 20 years I've never lost my little prayer book. It's all badly worn out now, but still legible. And I have a little prayer in there saying, O God, because I have been the worst of men, therefore let grace operate to do the most for me. Where sin abounded, let grace much more abound. And I believe God's going to do that. He has in some measure been doing it, as I have believed. And He'll do exactly the same thing for you.

Sin will prevent the Lord from leading you, but not sin repented of. Sin repented of will be cleansed, and it will not prevent you. You see, if God made no provision for human failure, then there could be nothing but human failure. If God made no provision for human failure, that would be the end of it.

And granted that God knows humanity, granted that God knows humanity, that He knows the human nature, human flesh, then imagine that God should make a redemption and send it to the world and make no provision for the frailties of the ones to whom he sent it, would be, even to think that, would be to think unworthily of God. If God made plans contingent upon human perfection, then there would be no use to make any plans, because if we were perfect, we wouldn't need God.

If we were perfect, we would not need any leadership. We'd not need any angel to lead us at all. We would not need to be admonished not to be afraid but go forward. We wouldn't need it, but he does not. God is not so unwise as to make His plans for us contingent upon human perfection. He makes His plans for us contingent upon His goodness and His grace and His willingness to forgive and to renew. And if God made His plans contingent upon human perfection, then they could only fail. And that God's plan should fail would be unthinkable, that God should be unwise would be unthinkable. No.

We must remember, beware of him, he says. And I don't see this, I don't see this as any reason. Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee and to bring thee but beware of him. I don't see anything here to stop me. Suppose that Israel did stumble and fall on their face, and they did. But remember, the cloud and the fire never left them.

It took hundreds of years of persistent incorrigible sinning before the cloud and the fire lifted. And then the cloud and the fire only lifted for a while. And God will yet restore Israel to Himself, and the cloud and fire will one time more hover over the temple in Jerusalem.

Read the book of Ezekiel and see. God Almighty never brought you out and said, no, I'll bring him out, but I can't bring him in. Because God said about Israel, He said, I'll never allow them to say that about me, that I brought Israel out, but can't bring Israel in.

The whole human race would have laughed at a God who started to build and found to His red-faced embarrassment that He didn't have enough material to finish the building.

The whole human race and the angels in heaven would laugh at a God who started to bring a nation out of Egypt and wasn't able to bring them in where He had planned to bring them. He did bring them in, and He did establish them there.

And for hundreds of years, they did worship God there. They did build a temple there. And David wrote his psalms, and Solomon built his temple, and the children of God met and worshiped and praised God, hundreds of years they were in that land.

So, remember that you're being led by One who's got a plan for you, and nothing short of a 100 percent persistent and perpetual rebellion with refusal to return can stop the sovereign plans of God. Do I sound like a Calvinist? I don't know whether I do or not, but I sound like the truth. And if any of you who are over on the other side should be shocked, a shock is good for you, brother. It's good for you. I believe that God Almighty will lead His people.

And don't you try to pin me down and make an Arminian out of me nor a Calvinist out of me. I'm neither one. I'm a lover of the Bible. I believe the Bible. I'm not going to be pinned down by anybody. Are you a Simpsonian or a Wesleyan or a Calvinist or an Arminian or a Plymouth Brethren? I am none of those things. I'm a Christian by the grace of God, a poor one, but a Christian. I've got my Bible here, Old Testament and New.

Some fellow comes in and wants to tag me and put a tag on me and say, now, here, you wear this button. I'll wear no button. You can categorize a man and put him in his place, say, Tozer, oh, he's a, and then they can invent a name that long and dismiss a man like that. I'm none of those things. I'm a Christian and here's what the Holy Ghost says in the Book. My heart speaks out against me.

David had an awful time with his heart, you know, he had a time with it. It lectured him and he talked to it, and he lay in bed at night and talked to his soul, meditated, and sometimes he wept and sometimes he got up and played a hymn on his own made harp. But when our own hearts speak to us about our past, now think about it, be realistic.

I've been thinking it over the last few days, and you know what I've decided? I've decided that for the most part, evangelical Christianity is just plain dumb and that stupidity and Pollyannaisms has pretty well taken over. That anything like tough, realistic thinking, daring to search the Word of God and obey, daring to shake yourself loose from tradition and stand up and say, this is what God says and I don't care what Dr. so-and-so says. We've got very little of that left anymore in our country. We're the spongiest bunch of mediocre people you ever met in all your life.

I confess frankly that I can't read the average book put out by the fundamentalists and yet I'm a fundamentalist. I'm a believer clear down to the roots and I believe everything the Bible teaches and I go back to Moses and Paul and believe it all at the same time. I get nothing from hearing the average man or from reading the book because everybody's scared, cautious, got to guard yourself.

