

A New Covenant

By Paris Reidhead*

In preparation for the Message, there are two Scriptures that I would have you see, in the Old Testament. Isaiah 43: Verse 18 to 21 and Jeremiah 31: verses 31 through 34. So will you turn, please to Isaiah 43: 18 through 21, a familiar portion to this Congregation. Perhaps it would be better if I read in addition to the Isaiah portion that balance of that chapter: "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen. This people have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise. But thou hast not called upon Me. O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought Me the small cattle of thy burnt-offerings; neither hast thou honored Me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought Me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled Me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine Own Sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put Me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against Me. Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches."

Jeremiah 31, beginning with the 31st verse. In Isaiah 43, God declares He will do a new thing. In Jeremiah 31, it is declared that God will make a New Covenant. And since you will be seeing this New Covenant later in the Book of Hebrews, I want you to note carefully the reading at this time. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:31-34) May the Lord bless to our hearts this, His Word.

A familiar portion, but one that is apropos to that which we have just read in Jeremiah. So will you turn to Ephesians, the first Chapter, while I read, beginning with the 15th verse. Remember Jeremiah said, that I will make a new Covenant, and I will dwell in them, and I will walk in them: "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

Now to Ephesians 3, verses 14-19 for a few verses: (His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth) verse 14. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Relate this to Jeremiah who said, I will write My law upon their hearts and I will dwell in them and walk in them. May God bless this Word to us.

Will you turn, please, to Hebrews, the 1st Chapter. Inasmuch as this is Reformation Sunday, I would like to preface our consideration of Hebrews by reminding us that the contest between Luther¹ and Rome was this: Rome said, "The truth is where the Church is." Luther said, "The Church is where the truth is." Now this summarizes it, and this puts it into focus. Rome said, "We are the custodians of the truth, and what we say is true is true. And it is true, because the Church has approved it as being true." Luther said, "You are judged by the truth. You do not judge it. And you are true only where you are in accord with the Word, and the Church is only the Church where it is in accord with the Word." Now we are grateful for everything that God gave through Martin Luther, for all the privileges we have today; the democracy, the freedom we have today has its basic roots in this revolt. For it was not only the Church is where the truth is, but also the individual has the right to determine what that truth is as he reads the Word, and as he studies it, and he has with the right of determining what is true the obligation to walk in that truth. We are grateful also for the heritage of truth that was given to us by Dr. Luther. For he it was that, rescued from oblivion and under the rubbish of centuries of Roman domination, the truth of justification by faith...That we are justified from all our past sins by the finished work of Jesus Christ, not by penances, not by vain ceremonial observances, not by useless sacrifices, but by faith in the finished work of Christ, that in an instant a man is justified from all that he has done. This is Bible truth, and it is part of our heritage today.

But remember, the Reformation was not completed with Martin Luther. We are indebted also to John Calvin, for in a different area, a different country, a different situation, Calvin is one of the heirs of and participants in the Reformation gave to us the truth that God is Sovereign. In His Sovereignty He reigns, by His Word He reveals His Character, and indicates His sovereign Will, and that the true privilege of the Christian is to bow to the Sovereignty of God, and to submit to the rule of God in his life, and that this bowing to God's Sovereignty, and this submission to His Rule is the ground and the condition of Justification by Faith. And we need remember that. For Salvation was intended to be not a humanistic provision for our need, as much as a Divine provision whereby man can come back in right relationship with God.

But the Reformation was not complete with Luther and Calvin, for each of these men was seeking to rescue some neglected truth from the ashes of meaningless ceremonialism, and God raised up John Wesley². I consider him one of the foremost, for his place in the Reformation was to add another truth to those two that we have mentioned. For he had no contest with justification by faith, nor did he contest either with the sovereignty of God in the life of the individual. This is what he said, "It must be genuine. It is not just a theory. And that when you have actually submitted yourself to the Lordship of Christ and consented to the sovereignty of God, and repented of your sin, and he it is who equated repentance with the renunciation of your own policy of being God in your life, and actually gave to the Church the testimony that to believe on Jesus Christ is to submit to His Sovereignty; to confess with the mouth Jesus to be Lord is the condition for being saved."

