

The Beauteous World as Made by Him

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Now, in the Gospel according to John, the first chapter, we've been very laborious as we've gone over this, that is, we've gone slowly, because this prologue to the Gospel of John is so profound and so highly packed with truth that I would, I'm afraid, affront the Spirit of Truth if I were to hurry through it. So, I take verse 10 for tonight's talk. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

Now, that pronoun, Him, refers to that which is spoken of in the first verse, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. And remember that all this refers to pre-incarnation times and does not refer to the coming of Christ at Bethlehem but refers to the world of mankind from its beginning, before the incarnation.

And here we have happily associated two English words, world and word, very much alike with the addition of "l" to the word, word, you have the word, world, and we have the world and the Word related in this prologue, as cause and effect. And remember that the world is always an effect, and the Word is always a cause, and there never is any time when the world is a cause, and there never is any time when the Word is an effect. The Word was, and the Word made the world. The Logos, but I'll not go into Greek because I don't pronounce it correctly, nobody does, only some people think they do, but in our English, it's, Word and we'll stay by it.

So, the Word and the world, they are related as cause and effect. The world you see around about you did not come into existence of itself, but it is an effect of that which the Bible calls the Word.

Now that word, world, needs a bit of definition, so I want to mention that the word, world, has three meanings in the Bible, only two of which concern us tonight. The third one means ages, but we're not concerned with the ages because the prologue is not concerned with the ages as such. And the prologue here to John uses the word, world, in two of its meanings.

It means nature and mankind, and it's the very same Greek word, and they're used together without clear distinction, so that when the Bible says, he was in the world and the world knew him not, you have two meanings of the word, world, and the context has to tell you which meaning it is, because it's a precise word in the original.

Now in the Bible, the word, world, comes from a root meaning to tend and to take care of and to provide for. I'd know that, I think, just from reading the Scriptures, even if I never looked in the Greek lexicon. I would know that the word here, the word, world, comes from an ancient root meaning to tend, to look after, to care for, and provide for.

And then it means something else, it means an orderly arrangement plus a decoration. Brother, everywhere you look you see God, and everywhere you see God you get delighted. Every place you find God, your soul's delighted.

And I'm delighted when I look into a dry old book that looks like a telephone directory gone mad, called the lexicon, and I find that in the New Testament, the word, world, means an orderly arranged system, highly decorative, which is tended, cared for, looked after, and provided for. All that's crammed into the word, world, and I defy any Greek student to say me nay. It's all there.

Now, persons who know God even slightly would expect God to make an orderly world because God is orderly. Disorder, God never was the author of disorder, neither in society, nor in a home, nor in a mind, and I don't think in the body. Some people let themselves go to seed, thinking it makes them spiritual, but I don't think it does.

I think that a combed set of hair, if you have any, and a pair of pants that have a modicum of press in them, I don't think that grieves God very much. It's being orderly, and I don't think a service where you know what you're going to do, and you know what you're going to preach, and what you're going to sing, particularly grieves God because God is a God of order, and the word, world, has the idea of order in it.

And so, we could expect God to be orderly because it's necessary that God be orderly. The world is a mathematical world, and the essence of mathematics is order. It's got to be. Two has to be before three, and three before four, and so on.

And then they that know God better will expect God not only to make an orderly world, but to make a beautiful world. And that's exactly what the Bible teaches. It teaches in the very Word itself that God made a beautiful, orderly world, and that He's looking after it, providing for it, and tending it.

Now isn't that a little charming thing, brother? Even God can take an old, dry word that's been for hundreds of years and speak to the bones, and they get up and stand and sing a solo. And that's what God's done here with the word, world.

One of these times we're going to be singing for the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies, for the love that from our birth over and around us lies. Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise. For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night, hill and dale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light. Lord of all, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise. And the man who wrote that was not simply having himself a poetical time. He was putting in harmonious language a truth, and that truth is that God made the world beautiful in its order.