But listen, if you say this, what will these people think of you? I don't happen to care and it doesn't make any difference. And if they write me off and I've been written off, you and I went someplace one time, Ray? You sang and I preached. They never invited us

back. They said they were going to, but the mailman didn't get the letter to us. They never invited us back. But I don't care about that because if they shut one door, God will open twelve more.

And if I had toes and hands and all the hairs left in my poor, rather shaggy head, were preachers, I could put them all to work. Hear me? Oh, if we could get out of this cowardice and this mediocrity that the evangelical church has become a paradise of mediocre clowns, what we need is courage and anointing and a bit of daring and, above all things, obedience. Obedience.

I will send mine angel before thee and he will guide thee, young fellow. You don't have to worry one little bit. All you have to do is be sure you don't take the bit in your teeth. The Lord says, if you take the bit in your teeth, you're in trouble. As long as you're obedient, you're being led. You're being guided. As long as you want God's will. But if you want your own will, of course, that's different.

Well, here was Jacob and Jacob was a terrible failure. Do you remember Jacob's failure? But you remember how on that riverbank he and God had it out? And wrestling, Jacob prayed through and limped away.

Oh, if I were an artist, what a picture I could paint of Jacob. I wouldn't paint a picture of God or of Christ. I think both pictures of God and Christ are borderline blasphemy. To try to picture the infinite God or to try to put down on a canvas that wondrous, beautiful being we call Jesus, I think it's horrible to try to do it.

But I wouldn't have any hesitation painting pictures of Bible characters. And I think one character I'd paint would be old Jacob, a little bald on top. Jacob's hair was gone and his wife and his children and his camels and all the rest were gone before. And Jacob was on the riverbank all night. He wrestled all night. He wrestled.

The doctor said, Jacob, you better not stay up at night because you need your eight hours, Jacob. Remember, you're not as young as you were and you need your eight hours. Now, remember, you take care of yourself and take a few hours, take a few days and go to Florida. But Jacob wrestled all night with his God.

And the next morning he got blessed. But along with his blessing, he got a limp. And you know, he was marked out as a limping man. He was a limping man. He limped from that time on. And it says the sun did rise upon him. I can just imagine him limping up out of the sandy riverbed, having crossed it now wet to his knees. But he limped up on the other side with a big smile on his face and the sun making a halo around his shiny bald head.

And when he appeared all the way down there where his family was waiting, somebody said, I wonder what's keeping Dad. And somebody said, who's that coming there? That looks like Dad. And wife said, no, that couldn't be Dad. That man limps. She didn't know that he'd had an experience that night that made him different. He walked different from everybody else from that time on. But Jacob was a terrible man, really. He was a terrible man. There isn't anybody here much worse than Jacob was, unless it's me by nature. Jacob was that kind of man.

Then there was another old fellow who said, I am vile. I am vile. And you know, his end, the Lord took the vileness away and gave him twice as much of everything. And he went marching out of the last chapter of the book into the glory. And he's there now. And there was a man named Elijah, and he was so discouraged. He said, let me die. I've always been afraid to ask God, let me die. Because sometimes, you know, God just takes you at your word.

And I've always been cautious. I remember the Greek said that if there's ever a time that a man ought to tell the truth, it's when he comes into the presence of the gods. And if a Greek would think that up, I think a Christian ought to know that much.

So, I'm very cautious about going to God about things. And I've never gone to God and said, O God, let me die. But there are times when I had a sneaking hope. But I've always been afraid to say it, for He'd take me at my word, and I got some things to do yet. So, I didn't pray that.

But this man did, O Lord, let me die. It looked as if that should have been the end. But you know, he left in a chariot, of fire, this man left in a chariot. God is a whole lot easier on His people than we are, because He understands them.

I like to sometimes let my imagination run in a little piece about St. Paul or somebody applying to a mission board, or Stephen applying to a conference for ordination, sitting around being examined for ordination. Stephen never would have made it, because he'd have jumped up and looked far into the distance and gone out and started to preach. And they'd have said, well, he's a well-intentioned young fellow, but he's a fanatic.

And I don't think there's very many people here in the New Testament that would have got along. Elijah never could have. He never could have graduated from any school on the North American continent. Never, they'd never have given that old fellow.

Could you imagine his going around with a parchment saying, to whom it may concern, this is to certify that Elijah has completed his studies, and therefore is authorized that we grant him this diploma. Never would have made it, never would have made it. Elijah couldn't have made it. But he left in a chariot, brother, at last. He left in a chariot.