John Wesley then said, "These things are not just doctrines, they are not just theories; they must be actual experiences of the individual heart, and when you have actually submitted to the sovereignty of Christ, actually repented of your sin (and the two are somewhat similar and synonymous), when you have savingly believed on Jesus Christ, then you are born of the Spirit. And the way you find out you are a Christian, is not by inferring that you are a Christian because of what you have done. But by experiencing the power of Christ, and the Life of Christ imparted to you by a supernatural work of God called regeneration, or the New Birth." Wesley it was that said in this building together of truth, that the day-or the moment actually--that you are justified in Heaven you are regenerated in your heart. And you know you are regenerated because you have the witness of the Spirit, and that only he that has the witness of the Spirit dare claim that he has been saved, born of God. He defined the witness of the Spirit as an inner certainty or knowledge which did not depend upon outward evidence or proof. It was something that you knew inwardly because God who is Spirit had joined Himself to your Spirit. And in the joining, you had partaken of God's Life and were aware of that Life. This is the reason the Anglican Church closed their doors to him, because what he said made most of the people of that day to recognize that in his terms and definition, they had not been saved. And, therefore, there was a great conflict.

1 Martin Luther (1483-1546) German monk, former Catholic priest, who wrote the Ninety-Five Theses.

2 John Wesley (1703-1791) Anglican cleric, Christian theologian, and founding the Methodist movement.

But he it was also who added to this Reformation heritage by saying, that God not only wants to come in conscious presence to tell you that you are forgiven, but He wants you to present your life to Him, and to be filled with the Spirit. And that this is not optional, but that this is mandatory. It is commanded of God. God says that this you must do, that you must be filled with the Spirit.

Since that time, we have gone on generation by generation, ignoring part of our heritage, accepting part. We have crystalized around these men. We find those who bear the name of Luther, and are Lutheran. We find those that bear the name of Calvin, and are Calvinist. We find those that bear the name of Wesley, and are Wesleyan. And we are today the heirs of all that these men gave. But the principle that I wish to make clear this morning is this: That we are not responsible simply to what we received from these men. Our responsibility is to the Word of God, and to the revelation of the Word. And I am not at all sure that Luther knew and saw everything that God wants you to see today. I think that you have the right of seeing all that he saw, plus all that the others have been shown by God. I do not believe that Calvin knew all that God wanted him to know, though I am deeply indebted to him, and find that a right understanding of what he said what God's Word says makes the two friends indeed. But I do not feel that Calvin saw all that God wanted us to see, and that it pays for us to identify ourselves in any restricted sense with one of these men.

I have the entire works of Wesley and read them avidly with great pleasure and profit, and find no real conflict incidentally between Wesley and Calvin. I am sure if they were here (they lived a hundred years apart), if they were together, they could have sat in the same room, and shared a cup of tea and rejoiced happily in the things of the Lord, because they knew the Lord. Now that is more than some of their professed followers can do, but I find that these two would have gotten along beautifully. And so I get great profit and delight out of reading Wesley and fellowshiping with him. Not because I am trying to straddle the fence. Someone has said the posture of a preacher in the present day is to be astride the fence, with ear to the ground, his shoulder to the wheel, and his nose to the grindstone and it is awfully difficult to maintain very long.

Well I am not in that position nor posture, nor do I - that the reason for it. I simply feel that each of these men saw some great area of truth, and they have given it to me as part of my heritage, and it is not my responsibility to be loyal to anyone of them, but to profit from all of them, and take from them what contribution they have made to a fuller, richer understanding of the revelation of God to our hearts.

Now, all this is to point out that God has a plan. Whether Luther saw it, or Calvin, or Wesley, to the degree to which we are to see it today, I do not know and have no interest in proving. But I am simply saying that unless you have this, you have missed the grand purpose of the Reformation and the grand purpose of God for your life. I read it to you in that portion that I call the definition of the normal Christian, in Ephesians 3:14-21. "That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith."

During the Convention we had the repetition to us over and over again by the varied speakers that when God left Heaven, His destination was not the stable in Bethlehem. When He left Heaven, His destination was not the home in Nazareth, nor was it the Temple in Jerusalem, nor was it the Cross on the Hill, nor was it the Tomb at the foot of the Hill, nor even was the destination the Throne at the Right Hand of God. When Jesus Christ left Heaven, the destination was your heart. His purpose was to come to you and live in you, that He wanted to get a nation, a holy nation. He wanted to get a peculiar people, a royal priesthood. He wanted to get a witness, someone who would show forth His praise. He tried it once by living in a tent in the midst of a company of people who were a nation by virtue of their being born of the flesh, born of blood, born of man. And it failed. And so He said, I am going to do a new thing, and this time I am going to get a people, and they will be a nation all right. But they will be supernaturally born. The only way they can get into that nation is to individually partake of my nature in the miracle of the New Birth. They will have to be born of God to get in. And this became then the criteria for the new thing, and the definition of the new thing.