Now there's an argument that comes from Mr. Worldly Wise Man, the man who has more brains than he has heart, who thinks more than he prays, and who tries to understand the unapproachable glory of God with his poor little peanut head. And he's going to advance this argument, and he's going to say, now wait a minute, now don't think I'm making this up, I've read this. He's going to say, wait a minute, now you're talking about God making the world beautiful, but don't you know, sir, that beauty is a word only, and that it's a word we've used to describe that that pleases us.

If anybody likes the looks of a thing, they say it's beautiful. And ugliness, the opposite, is a word we have coined to mean anything that doesn't please us, so that if we look at a thing and it looks as if it pleased us, we say it's beautiful. But if it doesn't please us, we say it's ugly. And that nothing is beautiful or ugly in itself, but it's only beautiful or ugly depending upon whether we like it or not. So says Worldly Wise Man and tells us that this idea that God made a beautiful world is all wrong. It's the figment of an overheated religious imagination.

Now I'm not going to blush and look for a place to hide and say, you're so learned you frighten me, because I don't think he is, he's just dumb, and I want to explain why he's dumb. I have an answer to that, and I'm not going to hide any place. God made us in His image and in His likeness.

And there is a similarity between the minds of man and the mind of God, sin being accepted. If you take sin out of the mind of man, there's a similarity, because God made man in His own image. I repeat that if the human race could only see that God made us in His image, we'd stop wallowing in the gutter and try to act like God. For God made us in His own image and likeness.

And when He made us in His image and likeness, part of that was mental and aesthetic. So that my mind is somewhat like God's mind as soon as I get sin out of it. So that when God makes a thing beautiful and orderly, it pleases the mind of God.

And God made us with a mind like His, somewhat, sin apart. And when we look at it and it pleases us, we say it's beautiful. So don't come to me and say that it's only a word, it's not. It's an arrangement, it's a decorative arrangement of God Almighty, which God looked at and said it's good.

And then God gave me a mind like His and I look at it and I say it's good. So that instead of apologizing to the learned brother, why, he ought to apologize to us Christians, and it's always so. So, I would recommend that instead of hanging your head like a bulrush and apologizing because you don't know enough to be a liberal, thank God that you know enough to be a Christian. You have nothing whatsoever to be worried about.

Bacon said a little learning turneth a man around to atheism, but a greater depth of learning will bring him back to God again. That is, we'll bring him back to belief in God again. So it's only a half-educated man that says that beauty is only something that we give to or something that pleases us, a name we give. The simple fact is that God looked, made things to please Himself, and for His pleasure they are and were created.

And so, God pleases Himself by what He makes, and then says, now look, and we look and say, say that is beautiful, and we're not apologizing because we've got ability to like what God likes, and be pleased with what God's pleased with.

Now, God makes things orderly and decorative, and first He makes things orderly for utility. You see, whatever God made, He made for a purpose. There isn't anything in the universe that just got here by accident. There are no cracks in the universe that some

cosmic dust sifted in that hadn't any meaning there, that ought to be wiped up and brushed off and forgotten. Everything in the universe has a meaning.

My old philosophical father used to sit and ponder on why God made mosquitoes. I don't know why he made mosquitoes, but when the great showdown comes, and we know as we're known, we'll smile and bow and thank God for a mosquito.

Now I don't know what he's for yet, but because I don't know what he's for, I'm not going to write him off and say, this is a cosmic mistake, this is a divine blunder. No, he's not a blunder, he's just a pest. And God made him and so let him pass for something, though God knows what tonight, I don't know.

And so are the great many other things. I don't know why God made them but remember there's nothing accidental in God's universe. Everything has a purpose. God made everything for a reason, and because I don't know what it's for, don't look at me and say, well, you don't know what it's for, therefore it's an accident.