And there was Peter. Peter cried; I never knew the man. I never knew the man. What a liar he was. Dirty mouth Peter, lying Peter. I never knew the man. He lied, he did.

Paul Richards, the French satirical philosopher, said the first Pope said, I never knew the man, and he lied. But if the present Pope would say it, he'd probably tell the truth. I never knew the man.

But he was the man at Pentecost. He was the man at Pentecost. He was the man. The Lord had got to him. The Lord said, Peter, beware of him, beware of the angel. Peter stumbled and fell and said, I never knew the man. The Lord said, Peter, that wasn't you talking. Get up on your feet. And Peter got up and wept bitterly.

No, my dear brother, God never overlooks sin, or failure, or weakness, or flaws. He never overlooks them, but He knows what to do about them. And the angel in the meantime pauses and turns around and waits, and says, is my boy going to get up and come on, or is he going to give up and lie there in the gutter?

Meister Eckhart is a quotable fellow, and Meister Eckhart said this. I marked it with pencil, drew lines along it. I want to remember. Eckhart said, when God forgives a man, he starts all over with him from right there. And his past is automatically canceled out, as far as God's concerned.

And not only that, but God trusts him as completely as if he'd never sinned. I believe he's right. God trusts the man. Starts all over with the man right there. You can't out-sin the mercy of God if you repent sincere.

Some people have misunderstood the Methodists. They think the Methodists got converted and then got perfect love. And from that time on, never sinned, never failed God anywhere.

Well, it wasn't God's plan they should. Certainly, John Wesley tried to prevent them. And all their class leaders and exhorters tried to prevent them. And they've had a pretty high batting average, I'd say, on the whole. But you read the writings of Wesley. Read the little book of Discipline, which I have read with such great care.

The only book of Discipline I ever cared for in all my life was the Methodist book of Discipline. You could set it to music. They knew what to do with a man if he failed the Lord. Beware of him. He has no authority to let you go and just act as if nothing had happened. If you fail him, something has happened. You got to deal with it immediately and right away. How do you deal with it? Name it.

I used to hear Paul Rader say back in those great days when he was preaching those great sermons, the like of which I've never heard on the North American continent except his. He said, if you'll name it, God will break it, talking about shackles, shackles. He said, they're on your wrists, they're on your ankles. Name it and God will break it. But if you call it something else, it'll be right there for two weeks, two months, two years.

If we could hear with our spiritual ears as we can with our physical ears, when we dismiss this meeting tonight and you start out, there'd be a clanking sound. You'd think there were 40 ghosts in the attic rattling their chains because so many of you wear on your ankles, chains, spiritually. We can't hear them because we can't hear except with these ears.

But the dear Heavenly Father knows they're there. If you name them, God will break them. Temper, bad disposition, love of money, lust, pride, unholy ambition, self-love, stubbornness, rebelliousness. Name them and God will break them. Jacob had to tell God his right name, Jacob. You'll have to tell Him your right name. Whatever it is, tell Him your right name.

There is such a thing as a repentance. As Kierkegaard has said, there's such a thing as a repentance that is so acute that you feel you want to help justice find your sins. Did you ever experience a repentance like that? Where you turned against yourself and wanted to help God find your sins instead of covering up and hiding and running from God, you race to God and say, God, I want to tell you this and this and this and this. That's repentance. That's repentance.

So, if you repented like that, sincerely, the guiding angel isn't leaving you. He's just pausing, just pausing. The individual, this church, any church, evangelicalism, I wonder if I were this church, I'd dismiss this pastor. You need somebody that's a lot more local. My burden is not this church only. My burden is for the whole evangelical church. I grieve over the whole evangelical church. I pray and have my prayer list with the whole evangelical church.

I worry over the whole church that calls itself fundamentalist. My heart cries to God that He'll help me some way to write something or do something or pray in such a way that it'll begin to lift and jar the whole evangelical church back out of her shameful Babylonian captivity, that God might lead us again to the place where we ought to be.

And a man that has a burden for the whole church of Christ must divide his time somewhat, at least his prayers. So I may be somebody that could think in narrower terms, could do more, but I'll never be able to get over it because I had to make my choice to be dumb and happy, or to be informed and be miserable, to not know much about what was going on and thus keep a kind of a cheap tranquility, or to know what was wrong with the church and grieve over it. And I grieve over the church.

I grieve over what's happening in the church of Christ and the Alliance too. Any of you brethren should be here on your way to Council. You hear me say this and I don't care who. The Alliance as well as every other. We're on the same greased skids that the others are. And unless God can break us down and stop us and turn us around, we'll never find the place He's called us to.