But you see, we have had an idea that God's purpose was birth; that we could be born again, and then we could become optional regarding all the rest that Jesus Christ provided. We have had an idea, and it has been emphasized more in the last hundred years more than in any time previously, due to the influence of the philosophy of Humanism. We have had an idea that all that God did was basically man centered, that God loved the World, and His concern for you, and His concern for me

moved Him to send His Son so we would not suffer. Now this is true. But this is only a peripheral portion of the truth. It was not simply that we should be saved from Hell, but that we should be kept from perishing.

And this word perish is just more than just being saved from Hell. To perish means, to fail of its intended purpose. And God made you for Himself. You were made to be the vehicle of God, and the Temple of God. Sin ruined all this. Now in Grace, God's purpose is to remake you in His Image, and to fulfill what He intended when He made man in the first place.

Therefore, with the emphasis on Humanism, and the benefits that the individual gets out of Christ, there has been a tendency to ignore what God had in mind for those whom He saved, and what God's purpose was in saving them; to get a witness for Himself, to get a people that would show forth His praise. Now you do not show forth God's praise by being born of God. You show forth God's praise by repenting, but not by being born of God. You do not show forth God's praise by being born of God, any more than Israel showed forth God's praise when they were in the Wilderness. They were God's people. God had brought them across the Red Sea, which speaks of repentance and faith. But they were a murmuring people, whining and whimpering. They were a stubborn and rebellious people. They were a proud and an arrogant people. They were a people that lusted after Egypt more than they did after Canaan. They were a fear filled people. And I defer anyone to go into the record of Israel in the Wilderness for those forty years, and try and establish that God is glorified, and God is praised by the people that were there, that were under the sentence of death, and God had to make the rest wander around until they were gone.

And I do not believe that you or I glorify God by our being born again, any more than Israel glorified God in the Wilderness. There was only forty days necessary from their going from the Red Sea to Canaan, if they had followed God. They would have been there in forty days. But they rebelled. They became stubborn. And they refused to enter into His rest. And the consequence of that was that God had to wait for one generation to die, to raise up another, that He could get a people that would go across the river and into the Land, so that God could get the glory that He deserved. And it was only when they went through the Jordan River, and up on the Bank, and came to this place that they were that God had intended them to be, that they began to show forth His praise in the manner that God had purposed.

And I will reason from that, that we are certainly going to be grateful for everyone that is born again, everyone that is passed from death to Life, but I am going to maintain as stoutly as I know how with every kind of phrase and expression that I can use in due course, that until we come to the place that Ephesians 3:14-21 is normal to us we are a spiritual liability to God, rather than a spiritual asset. Because everything that God has purposed for the Church, and everything that God has determined to do to get glory to Himself is postulated on being filled with the fullness of God. And I maintain that this is the normal Christian life, and that none of us dare stop short of that.

Now in order to enforce this, I have asked you to turn to Hebrews, and presumably your Bible is open there. And I am going to now try to prove to you from reading through the Book of Hebrews, briefly and selected portions, that there is no option in the matter of being filled with the Spirit. There is no option permitted by God to the matter of being filled with the fullness of God; that this is not an optional matter, but that if anyone claims to be saved who refuses to go on, he evidences a basic stubbornness in his heart with which God cannot deal.

Now will you watch while I read and I begin with the first verse of Hebrews. (And if I were you I would make a note of these, either on the page or in some other page.) The theme of Hebrews is given to us in the first two verses: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son," (Heb. 1:1,2) (whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds) Now bear that in mind. This is the Theme. God has spoken by His Son. What He has said by prophets, He has now said by His Son. What did His Son say? "Out of your innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38) What did He say? "Abide in Me, and I in You." (John 15:4) "Without Me, ye can do nothing. He that abideth in Me, and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit. If a branch abide not in Me, he is cast forth and burned." (John 15:5,6) This is what Christ said.

In His High Priestly prayer He said, "That they all may be in union, in the same way Father Thou hast lived in Me, and I have lived in Thee, I want to live in them, and I want them to live in Me, that the world will be able to believe." (John 17:23) We have selected just two or three out of innumerable Scriptures.