Mr. Chase down here is an artist and sometimes I go to his studio and look around, I don't know what half the things are, but because I don't know what they are doesn't mean he doesn't know what they are. I go into a operating room in a hospital and I see a lot of things weird and ominous looking things lying around. I don't know what they're for, but that doesn't mean the surgeon doesn't know what they're for.

I step into the cab of a diesel locomotive. I don't know what all those buttons and bars and so on are for and I'd wreck it in 20 minutes, but he knows what it's for, that's his business.

So, when God Almighty stepped into the locomotive, the cab of His mighty locomotive, He calls the cosmos, why, God knows what every button's for and every wheel and all the rest, and because I don't, I'm not going to accuse God of making a lot of unnecessary truck to clutter up the universe. It's all got a purpose, brother. God made everything for a purpose.

If you go back to the book of Genesis, you'll see that utility was God's first plan, that is usefulness. God saw the light and said, let there be light, and the light saw that it was good, it had a purpose, and God divided the light from the darkness, that was for utility. And God called the light day and the darkness night, and God said let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and God made the firmament and divided the waters that run to the firmament.

I won't go on, but the whole two chapters in Genesis is simply a beautiful exercise in utility. It is God making an orderly world for a purpose, everything having a reason for existence. And utility was first, usefulness was first, purpose was first, and so it is with people.

When a man goes out onto the far plains of Canada or the United States and decides to squat and start a little place, he doesn't think of beauty first, he thinks of usefulness. He wants to get a cabin up that'll house him before the blizzard hits. And so, he builds himself, as you see scattered even yet throughout the United States in the West.

You see plain, rather ugly places, but they're a place to live--it's home, it's where he gets his mail if he gets any, and it's where he goes when he's tired. It's a utilitarian affair, not very pretty, but at least it houses him. And so, utility comes first. Usefulness always comes first with God and man. God makes it orderly for usefulness.

So, man seeks usefulness first of all. Everything primitive was useful instead of beautiful. It was a fight to live and stay alive with sin around us, and so we simply grabbed the first thing we could and used it, and it was not pretty maybe, but it was at least useful. So utility is first with man and God.

And then there's that in the mind of God that wants to be pleased, not only satisfied that it's orderly and useful, but He wants it to be beautiful, so it'll please the eye and please Him. So, He adds decoration, and that's actually in the Greek root. The word, decorative, is in it so that we have decoration there. And we make first the thing useful and then add the decoration. We can get along without it, but it's a lot better to have it. And you know it doesn't cost any more to have things beautiful, pleasing to the eye, than it does to have them useful and ugly. I wish we could find that out.

You can start here at Englewood on the New York Central of Pennsylvania lines, and you can ride on out in towards Canada and toward our south and toward the east, and up through Michigan and on over into Ontario. And before you get out of this city, or at least out of this area, you'll wonder if there's anything beautiful left in the world. Smokestacks and smell and jiggers for cracking gasoline and making gasoline out of crude oil, and just ugly stuff, just ugly. Man did that. That's utility, though.

If a war comes, we'll forget that's ugly. We'll need that. And we licked Hitler with that kind of thing with some allies, and we can lick Malenkov the same way. Useful, you see. Utilities out there, and that smelly, old, ugly, miserable hunchback-looking affair we call the refineries. It's not very pretty, but it's mighty useful. It brought you here tonight to the church. Some gasoline brought you here, probably, and they got it somewhere down there or somewhere like it. Useful, but not beautiful.

Maybe the day will come in the millennium when we'll make things beautiful as well as useful, for it doesn't cost any more to make things beautiful than it does to make them useful. It doesn't cost any more to raise a beautiful daughter than it does a homely daughter, and a beautiful wife doesn't eat any more than a homely wife, and if you give a certain amount of money to one woman and say, go out and buy yourself an outfit, she'll come back looking as if she was planning to attend a permanent Halloween party. She spent the same amount of money, but she got a mess to wear around.

Give exactly the same amount of money to another woman and turn her loose in the same stores, and she'll come back looking like a million dollars, and it doesn't cost any more, just a question of taste and proper relative arrangement of materials and so on. I'll leave that to the ladies. But it doesn't cost any more.

You give two men a pot of paint, and one of them will turn out a masterpiece to hang in a gallery, and the other fellow will turn out a horrible insult to the human imagination, and in just the same amount of paint in the same amount of time, one's an artist and

one's just a dauber. Give two architects a few carloads of bricks, and one of them will make something as ugly as some churches I've seen or buildings, and others will turn out something very lovely. It doesn't cost any more, just a question of arranging it properly.

So when God made his universe, it was just as cheap and easy as if God cared. It was just as cheap and easy for God to ever make it lovely as it was to make it homely. Of course, it would have been useful if the clouds above were square and painted battleship gray. They'd be pretty. I mean, they'd be useful, but they'd never be nice to look at. Nobody would ever write a sonnet to a square cloud painted battleship gray.

But the poets have written sonnets to the beautiful, fleecy clouds, they call them, that float in the blue sky above. Why did God make the sky blue, as any old colored sky would have done? Why, God said, that's a lovely color, isn't it? He liked it. He had something in Him that liked it.

And then He made you and me, and we have something in us that like it. God could have made a river to go roaring right down to the sea, a plain, straight, ugly looking thing. It would have fed the fish and done its job. Instead of that, God smiled and let it meander around and run under trees and round hills and look pretty and catch the blue of the sky and reflect it.

And everybody stands and looks and says, isn't it beautiful? Thank God. God says, thank you for seeing it. I made you to see it. Utility is one thing, beauty is another, but God is able to make useful and beautiful. That's what the word, world, means.

Now you say, what is this, a lecture on art? No, it's no lecture on art. It's a theological talk on what the word, world, means in the Bible. And if you've missed it, don't look at me. I didn't make you like that. It's there, brother. And so don't say I'm preaching out of my head. I'm preaching out of the Book. It's here. Ask any scholar who knows the original, he'll tell you that. That it's God Almighty's decorated order, which He watches and tends and looks after. So, there was the world.

Now, He was in the world. I might mention that the second use of the word, world is mankind. And that's so well known that I shall not say any more about it.

So, when God says He was in the world, that's His beautiful world that He made. And the world knew Him not. That didn't refer to the clouds and the hills and the rocks and the rivers. That referred to the world of mankind, the organized world of man, fallen man, and they knew Him not. And He was in the world.

What was He doing in the world, this Logos, this Word, this all-permeating Word? What was He doing in the world before the incarnation? The world was the Shekinah of the Word, the all-permeating will and Word of God, moving creatively in His universe. That was the Word.

And when Jesus Christ became man and was incarnated in a human body, He did not cease to be the all-permeating Word. And the all-permeating Word still fills the universe

and moves among us. And we have Him to deal with, and He's still here, and He's still the light that lighted every man that cometh into the world.

And when He in His human body went away from all of its mountains, He did not plunge the world into night. But the all-permeating Word, vitalizing, life-giving Word, is still in the universe. Now I ask you, what's He doing? What's the Word doing in the world? I've got some Scripture now that I want to give you.

Listen to this. For by Him, that is, the Word, the Son, for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things in time. And by Him all things consist, which is whole together.

The all-permeating Word, which is in the world, is the adhesive quality of the universe. That's why we don't fall apart. He is to the universe the mortar that holds it together. He is the magnetism that holds it together. He holds up His universe. That's what He's doing in His universe. That's why He's here, so that this is not a dead world we inhabit. Only sin is the dead thing. This is a living world we inhabit.

And this is a spiritual world, basically, and it's held together by the spiritual presence of the Invisible Word. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him. What is He doing? Who, being the brightness of His glory, as God's glory, and the express image of God's person, His Word, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, upholding all things by the word of His power.