The Theme, therefore, is this, That what the prophets declared of old, God has finally said by His Son. And it is now the more authoritative because He has spoken by His Son.

Now the first warning that you find in Hebrews is given in the 2nd Chapter, verses 1 to 4. And of course the remainder of Chapter 1 is the setting forth of the excellence of the Son. Now notice what Paul (What the writer. I show my prejudice here. We do not know that it was Paul. I think perhaps it was.) Notice what we have in this first verse of the 2nd Chapter. "Therefore." What is this therefore referring to? God has spoken to us by His Son; therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; (which has been spoken to us by His Son). This is not to the unsaved. For years I have known that Hebrews 2:3 did not refer to the unsaved. It refers to Christians, professedly. How shall we escape, If we neglect so great salvation. Well, what is this great salvation? It is given to us in epitomized form in Galatians 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ. Christ liveth in me." "How are we going to escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord." (Heb. 2:3) He started it, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him. God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders and divers miracles, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own Will. For He said, You have the Son saying it, but then you have the demonstration of this in the early Church. How are we going to escape if we neglect something that God was willing to seal to this degree.

Now the second warning is given in Hebrews Chapter 3, verses 7-19. The second warning: "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest.) Take heed, brethren.... (How shall we escape?) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the.... (Words spoken by the Son. The Word of the living God.) But exhort one another (May I stop here to remind you that John Wesley was used of God to start the Class Meeting. I do not know much about them, but I am sure they are needed. The Class Meeting I understand was a group of people who gathered together for the purpose of meeting and encouraging one another to go on into entire sanctification. To go on to the fullness of the Spirit. And they would meet together. And the reader would ask pointed questions as to your state. How, what is your state? Questions that had been formulated and were understood and agreed to by the group. And they would ask these questions. And the individual was forced to answer those questions honestly and earnestly. And they were to lead on into this normal Christian life, filled with the fullness of God.

"Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

Now the promised rest is described for us, or this relationship is described as a life of rest, in Chapter 4, verses 1-11. And incidentally relative to this Scripture, is one of the most magnificent books on this subject that you could find...It is entitled, The Saints' Everlasting Rest, by a great Puritan, Richard Baxter, in which he teaches the same thing that Wesley taught, only in different words. The Presbyterians call it, The Saints' Everlasting Rest; and the Wesleyans call it, Entire Sanctification I do not care what you call it, just so you go there. That is what I am interested in.

"Let us therefore fear, (Here it is) lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest..." (Heb. 4:1) What is the rest? Crucified with Christ. We live, yet not I but Christ. This normal Christian life.

"For unto us was the good news preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in My wrath, if they

shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into My rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, (Christ's rest) he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." (Heb. 4:2-10) Not I that work. Not I that live, said our Lord Jesus. "The Father that dwelleth in Me. I am crucified with Christ," said Paul. Christ liveth in me. This is resting from one's own labor. Notice verse 11: "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

Are you filled with the fullness of God? Are you walking in the fullness of God? Have you experienced the fullness of God? This is to you, if you are born again, and you have not come to that place. It is no longer a matter of option. It is a matter of God's sovereign purpose.

Now the exhortation to enter into this rest is given to us in Hebrews Chapter 6, verses

1-3: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection;" (go on unto maturity). What is maturity? Filled with the fullness of God. "Not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit."

What is maturity? That they all may be wrought to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Christ living in you His own Life.

Now we will notice the third warning. Hebrews Chapter 6, 4-12. "For it impossible for those who were once enlightened, (and have learned that there is this life.) and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. -- Here we have in these words the third warning. And I go down to the 12th verse: "Be not slothful. Take the more earnest heed. Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Now the exposition of this is given to us in Hebrews Chapter 8. You turn to it. Verses 6 - 13. I cannot read the extensive portions that I would have, 8: 6-13. I will simply read beginning with verse 8: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My Covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest." -- Here is the new thing. God dwelling in you, becoming your law.

A young man the other day said to me, "Well how do you live this life. Do you make a list of rules, of do's and don'ts? And then do you just try to follow them?" And the answer is a categorical "No." What you do is let God come into you, and let God be God in you. And He lives consistent with Himself. And this life becomes a life of rest because you cease from your own labors. And God is doing in you and through you what you never could do for yourself.