The little child lies down and looks up at the stars and runs into the house and cries, Mother, Mother, I'm afraid. What are you afraid of, Johnny? I'm afraid the sky will fall down. Well, we laugh and pat his little head and put him to bed. He's tired. But he's not so dumb, as we might think. Why doesn't it fall down? Why? Why do, why don't things tear apart and go ripping off into, into chaos? Because there is a presence that makes all things consist, and there is one here upholding all things by the word of His power.

So, this universe can be explained only by spiritual laws. This is a spiritual world, and that is why the scientist never manages to get through to the root of things, never, because he deals only with things that he can see and touch and taste and experiment with.

But he doesn't know why they hold together. He throws two chemicals into a tube and certain action takes place, and he writes about it and says, where's God, where's God? God's making it do that. God's holding it together. He says that star out there yonder in 2,510 years and 20 minutes will be in such and such a position. And then he brushes off his hands and hangs up his typewriter and says, now I've done it. I have run God out of His world. I can predict where the stars will be. Foolish man. The stars would never be anywhere but dust, except God run the whole show and did the whole business.

So, God upholds all things by the word of His power. What's He doing in His universe? This, this presence, this, this permeating Logos, what's He doing in His universe? Let me read again from the Scriptures to you. Lift up your eyes on high and behold who has

created these things that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by name, but the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power and not one failure.

In our English translation, I think we miss a good deal out of this, but here is a figure of speech, one of the most beautiful in the entire Bible. It is a companion piece to the 23rd Psalm, only it's astronomical in place of dealing with human beings. And the man of God says, lift up your eyes on high and behold who has created these things. What things? These shining bright diamond things that look down upon the country and the city and reflect on the still waters of the sea. These stars yonder, who has created these things that bringeth out their host by number? Why do they bring out their host? Why they are like sheep.

And this is a figure of a shepherd bringing his sheep out by number and calling them all by names, counting them as they come out and naming every one of them and leading them across the green grass of the meadows and beside the still waters.

And so, this shepherd-minded poet Isaiah saw that the starry hosts above were like a flock of sheep and that God the great Shepherd called them and as they came sailing out through interstellar spaces, He numbered them and said they're all here and then called them by their names. And because He is strong in power, not one faileth. I think probably that this can be said to be the most majestic and elevated figure of speech in the entire Bible with no possible exception.

I know of absolutely none that we look into the starry sky and know that astronomers have told us that the very Milky Way is not a Milky Way at all, but simply a confusion of stars, so many billions of light years away, all moving in an orderly direction. But God called them all out and He knows their number and He called them all by name, just as a shepherd calls his sheep.

I don't know of any loftier, more brain-stretching figure of speech anywhere in the Bible than this is. So, that's what He's doing in His universe. He is here upholding it and shepherding it and caring for it and causing it to cohere.

Now the word, world, knew him not, that's mankind. He's in His world but the mankind knew Him not. Now the Word can be known by the humble heart. You find that here.

Now the Word I say, can be known by the world, by mankind, and that is, I don't mean now this is salvation. I mean to say that the consciousness of the presence of God, could I put it like this, in the early days of America, when our founding fathers were writing up constitutions and drafting laws and doing all sorts of things, we had many men who were not Christian men in high places. We've made, we've been dreamy-eyed about some of those old boys and made Christians out of them when they were not Christians.

But for instance, Benjamin Franklin, when they were in a tight place, old Ben got up and suggested they have prayer. And they had prayer and got out of the tight place. And Benjamin Franklin wasn't a Christian. George Whitefield preached to him and prayed for him, but he said in his old age, it must not have done any good because I'm not a Christian yet, and he died that way. He was not a Christian, but he believed in God. That

is, he believed that there was a God in the world, and he believed that there were divine laws in the world.

And when somebody said to, not Franklin, but to Webster, Daniel Webster, what's the loftiest thought that's ever entered your mind? He said, by all means, the profoundest thought my mind has ever entertained is my responsibility to a holy God.

Now our fathers weren't all fundamental Christians and weren't all born again, but most of them were men who had a reverent and profound belief in the presence of God in His world. And they can laugh at them if they will.

They drafted some laws and laid down some rules and regulations that remain to this day as relics, at least, of the days when men stood up on the earth and whether they were Christians or not, still believed there was a God that didn't save them. But it made them a lot different from some of these happy-go-lucky, wild Adalpates that run around now and laugh at the idea of God.

Some of these poker-playing, whiskey-drinking, dirty storytelling rascals that we have in Washington and other places now, that are dirty-minded, dirty-tongued, and dirty generally, whose idea of God is so cynical that they toss God a sop somewhere in their speeches but go on as if God didn't exist. That's what we've come to.

The Word is in the world and the world knows Him not. But it's possible to know about Him, possible to know. The Mohammedan falls down on the ground five times a day, and we laugh at the Mohammedan. I stand with respect to that Mohammedan. He'll perish, but he knows there's a God in the world anyhow.

The Hindu majors himself painfully on his way to the Ganges River to bathe himself, and we say, how foolish can you get? But I'd rather be a half-naked Hindu trying to get free from my sins in the filthy waters of Mother Ganga, than I would an American businessman who's ruled God out of my business and out of my home and out of my life and lived for my bank account. I don't say I'd take my chances. No, men don't take their chances. They're either saved or they're lost.

But I would rather go to hell from the waters of the dirty Ganges, trying to find God, than I would to go to hell from a slick office in Chicago's Loop. The world knew Him not, and that's the curse of the hour.

Now the world knew Him not. I say this is the supreme sin of the world. Absorption in a godless world, that's the supreme sin of the world. Some of you people say, well, now there goes the preacher. He's trying to get me converted. He'd better go down to Pacific Garden Mission, down to West Madison Street, and try to convert somebody in Skid Row. I don't need him.

I came here tonight because my wife plagued me to come to church, and so I satisfied her. I'll go, she'll go to a show with me Wednesday night. So I'm here tonight to please her, but don't preach to me. I never robbed anybody. I pay my taxes. I pay my debts, and I'm a decent man. I'm faithful to my wife, and taking care of my home, and I vote, and I

am a citizen. Why should you preach to me? Oh man, if you only knew how foolish you talk.

Did you know that your great sin is that the all-pervading Presence is here, and you can't feel Him. The Light shines and you can't see it. There is a Voice, and you can't hear it. And there's a curse that lies upon you, sir.

Not that you didn't rob a bank, but the great curse that lies upon your heart is that you have become so absorbed in business that you can't see God. There are dollar signs before your eyes, and you can't see God, and you'd rather make a neat profit than to make your way into the kingdom.

The Word was in the world, and the world knew Him not. And this is the curse of the world. And I repeat that I would rather be a black man wearing a g-string and living in a cootie-infested mud hut in Africa, kneeling before a bone and mumbling some kind of a homemade prayer, than I would be a self-satisfied American businessman, satisfied with his money and his home and his Chrysler and his TV and his deep freeze.

He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. To get up in the morning and there's a Presence and you don't feel it. To get up in the morning and there is a Light and you don't see it. To get up in the morning and there is a Voice and you can't hear it.

And then you say to me, don't preach to me, go preach to the bum. You're a bum, too, only on a higher level. And before the great bar of God, your sin is deeper than the drug addict that lies tonight in the cool of the West Side, in some gutter or alley. Business, yes, sir.

And then there are others that have fame. They make fame their gods. I just heard over the radio that very soon there's going to be one of these actresses and nightclub singers and all that. She is going to tell over the radio, I think, what has held her up so long and held her together. And do you know what it is? I'll give you three guesses. It's faith.

She says, faith made me what I am. She has given her life to that kind of thing, and now she's falling back on some kind of an esoteric, weird faith. But oh, brother, she's living for fame. And she'd rather get her name on the marquee of a theater than she would in the Lamb's Book of Life. And she's proud of it.