Now we must go to Hebrews Chapter 9: verses 14 and 15: "How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the mediator of the new covenant..." (What is the New Covenant? That God would dwell in Men. Be filled with

the fullness of God. Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant) that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Then to Hebrews Chapter 10, verses 9 and 10: "Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. (The first Covenant, that He may establish the second Covenant.) That second covenant as we said, I will put My law in their hearts, put My Spirit within them, and cause them to walk. But— By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all."

And now to Hebrews 10:16: "This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;" (And then God Himself will come in to keep the law that He has put in heart and mind.)

Now the entreaty. Hebrews Chapter 10: verses 19-25: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter the holiest by the Blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His Flesh; And having an High Priest over the house of God; Let us (Notice now) draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as a manner of some is; but let us exhort one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Now look: "If any man sin willfully." If any man sin — What is this willful sin? Let us go back. Failing to draw near? Failing to hold fast? Failing to consider and to provoke to good works? Failing to associate together, assemble together, and failing to exhort one another. This is called willful sin — to fail to enter in. "If any man sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose yet shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the testimony that God has spoken by His Son." Do you see it?

Now the fourth warnings Hebrews Chapter 10: 26-31. I would like to read it all. I cannot read it. Just, we have given it to you now in these words. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: How much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant (which made this possible) an unworthy thing wherewith he was sanctified, -- hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace? For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Now the fifth warning is in Hebrews Chapter 12: 11-17: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble kneel; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. (— What is our birth right? To be filled with the fullness of God.) For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, (in his heart) though he sought it carefully with tears. For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them anymore." (If this is all true, if this is all true of that, then how much more the 6th warning, verses 25-29.)

“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.” Who is it? God, who in divers times hath spoken to us by the prophets, has spoken to us by His Son. “See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also Heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”

Now what is the testimony that I have read to you today? That there is no option. That if you through indolence, through unbelief, or disobedience, refuse to go to the mature Christian life of being filled with the fullness of God, and walking in that fullness, you have evidenced thereby a state of rebellion which gives the contradiction to the testimony of submission to the Lordship of Christ, because this is the Message that God spake through His Son. No option. No option at all. And therefore I bring you, with all love and longing, and deep concern to this: What are you doing with the truth that you have heard? What are you doing? Or, What can I do to help you with the truth that you have heard? What can I do to provide means to help you, because I do not want you to fail to enter in in the light of the solemn Word that God gives us in His Word. The solemn warning. Six warnings, that He gives.

Let me ask you. Are you walking in the fullness of God? This is what He said was the new covenant: I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will fill them with Myself. — The normal Christian life. Are you there? You can be. You ought to be. Great good will come if you are. And great loss if you are not. Take the Word. Read it, and search the Scriptures, and see if these things be so. I think I have given to you today that which forever, in my mind at least, takes all option out of the deeper or the normal Christian life, and makes it mandatory upon the child of God.

Let us pray. Our Father, these are solemn words which we have read. And if we rightly understand this Epistle, this letter, we hear Thee saying down across the centuries that the Reformation is not complete with a return to Orthodoxy, but it is only complete when we enter into all that Jesus Christ died to make ours. Save anyone today from having come to Kadesh-Barnia, having looked over and seen the grapes and good things, the land flowing with milk and honey, but then feeling there have are giants to be met, to turn away, to have their bones bleach in the wilderness of despair and futility. We pray, Father, that Thou wilt lay upon the hearts of this Congregation a sense of the immediate urgency of seeking God with our whole hearts, until that which we know to be true becomes inwardly experientially true in our hearts and lives. We believe this is Thy Word. We ask Thee, Lord, as meditation continues through the hours of the day, and the weeks to come, that it may be shown to be Thy Word, and that many may take heed and flee to Thee to let Thee do what Thou art so graciously waiting and longing to do. And so we turn the Word over to Thee, Lord; use it as a deep, sharp cutting sword, and may it do its good office work to the glory of Christ. For those, Lord, who may need special help, or long for counsel we pray. Move upon their hearts to know, Lord, that the Pastor of this Church and others with him, have no desire in all this world quite as keen as to help hungry people the best they are able to enter into the fullness of our inheritance in Christ. And stir them to make known their need. For Jesus sake we pray. Amen.

Let us stand. I urge you to read these Scriptures in any manner you wish, but to meditate upon them until you discern whether or not we have given a correct interpretation. I shall not be at the door, but be here to greet friends that may wish to see me.

Now may the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father, the Communion and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be and abide with us now, and until Jesus comes. Amen.

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Morning, October 30, 1960 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.