And there is a Voice, but she can't hear it. There is a Light, but she can't see it. And there is a Presence, but she can't feel it. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

And others are addicted to pleasure. They've given themselves to pleasure. Flesh contacts, nerve ends, delight, joy, anything to take the seriousness out of living, anything to keep us from knowing that there is a Presence, keep us from knowing there is a Light and a Voice.

Now, I'm not acting like a mystic. If you think that I am, let me quote to you. In Him was life, and the Life was the light of men. And the Light shined in darkness, and the

darkness comprehended it not. And in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was in the world.

Now, there's the Word, there's the Voice, there is the Light, and the Word was in the world. There's the Presence. I'm giving Scripture to you tonight, not poetry. And I'm telling you there is a Voice, and you don't hear it, and there is a Light, and you don't see it, and there is a Presence, and you don't feel it. And you're, that's what the old writers called profane. Profane, my brother.

You may dress in \$200 suits, and you may drive \$4,000 cars, and your home may cost \$25,000, and there may not be a thing in it more than a year old. You may be from your dainty skin out, dressed to kill. You may have promotions and expect to make good in this world, but remember you're a profane man, until you have waked up to the fact that you're not alone in this universe, that He's here, that there is a Presence, and that there is a Voice, and that there is a Light, the light of every man. And realize the basis of your life is not physical, but spiritual, and you owe it to God to turn to Him with all your heart.

And then there's eating, and drinking, and buying, and selling. You say, what's the wrong with eating, and drinking, and buying, and selling? I don't think there's anything wrong with it. Christians eat, and Christians drink, everything except alcohol, of course, and Christians buy, and Christians sell. Christians marry and are given in marriage, and it's all perfectly proper, they should. And yet, listen, did you not read that Jesus said as it was in the days of Noah, so should it be in the day of the coming of the Son of Man, and He didn't say one thing about murder. He didn't say one thing about lust. He didn't say one thing about robbery.

He said, as it was in the days of Noah, what were they doing? They were absorbed in eating, and drinking, and having fun, and getting married, and having homes, and planting, and building, running their business, and enjoying themselves. So shall it be in the day of the coming of the Son of Man. It's a tremendous thought that when our Lord wanted to point to the most dangerous trap of all, he didn't mention the wicked things. He said the most dangerous trap is just living and forgetting that God exists.

That's what's the matter with America, brother. Sin will damn you, of course it will, or any kind of sin will damn any man that doesn't get free from it by the blood of the Lamb. But it's noteworthy that Jesus Christ specialized in talking about these innocent things that are all right in themselves, but when we get absorbed in them to a point where there's a Presence and we can't feel Him, a Voice and we can't hear him, a Light and we can't see Him, then we're profane men. Woe, be to us. Far better we never had been born.

The only Scripture that fits us is the Scripture of the poor Job who said, Oh, woe is me that I was ever born, that my mother ever conceived me. Let the stars of the twilight of that night be as darkness. Oh, that I might have been carried from my mother's knees to the grave, there the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

The only Scripture for that profane man who's forgotten that Jesus Christ exists and that he has a responsibility to God, that God made him, he's an effect, not a cause, an effect of

a cause, and that he is in the hand of God, if you only knew it, and God will puff and blow him into hell because he's forgotten that there is a God. He gives lip service to the church and mental service to religion, but he's a profane man for he can't see the Presence, nor hear the Voice that says, come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. You can be too bright to miss it, but you can't be too simple.

A 17-year-old ignorant boy walking the streets of East Akron, I heard them preach on the street, and I wandered into a church and heard a man say, Here is my text. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

And without any biblical background, much more than a pagan, I got disturbed, disturbed, greatly disturbed, and I began to feel the Presence, and I began to hear faintly a Voice, and dimly a Light. I was lost still, but I was getting close. Jesus said, If such, you're not far from the kingdom of God.

And then walking down Market Street, I came to Case Avenue there at the bottom of the hill, and I saw a man preaching on the street. It was a German with a strong marked accent and a very colored birthmark disfiguring the side of his face. And he said, If you don't know how to pray, he said, go home and pray, have mercy on me a sinner. And you know what? I did it.

And the dispensationalists tell me I had a hold of the wrong text. I got into my father's house, got my feet under the table, and got a hold of a big spoon, and my brethren on the outside pound on the window and say, come out of there, boy, you got in the wrong door.

I got in all right. Dispensational or no dispensational, I got in. God will forgive a fellow if he doesn't get his dispensations right, if he's hungry enough, don't you think? Sure he will.

All the Lord wants to know, and Peter was falling, going down into the water. He cried, Lord, save me. He'd had to consult the margin of some old Bible to find out whether he should have prayed like that or not. He'd been 40 feet under, and the bubbles would have been coming up. But he just prayed right out of his heart, Lord, save me. And the Lord said, sure, and up came Peter. It was all right. Amen.

If Jonah had had to go through a series of books and consult all the marginal annotations, he'd have been in the belly of a whale yet. But he'd just let his heart do the praying. Always let your heart do the praying, brother.

Isn't that right, Tom? Our old friend Tom Haire knows that. Let your heart do the praying. When he was coming to this country, he got down on these Irish prayer bones and began to ask God what he ought to tell us Americans. And God said to him, Tom, when you get over there, don't read up on America. Don't learn anything at all. Don't try to fit in. Just tell them what I've told you right out of your heart. Don't pay any attention

to their heads. Preach to their hearts. He was wise enough to do that, that's why he's been such a blessing over here, because he's preached to our hearts.

And so if you'll just get your heart down on its knees, there's an awful lot you don't need to know to find Him. The Light shineth, and the Voice calleth, and the Presence is here. All this was, of course, headed up when it says, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we saw his glory as of the only begotten of the Father.

So He's here now. He went away in His human body, but as the everlasting, all-permeating Word, He's with us still. With us to save. With us, O Word of the Father, Light of life. Word of God incarnate, O wisdom from above. And He offers Himself to you tonight, if you'll only believe.

Become childlike, and say, yes, Lord, I will. Yes, Lord, I will. Just for I am without one plea, but that thy blood be shed for me, and that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come. Do what your heart tells you. Will you not? Let us pray.

Father, O God, Thou art near us. Thou art here. Like Jacob, we're tempted to say, Thou art in this place, and I knew it not. But we did know it after a fashion. This is none other than the gate of heaven. This is the house of God, Beth-El. We will raise our altar here, at this Presence.

Now, we pray for men and women, and particularly young people, who are charmed. The serpent of the world has charmed them like a bird. They gaze with fascination on all the showy glamour of the world. They would die to become famous. Women here would give 20 years off their lives for five years to be a movie star. Great God, we're sick, sick, sick inside that we have sought the gutter instead of the clouds, that we have learned to love and live in, admire and imitate and follow the filthiest, lowest, most profane element in society.

When there is a Light and men don't see it, and a Voice and they don't hear it, and a Presence and they don't feel it. O, we pray, get hold of men and women and young people and children tonight, and pull them out of this mud, moral and intellectual mud. Get them out of it, we pray.

We pray that Thou will give to all of us who've been here tonight a renewed and vivid sense of the sacredness and spirituality of the world that Thou has created. Sin we have no truck with, and there's nothing good can be said about it. No eloquence can remove from it the ugly bestiality of sin. But apart from sin, O God, Thou art in the world, art here. We pray to help us, morning and night, and all during the day and night, and wherever we may be, to keep in contact with Thee, knowing that He is in the world. And the great grief of the world is the world knows Him not.

O, we Christians can say, thank Thee, Father, we know Thee. We know thee through Jesus Christ Thy Son. We call thee Father. We have called Thee, Abba, Father. We have stayed our hearts on Thee. Blessed be Thy name.

Now we trust Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.